

**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REALITY AND APPEARANCE IN  
EARLY BUDDHIST AND KANTIAN VIEWS: A COMPARATIVE  
PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY ON THE MADHUPINDIKA SUTTA**

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The concept of reality is one of the key concepts that belongs to the ontology of Philosophy. Immanuel Kant who was a prominent philosopher in the Modern era has spoken of this concept as an epistemological concept that cannot be grasped by the human mind. According to the *Madhupindika Sutta*, which belongs to the *Majjima Nikaya* of the *Sutta Pitaka*, our mind never perceives the reality of the world but grasps mere concepts that are produced by the mind. This study entails a comparative analysis of the Early Buddhist and Kantian views on the difference between reality and appearance. According to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, reality is a concept, which cannot be grasped as it is. In the Kantian Epistemology, the human mind goes through two stages namely, the stage of sensibility and the stage of understanding. When we grasp the world, we perceive gross data through our five senses that is edited at the stage of understanding. The edited data has been named 'concepts' by Kant. This suggests that according to him, we cannot grasp things-in-themselves but can only do so in their appearances. Thus, there is a large gap between reality and appearance. Similarly, according to *Madhupindika Sutta*, we perceive sensations through our senses. Then we cognize and ratiocinate them further, which is clarified by the term '*Papañca*'. Kant accepts the notion that we perceive sensations through five senses. However, the *Madhupindika Sutta* mentions six with the mind as the sixth sense. Both Early Buddhism and Kant accept that the gross data that we grasp through the senses are edited by our own mind. Thus the study concludes that both Early Buddhism and Immanuel Kant accept that there is a difference between reality and appearance.

*Keywords: Reality, Appearance, Papañca*