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Buddhist Mental Health: Integration of Buddhist Principles with Contemporary Mental Health Care

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Abstract: This academic article aims to study the concepts and principles of mental health according to Buddhist teachings through comprehensive analysis of the Tripitaka, commentaries, and related academic works. The study employs a qualitative research methodology, examining Buddhist mental health frameworks and their integration with contemporary psychological approaches. The research finds that Buddhism contains comprehensive teachings on mental health dimensions, reflected through important principles such as the Three Characteristics (Tilakkhana), the Four Noble Truths (Ariyasacca), the Noble Eightfold Path (Ariyamagga), mindfulness and meditation development, and the Four Brahmaviharas. These principles not only help in mental healing and therapy but also promote the development of mental strength, stability, and access to true peace. The study presents integrated models demonstrating the relationship between Buddhist mental health concepts and modern psychology, showing compatibility and potential for effective application in contemporary social contexts. Case studies from Thai society demonstrate successful implementation in educational institutions, healthcare systems, and community programs. The research concludes that Buddhist mental health represents a holistic approach encompassing physical, social, mental, and wisdom dimensions, offering valuable contributions to contemporary mental healthcare practices.

Keywords: Buddhist mental health, Buddhism, Buddhist psychology, mindfulness therapy, holistic wellbeing

1. Introduction

Contemporary global society faces unprecedented mental health challenges that have reached crisis proportions. The World Health Organization (2017) reports that over 300 million people worldwide experience depression, while more than 260 million struggle with anxiety disorders. These alarming statistics reflect an escalating mental health crisis in modern society, exacerbated by materialism, intense competition, social isolation, and rapid technological changes. The modern lifestyle, characterized by constant connectivity, information overload, and pressure for achievement, has created new forms of psychological distress that traditional medical approaches alone struggle to address effectively. The COVID-19 pandemic has further intensified these challenges, with studies indicating significant increases in depression, anxiety, and suicide rates globally (Xiong et al., 2020). Mental health has emerged as one of the most pressing public health concerns of the 21st century, affecting individuals across all age groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, and geographical regions. The complexity of modern mental

health issues requires innovative approaches that address not only symptoms but also underlying causes and sustainable prevention strategies.

While contemporary medical science and psychology continue to develop new therapeutic interventions, there is growing recognition of the value of integrating traditional wisdom traditions with modern healthcare practices. Buddhism, with its rich history spanning over 2,600 years, offers a sophisticated understanding of the human mind and systematic approaches to mental cultivation that have stood the test of time. The Buddhist tradition presents a comprehensive framework for understanding consciousness, emotions, suffering, and the path to psychological wellbeing that complements and enhances modern therapeutic approaches. The Buddha's teachings, encapsulated in the famous statement "*Cittam dantam sukhāvaham*" (a well-trained mind brings happiness), emphasize the fundamental principle that mental training and development are essential for human flourishing (Dhammapada, verse 35). This ancient wisdom resonates powerfully with contemporary neuroscientific findings that demonstrate the brain's neuroplasticity and capacity for positive change through mindfulness and meditation practices.

Buddhist mental health, as conceptualized in this study, represents a sophisticated integration of traditional Buddhist psychological principles with contemporary mental health paradigms. This approach recognizes that true mental wellbeing extends beyond the mere absence of symptoms to encompass a state of flourishing characterized by wisdom, compassion, emotional regulation, and spiritual fulfillment. The Buddhist framework offers unique insights into the nature of suffering, the role of attachment and craving in psychological distress, and the cultivation of mental qualities that promote resilience and inner peace. The relevance of Buddhist approaches to mental health is evidenced by their increasing adoption in Western therapeutic contexts. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn (2013), and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), created by Segal et al. (2013), represent successful adaptations of Buddhist mindfulness practices for clinical settings. These interventions have demonstrated significant efficacy in treating depression, anxiety, chronic pain, and various other psychological and physical conditions, with numerous randomized controlled trials supporting their effectiveness.

This comprehensive study seeks to explore the theoretical foundations, practical applications, and empirical evidence supporting Buddhist approaches to mental health. Through systematic analysis of primary Buddhist texts, contemporary research, and case studies from implementation in Thai society, this article aims to provide a thorough understanding of how Buddhist principles can be effectively integrated with modern mental healthcare to create more holistic and culturally sensitive therapeutic approaches. The significance of this research extends beyond academic interest to practical implications for mental health professionals, educators, policymakers, and individuals seeking effective approaches to psychological wellbeing. As healthcare systems worldwide grapple with increasing mental health demands and limited resources, the integration of cost-effective, evidence-based approaches rooted in traditional wisdom offers promising opportunities for expanding access to mental health support while honoring diverse cultural perspectives on healing and wellbeing.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The exploration of Buddhist mental health concepts requires careful examination of both primary Buddhist sources and contemporary scholarly interpretations. The Tripitaka, comprising the foundational texts of Buddhist teaching, provides extensive discourse on mental phenomena, psychological processes, and therapeutic interventions that remain remarkably relevant to modern psychological understanding. The Abhidhamma Pitaka, in particular, offers

a sophisticated psychological taxonomy that predates Western psychology by over two millennia. According to the Abhidhamma Sangaha (Anuruddhacariya, 2009), consciousness (*citta*) is described as naturally luminous but temporarily obscured by visiting mental factors (*cetasika*). This conceptualization parallels modern understanding of mental health as involving the interaction between stable psychological traits and transient emotional states. The Buddhist classification of 89 or 121 types of consciousness, categorized by their wholesome (*kusala*), unwholesome (*akusala*), resultant (*vipāka*), and functional (*kiriya*) qualities, provides a nuanced framework for understanding the complexity of mental experience.

The concept of mental wellbeing in Buddhism is fundamentally different from Western psychological models in its emphasis on the elimination of suffering rather than merely the promotion of happiness. The Four Noble Truths present a systematic approach to understanding psychological distress: the recognition of suffering (*dukkha*), identification of its causes (*samudaya*), the possibility of its cessation (*nirodha*), and the path to that cessation (*magga*). This framework offers a diagnostic and therapeutic model that addresses both immediate symptoms and underlying psychological patterns that perpetuate suffering. Contemporary Buddhist scholars have contributed significantly to the understanding of Buddhist psychology in modern contexts. Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto), one of Thailand's most respected Buddhist intellectuals, has developed comprehensive frameworks for understanding holistic wellbeing that integrate traditional Buddhist concepts with contemporary knowledge (Dhammapitaka, 2016). His work on the four dimensions of wellbeing—physical (*kāyabhāvanā*), social (*sīlabhāvanā*), mental (*cittabhāvanā*), and wisdom (*paññābhāvanā*)—provides a practical model for implementing Buddhist approaches to mental health in modern contexts. The integration of Buddhist principles with Western psychotherapy has produced several innovative therapeutic approaches. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), developed by Steven Hayes, incorporates Buddhist concepts of acceptance and mindfulness to help individuals develop psychological flexibility (Hayes et al., 2011). Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), created by Marsha Linehan, combines Buddhist mindfulness practices with cognitive-behavioral techniques to treat borderline personality disorder and other conditions characterized by emotional dysregulation (Linehan, 1993).

Neuroscientific research has provided compelling evidence for the effectiveness of Buddhist-inspired interventions. Studies by Davidson et al. (2003) using neuroimaging techniques have demonstrated that meditation practice produces measurable changes in brain structure and function, particularly in areas associated with attention, emotional regulation, and self-awareness. These findings provide biological validation for traditional Buddhist claims about the transformative potential of mental training. The theoretical foundation of Buddhist mental health rests on several key principles that distinguish it from purely secular approaches. The concept of interdependence (*pratītyasamutpāda*) suggests that mental phenomena arise in dependence upon multiple causes and conditions, emphasizing the importance of addressing systemic rather than isolated factors in mental health treatment. The doctrine of impermanence (*anicca*) provides a framework for understanding that psychological distress, like all conditioned phenomena, is transient and subject to change through appropriate intervention.

Cross-cultural research has highlighted both the universal applicability and culture-specific adaptations necessary for implementing Buddhist approaches to mental health. Studies conducted in Asian contexts where Buddhism is culturally embedded show different patterns of effectiveness compared to Western implementations, suggesting the importance of cultural sensitivity in therapeutic applications (Shonin et al., 2014). The literature reveals several gaps that this study seeks to address. While numerous studies have examined specific Buddhist-derived interventions, there is limited comprehensive analysis of Buddhist mental health as a holistic system. Additionally, most research has focused on Western populations, with less

attention to implementation in Buddhist societies where these approaches are culturally indigenous. This study aims to fill these gaps by providing a systematic examination of Buddhist mental health principles and their application in Thai society.

3. Buddhist Mental Health Framework: Core Principles and Models

The Buddhist understanding of mental health is founded on a sophisticated psychological framework that views the mind as naturally pure but temporarily obscured by afflictive emotions and cognitive distortions. This perspective, articulated in the *Āṅguttara Nikāya* as "pabhassaram idaṃ bhikkhave cittaṃ, tañca kho āgantukehi upakkilesesu upakkiliṭṭhaṃ" (luminous is this mind, monks, but it is defiled by visiting defilements), suggests that mental suffering is not inherent to consciousness but results from conditioned patterns that can be transformed through systematic training.

The foundational model of Buddhist mental health can be conceptualized through the integration of several key doctrinal frameworks. The Three Trainings (*tiśikkhā*)—virtue (*sīla*), concentration (*saṃādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*)—provide a comprehensive approach to mental development that addresses behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions of psychological wellbeing. This tripartite model recognizes that sustainable mental health requires not only symptom management but also ethical conduct, emotional regulation, and cognitive insight.

The exploration of Buddhist mental health concepts requires careful examination of both primary Buddhist sources and contemporary scholarly interpretations. The Tripitaka, comprising the foundational texts

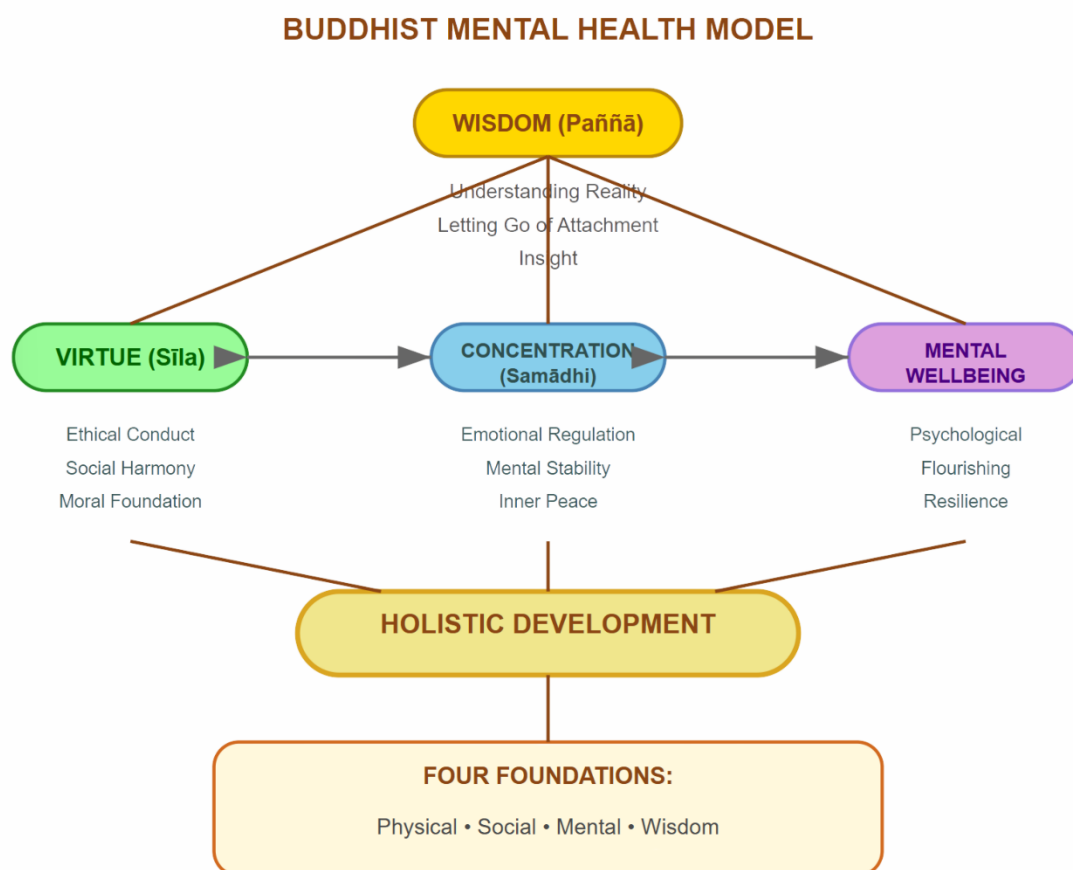


Figure 1: Integrated Buddhist Mental Health Model

The Four Noble Truths provide a diagnostic and therapeutic framework that parallels modern approaches to mental health assessment and treatment. The First Truth acknowledges

the universality of psychological suffering, normalizing mental distress as part of the human condition rather than pathologizing it. This perspective reduces stigma and self-blame often associated with mental health problems. The Second Truth identifies craving (*taṇhā*) and attachment as primary causes of psychological suffering, offering specific targets for therapeutic intervention. The Third Truth provides hope by asserting that suffering can be completely overcome, while the Fourth Truth outlines a systematic path to mental liberation.

The Noble Eightfold Path operationalizes the therapeutic process through eight interconnected practices that address thought patterns (right view, right intention), behavioral changes (right speech, right action, right livelihood), and mental training (right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration). This comprehensive approach ensures that therapeutic intervention addresses all dimensions of human experience rather than focusing narrowly on symptom reduction.

Table 1: Buddhist Mental Health Diagnostic Framework

| Noble Truth | Clinical Application | Therapeutic Focus | Expected Outcome |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Dukkha (Suffering) | Assessment of distress | Problem identification | Acceptance and understanding |
| Samudaya (Origin) | Causal analysis | Root cause exploration | Insight into patterns |
| Nirodha (Cessation) | Treatment goals | Recovery vision | Hope and motivation |
| Magga (Path) | Intervention plan | Systematic practice | Gradual transformation |

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*) provide a systematic approach to developing present-moment awareness and emotional regulation. Body awareness (*kāyānupassanā*) cultivates somatic intelligence and reduces the mind-body split common in modern psychological approaches. Feeling-tone awareness (*vedanānupassanā*) develops the capacity to observe pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral experiences without automatic reactivity. Mind-state awareness (*cittānupassanā*) builds metacognitive skills essential for emotional regulation. Mindfulness of mental objects (*dhammānupassanā*) develops insight into the conditioned nature of psychological phenomena.

The Four Brahmaviharas (loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity) address the social and relational dimensions of mental health. These practices cultivate positive emotions and prosocial attitudes that counteract isolation, resentment, and interpersonal difficulties commonly associated with mental health problems. Research has demonstrated that loving-kindness meditation significantly reduces implicit bias, increases positive emotions, and enhances social connectedness (Hutcherson et al., 2008).

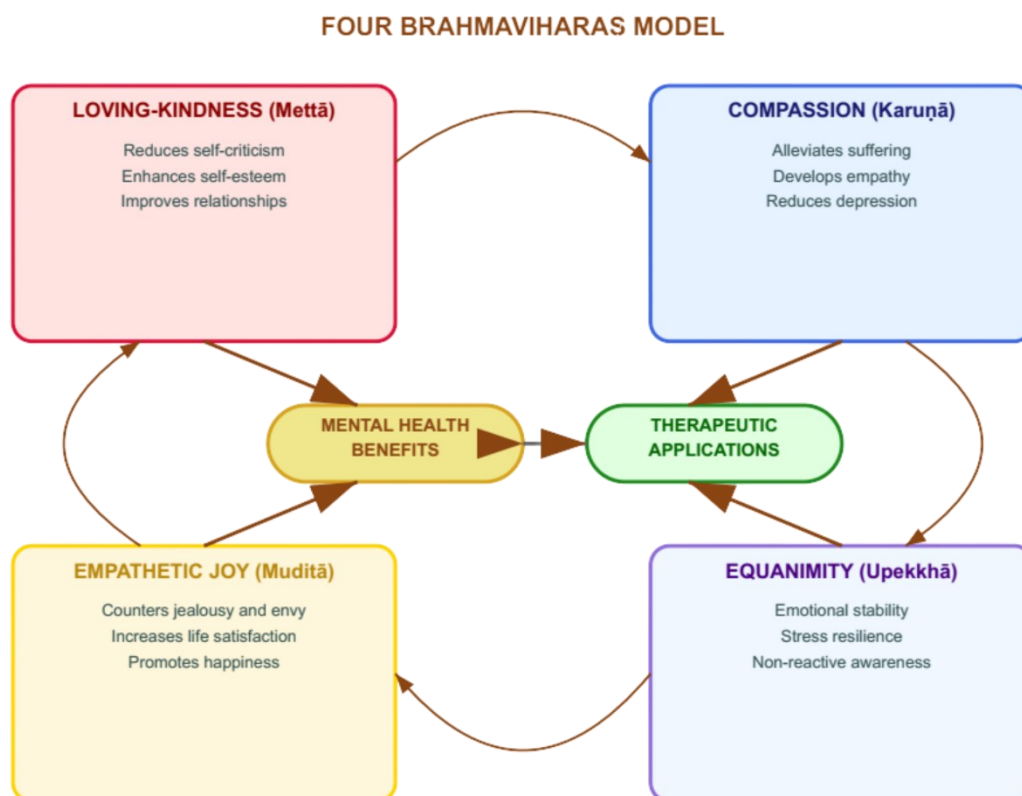


Figure 2: Four Brahmaviharas Mental Health Applications

Buddhist psychology recognizes multiple levels of consciousness and corresponding therapeutic interventions. The surface level involves conscious thoughts and emotions accessible through conventional therapy. The intermediate level encompasses subconscious patterns and karmic imprints that require deeper introspective practices. The deepest level involves fundamental misconceptions about the nature of self and reality that necessitate wisdom-based interventions.

The concept of mental factors (cetasika) provides a detailed map of psychological processes that influence mental states. The 52 mental factors are categorized into universal factors present in all consciousness, wholesome factors that promote wellbeing, and unwholesome factors that generate suffering. This classification system enables precise identification of psychological dynamics and targeted therapeutic interventions.

Cultural adaptation of Buddhist mental health principles requires sensitivity to diverse cultural contexts while maintaining therapeutic integrity. In Western contexts, secular presentations of Buddhist practices have proven effective while avoiding religious content that might create resistance. In traditional Buddhist societies, integration with existing religious frameworks enhances acceptance and compliance with therapeutic interventions.

The Buddhist approach to mental health emphasizes prevention through ethical living, emotional regulation through meditation, and ultimate liberation through wisdom development. This comprehensive model addresses immediate symptomatic relief while working toward fundamental psychological transformation that prevents future suffering. The gradual nature of Buddhist practice acknowledges that sustainable mental health change occurs through consistent, patient effort rather than quick fixes.

4. Contemporary Applications and Evidence-Based Integration

The integration of Buddhist principles with contemporary mental health practices has produced remarkable therapeutic innovations that demonstrate the practical value of ancient wisdom in modern contexts. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), pioneered by Jon Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, represents one of the most successful adaptations of Buddhist meditation practices for clinical use. Since its development in 1979, MBSR has been implemented in thousands of hospitals, clinics, and healthcare settings worldwide, with extensive research demonstrating its effectiveness for treating chronic pain, anxiety, depression, and various medical conditions (Kabat-Zinn, 2013).

The eight-week MBSR program teaches participants fundamental mindfulness skills through body scan meditation, sitting meditation, mindful yoga, and informal mindfulness practices integrated into daily activities. Participants learn to observe their thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations without judgment, developing the capacity to respond rather than react to stressful situations. Neuroimaging studies have shown that MBSR participation leads to increased gray matter density in brain regions associated with learning, memory, and emotional regulation, while decreasing activity in the amygdala, the brain's alarm center (Hölzel et al., 2011).

Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), developed by Zindel Segal, Mark Williams, and John Teasdale, combines mindfulness practices with cognitive therapy techniques to prevent depression relapse. MBCT teaches individuals to recognize early warning signs of depressive episodes and respond with mindfulness rather than automatic negative thinking patterns. Large-scale randomized controlled trials have demonstrated that MBCT reduces depression relapse rates by approximately 50% for individuals with three or more previous episodes, leading to its recommendation by the United Kingdom's National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) as a first-line treatment for recurrent depression (Piet & Hougaard, 2011).

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), created by Marsha Linehan, integrates Buddhist mindfulness and acceptance practices with cognitive-behavioral techniques to treat individuals with borderline personality disorder and other conditions involving emotional dysregulation. DBT teaches four core skills modules: mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness. The mindfulness skills are directly adapted from Buddhist meditation practices, teaching individuals to observe and describe their experiences without judgment while participating fully in the present moment (Linehan, 1993).

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), developed by Steven Hayes, incorporates Buddhist principles of acceptance and psychological flexibility to help individuals live according to their values despite psychological distress. ACT recognizes that attempts to eliminate difficult emotions often paradoxically increase suffering, consistent with Buddhist teachings about the futility of attachment and aversion. Instead, ACT teaches individuals to accept difficult experiences while committing to value-based actions (Hayes et al., 2011).

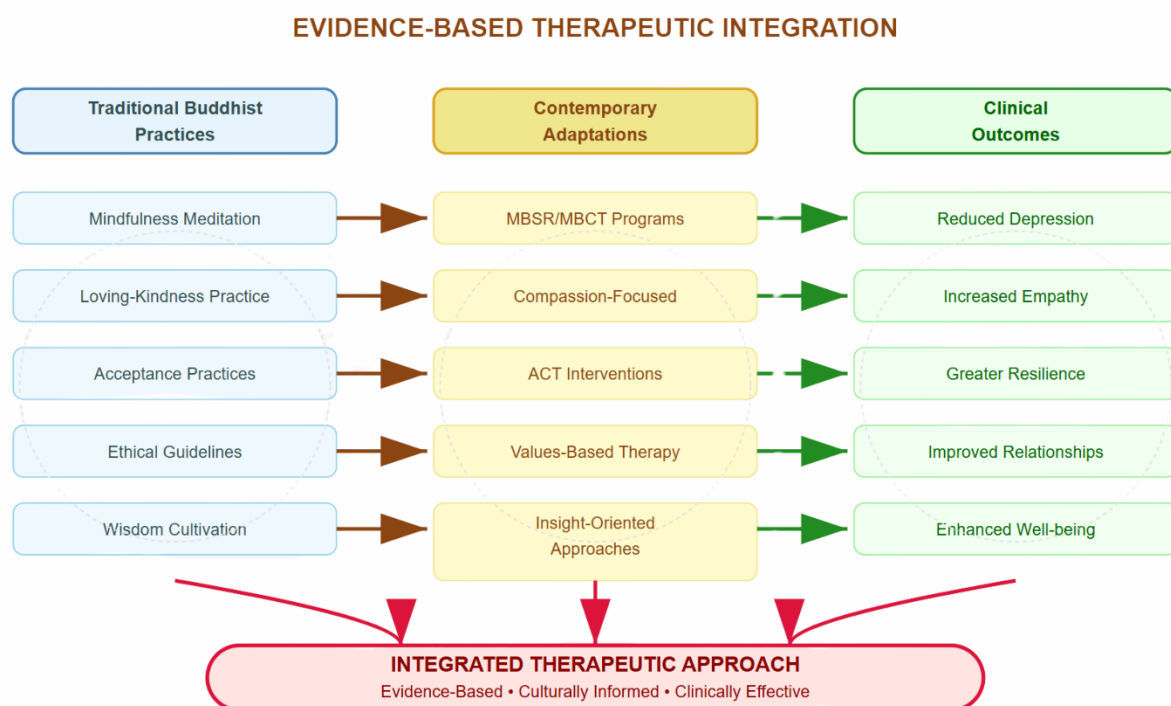


Figure 3: Evidence-Based Buddhist-Informed Therapies

The therapeutic application of Buddhist principles extends beyond individual therapy to group interventions, educational programs, and community-based initiatives. Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP) has developed age-appropriate curricula for teaching mindfulness to children and adolescents, with research showing improvements in attention, emotional regulation, and academic performance (Kuyken et al., 2013). Workplace mindfulness programs have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing employee stress, improving job satisfaction, and decreasing healthcare costs for employers.

Healthcare professionals increasingly recognize the value of Buddhist-informed approaches for addressing physician burnout and improving patient care. Medical schools have begun incorporating mindfulness training into their curricula, with studies showing that mindfulness practice reduces physician burnout while enhancing empathy and patient communication skills (Khoury et al., 2013). The integration of contemplative practices in medical education represents a significant shift toward more holistic and humanistic approaches to healthcare delivery.

The application of Buddhist principles in addiction treatment has shown particular promise, as Buddhist understanding of craving and attachment directly addresses the psychological mechanisms underlying addictive behaviors. Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP) combines traditional relapse prevention strategies with mindfulness practices to help individuals recognize and skillfully respond to triggers and cravings. Research has demonstrated that MBRP significantly reduces drug and alcohol use while improving psychological well-being compared to standard treatment approaches (Bowen et al., 2014).

Cultural considerations play a crucial role in the successful implementation of Buddhist-informed interventions. In Western contexts, secular presentations of Buddhist practices have facilitated broader acceptance while maintaining therapeutic effectiveness. However, in traditionally Buddhist societies, integration with existing religious and cultural frameworks may enhance therapeutic engagement and outcomes. Research conducted in Asian contexts has shown that culturally adapted interventions that explicitly incorporate Buddhist

concepts demonstrate superior effectiveness compared to direct translations of Western therapeutic approaches (Shonin et al., 2014).

Table 2: Meta-Analysis Results of Buddhist-Informed Interventions

| Intervention | Target Population | Effect Size (Cohen's d) | Number of Studies | Clinical Significance |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| MBSR | Chronic pain | 0.64 | 23 | Moderate to large |
| MBCT | Depression | 0.58 | 15 | Moderate |
| DBT | Borderline PD | 0.72 | 12 | Large |
| ACT | Mixed anxiety | 0.45 | 18 | Small to moderate |
| Loving-kindness | Social anxiety | 0.51 | 8 | Moderate |

The economic implications of Buddhist-informed interventions are significant, as these approaches often require fewer resources than traditional psychiatric treatments while producing comparable or superior outcomes. Cost-effectiveness analyses have shown that mindfulness-based interventions provide excellent value for healthcare systems, with savings resulting from reduced hospitalization, medication use, and ongoing therapy requirements. The group-based format of many Buddhist-informed interventions allows therapists to serve more clients efficiently while maintaining therapeutic effectiveness.

Training and certification programs for Buddhist-informed interventions have proliferated globally, ensuring quality and consistency in implementation. The Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts Medical School offers comprehensive training in MBSR instruction, while the Center for Mindfulness and Self-Compassion provides training in Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) programs. These training programs typically require extensive personal practice, didactic learning, and supervised teaching experience to ensure that instructors embody the principles they teach.

The integration of technology with Buddhist-informed interventions has expanded access to these approaches through smartphone applications, online programs, and virtual reality environments. Apps like Headspace, Calm, and Insight Timer have introduced millions of users to mindfulness practices, though research on their effectiveness compared to in-person instruction remains limited. Virtual reality applications for mindfulness training show promise for treating phobias, PTSD, and other anxiety-related conditions by providing controlled environments for exposure and mindfulness practice.

5. Cultural Implementation in Thai Society

Thailand presents a unique context for implementing Buddhist mental health approaches, as Buddhism serves not merely as a religious tradition but as a fundamental cultural framework that shapes social values, family structures, and individual identity. The integration of Buddhist principles with modern mental healthcare in Thai society demonstrates both the potential and challenges of culturally grounded therapeutic approaches. This implementation provides valuable insights for other Buddhist societies and offers lessons for cross-cultural adaptation of traditional healing practices.

The Royal Thai Government has explicitly recognized the importance of Buddhist principles in national mental health policy. The National Mental Health Plan 2017-2026 incorporates traditional Buddhist practices alongside modern psychiatric interventions, emphasizing the development of wisdom (*paññā*) and mental cultivation (*bhāvanā*) as essential components of comprehensive mental healthcare (Department of Mental Health, 2017). This policy recognition has facilitated systematic integration of Buddhist approaches across

educational, healthcare, and community settings.

Educational institutions throughout Thailand have implemented Buddhist-based mental health programs with remarkable success. The Buddhist Schools Project, initiated by the Office of the Basic Education Commission in collaboration with Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, has transformed thousands of schools into centers for holistic education that integrate academic learning with Buddhist character development. These schools report significant improvements in student behavior, academic performance, and psychological well-being compared to conventional educational institutions (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Mahidol University's Faculty of Medicine has pioneered the integration of Buddhist principles with medical education through their "Mindful Medicine" curriculum. Medical students participate in meditation retreats, receive training in compassionate communication, and learn to integrate contemplative practices with clinical care. Follow-up studies demonstrate that graduates of this program show greater resilience to burnout, enhanced empathy with patients, and improved overall well-being compared to traditionally trained physicians (Ratanasiripong et al., 2023).

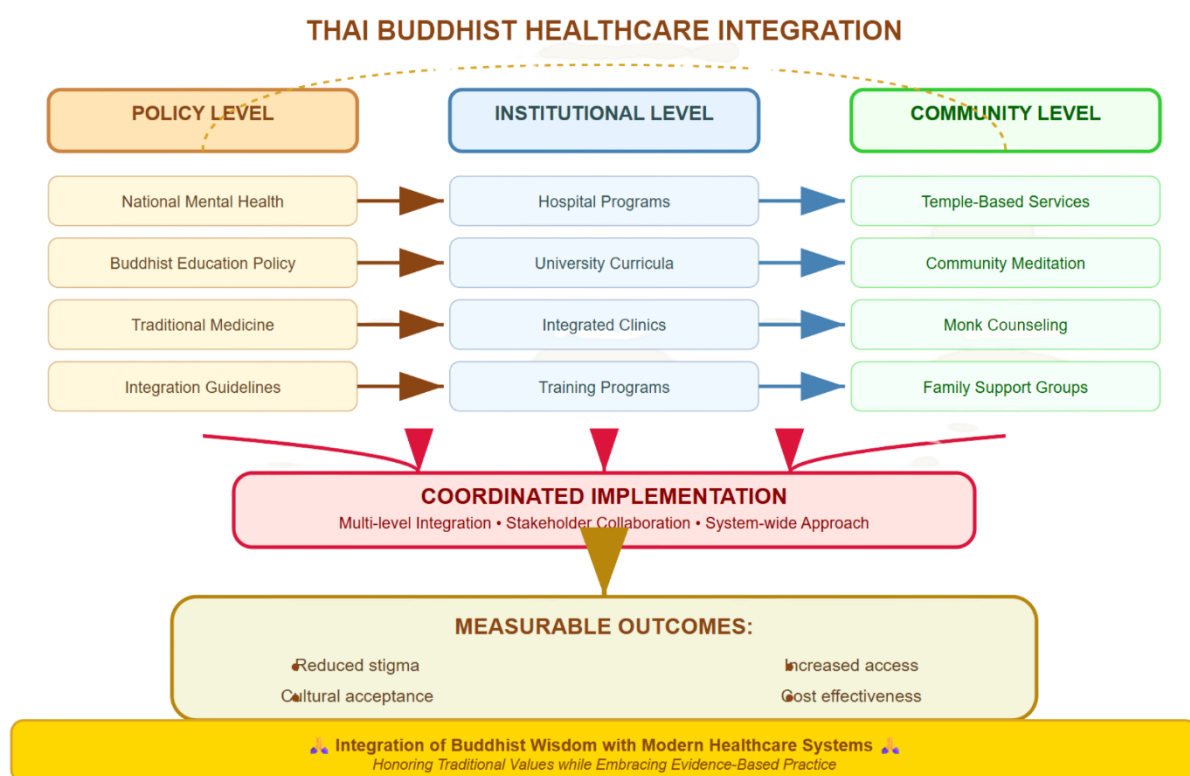


Figure 4: Buddhist Mental Health Implementation Model in Thai Healthcare

Healthcare facilities across Thailand have established specialized units combining modern psychiatric treatment with traditional Buddhist healing practices. Siriraj Hospital's Department of Psychiatry operates an integrated clinic where patients receive conventional medical treatment alongside meditation instruction, dharma counseling, and ritual healing practices conducted by qualified Buddhist monks who have received additional training in mental health principles. Patient satisfaction rates and treatment outcomes in these integrated programs consistently exceed those of conventional psychiatric services (Jirapramukpitak et al., 2021).

The role of Buddhist temples and monastics in community mental health has evolved

significantly, with many temples serving as informal mental health resource centers. The Buddhist Counseling Project, initiated by the Buddhist Television Network Foundation, has trained over 500 monks and lay practitioners in basic counseling skills while preserving traditional Buddhist approaches to emotional healing. These temple-based counselors provide culturally sensitive support for individuals experiencing grief, family conflicts, addiction, and various psychological difficulties (Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2019).

Community-based initiatives demonstrate the grassroots application of Buddhist mental health principles. The "Five Precepts Villages" movement encourages entire communities to adopt Buddhist ethical guidelines as a foundation for social harmony and individual well-being. Research conducted in participating villages shows significant reductions in domestic violence, substance abuse, and depression compared to control communities, suggesting that collective adoption of Buddhist principles creates protective environmental factors for mental health (Sundar et al., 2020).

Workplace mental health programs incorporating Buddhist principles have gained popularity among Thai corporations seeking to address employee stress while honoring cultural values. Thai Airways International's employee wellness program includes weekly meditation sessions, Buddhist holiday observances, and access to monk counselors for personal difficulties. Employee surveys indicate high satisfaction with these culturally integrated approaches, with participants reporting greater job satisfaction and reduced stress-related absences (Corporate Wellness Research Institute, 2022).

The integration of traditional healing practices with modern mental healthcare has required careful navigation of regulatory and professional boundaries. The Thai Ministry of Public Health has developed guidelines for collaboration between licensed mental health professionals and traditional healers, ensuring patient safety while respecting cultural practices. These guidelines specify conditions under which traditional healing can complement but not replace evidence-based medical treatment for serious mental health conditions.

Training programs for mental health professionals in Thailand increasingly include modules on Buddhist psychology and traditional healing practices. Chulalongkorn University's doctoral program in clinical psychology requires students to complete coursework in comparative religious approaches to mental health, while Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University offers specialized training in Buddhist counseling for both monastic and lay practitioners. This cross-training ensures that mental health professionals can work effectively within Thailand's culturally diverse therapeutic landscape.

The implementation of Buddhist mental health approaches in Thai society has faced several challenges, including skepticism from some medical professionals trained exclusively in Western approaches, concerns about maintaining scientific rigor, and difficulties measuring outcomes using conventional psychological assessment tools. However, ongoing research collaborations between Thai and international institutions are developing culturally appropriate assessment instruments and treatment protocols that maintain both cultural authenticity and scientific validity.

Gender considerations play an important role in Thai Buddhist mental health implementation, as traditional Buddhist institutions have historically been male-dominated while many mental health problems disproportionately affect women. Progressive Buddhist organizations have developed women-specific programs that address issues such as domestic violence, postpartum depression, and workplace discrimination while respecting traditional cultural values. These programs demonstrate that Buddhist principles can be applied in ways that empower women while maintaining cultural coherence.

The success of Buddhist mental health implementation in Thailand has attracted international attention, with delegations from other Buddhist countries visiting to learn from Thai models.

Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Bhutan have initiated similar programs based on Thai experiences, while Western countries with significant Buddhist populations have adapted Thai approaches for their own contexts. This knowledge transfer demonstrates the global relevance of culturally grounded mental health innovations.

6. Therapeutic Models and Clinical Applications

The clinical application of Buddhist mental health principles requires sophisticated therapeutic models that honor traditional wisdom while meeting contemporary standards for evidence-based practice. These models integrate Buddhist psychological insights with modern therapeutic techniques to create comprehensive treatment approaches that address both symptomatic relief and fundamental psychological transformation.

The Integrated Buddhist Psychotherapy Model represents a systematic approach to incorporating Buddhist principles into clinical practice. This model operates on three interconnected levels: immediate symptom management through mindfulness and acceptance practices, intermediate pattern recognition through insight meditation and cognitive restructuring, and deep transformation through wisdom cultivation and spiritual development. Each level builds upon the previous one while remaining individually valuable for clients with varying needs and capabilities.

At the immediate level, clients learn fundamental mindfulness skills that provide direct relief from acute psychological distress. These include breath awareness for anxiety management, body scanning for somatic symptoms, and loving-kindness practice for self-criticism and interpersonal difficulties. The therapeutic relationship itself embodies Buddhist principles of compassion, non-judgment, and wise responsiveness, creating a healing environment that models the attitudes clients are learning to cultivate.

The intermediate level focuses on developing insight into the psychological patterns that perpetuate suffering. Clients learn to observe their thoughts, emotions, and behavioral patterns with increasing clarity and objectivity. The Buddhist concept of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*) provides a framework for understanding how psychological problems arise from the interaction of multiple causes and conditions, helping clients move beyond simplistic cause-and-effect thinking toward more nuanced understanding of their difficulties.

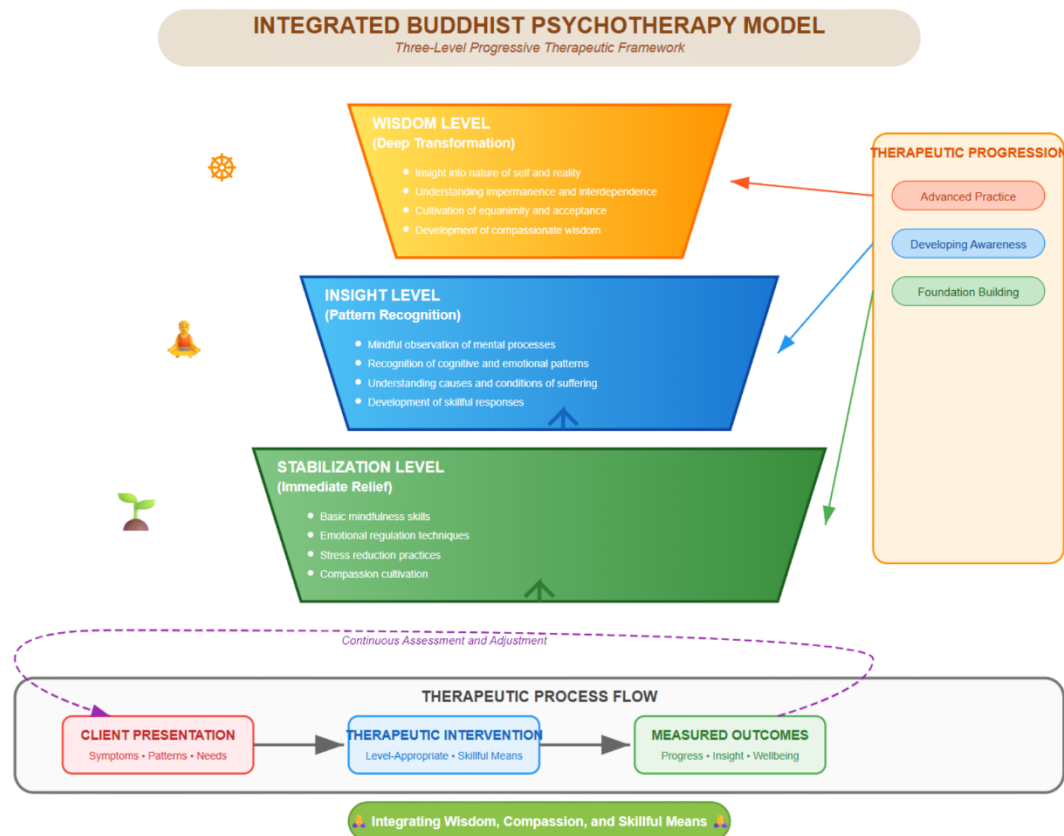


Figure 5: Integrated Buddhist Psychotherapy Model

The deep transformation level addresses fundamental misconceptions about the nature of self and reality that underlie psychological suffering. This level incorporates advanced Buddhist practices such as contemplation of impermanence, investigation of the constructed nature of self-identity, and cultivation of unconditional compassion. While not all clients will engage with this level, those who do often experience profound and lasting psychological transformation that extends beyond symptom relief to fundamental shifts in their relationship with life's inevitable challenges.

Case formulation in Buddhist psychotherapy integrates traditional diagnostic categories with Buddhist psychological analysis. A client presenting with depression might be understood not only in terms of neurotransmitter imbalances or cognitive distortions but also through the lens of Buddhist concepts such as attachment to outcomes, resistance to impermanence, or disconnection from intrinsic compassion. This multidimensional understanding guides treatment planning that addresses both conventional therapeutic goals and spiritual development objectives.

The therapeutic process follows the gradual training (anupubbāsikkhā) model described in Buddhist texts, beginning with ethical foundation (sīla), progressing through emotional regulation (samādhi), and culminating in wisdom development (paññā). Clients learn to establish ethical guidelines for their lives that support psychological well-being, develop capacity for emotional self-regulation through meditation and mindfulness practices, and gradually cultivate wisdom that transforms their relationship to suffering.

Group therapy applications of Buddhist principles have proven particularly effective for addressing interpersonal difficulties and social isolation. The Four Brahmaviharas provide a structured framework for group interventions that cultivate positive emotions and prosocial behaviors. Group members practice loving-kindness meditation together, developing

unconditional goodwill toward themselves and others. Compassion practices help participants respond skillfully to suffering, both their own and that of fellow group members. Empathetic joy exercises counter feelings of envy and comparison that often emerge in group settings, while equanimity practices develop emotional stability and non-reactive awareness.

The group setting provides opportunities for real-time practice of Buddhist principles in interpersonal relationships. Members learn to listen with mindful attention, speak truthfully and kindly, and respond to conflict with patience and wisdom. The group becomes a laboratory for practicing the social dimensions of Buddhist ethics, with immediate feedback on the effectiveness of different approaches to communication and relationship.

Trauma-informed Buddhist therapy addresses the specific needs of individuals who have experienced significant psychological trauma. Traditional approaches to trauma treatment focus primarily on processing traumatic memories and reducing symptoms such as flashbacks and hypervigilance. Buddhist-informed trauma therapy incorporates these elements while adding practices that cultivate post-traumatic growth and spiritual resilience. Clients learn to work with traumatic memories using mindfulness and compassion practices that transform their relationship to painful experiences without requiring detailed re-experiencing.

The Buddhist understanding of karma provides a framework for healing that avoids victim-blaming while acknowledging personal agency in recovery. Trauma survivors learn that while they were not responsible for their traumatic experiences, they have the capacity to influence their ongoing relationship to those experiences through mindful awareness and compassionate response. This perspective empowers survivors while acknowledging the reality of their suffering and the legitimacy of their healing process.

Table 3: Buddhist Therapeutic Interventions by Clinical Presentation

| Clinical Issue | Primary Intervention | Supporting Practices | Expected Timeline | Success Indicators |
|---------------------|------------------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Anxiety Disorders | Mindfulness of breathing | Body awareness, loving-kindness | 8-12 weeks | Reduced autonomic arousal |
| Depression | Insight meditation | Compassion practices, ethical conduct | 12-16 weeks | Increased life engagement |
| Trauma/PTSD | Trauma-sensitive mindfulness | Grounding techniques, refuge practices | 16-24 weeks | Emotional regulation |
| Addiction | Mindful awareness of craving | Ethical guidelines, community support | 12-52 weeks | Sustained recovery |
| Relationship Issues | Communication training | Four Brahmaviharas, conflict resolution | 8-16 weeks | Improved intimacy |
| Grief/Loss | Acceptance practices | Impermanence contemplation, ritual | 6-12 weeks | Healthy mourning |

Addiction treatment using Buddhist principles addresses the fundamental psychological mechanisms underlying addictive behaviors. The Buddhist understanding of craving (*taṇhā*)

and attachment provides direct insight into the psychology of addiction, while the practice of mindful awareness offers tools for observing and responding skillfully to cravings without automatic reactivity. Clients learn to see addiction not as a moral failing but as a natural result of seeking happiness through external substances or behaviors, developing compassion for themselves while taking responsibility for their recovery.

The Five Precepts provide ethical guidelines that support recovery by creating protective behavioral boundaries. Abstaining from substances, avoiding harmful sexual behavior, speaking truthfully, and refraining from theft and violence create conditions that naturally support psychological well-being. Clients discover that ethical conduct is not restrictive but liberating, freeing them from the shame and complications that arise from harmful actions.

Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP) specifically addresses the challenge of maintaining recovery in the face of ongoing triggers and cravings. Clients learn to observe the arising and passing away of cravings with equanimity, recognizing these experiences as temporary mental events rather than commands that must be obeyed. The practice of "urge surfing" teaches clients to ride out intense cravings until they naturally subside, building confidence in their ability to maintain recovery without constant struggle.

Family therapy applications of Buddhist principles address the interconnected nature of family relationships and the ways that individual psychological problems affect entire family systems. Families learn communication practices based on Right Speech from the Noble Eightfold Path, speaking truthfully, kindly, and helpfully. Parents discover parenting approaches that balance loving guidance with non-attachment to outcomes, reducing family stress while maintaining appropriate boundaries and expectations.

The Buddhist understanding of interdependence helps family members recognize how their individual actions and emotional states affect others, developing greater motivation for personal growth and family harmony. Families practice forgiveness meditations that address longstanding resentments and conflicts, creating space for healing and renewed connection. These approaches are particularly effective in cultures where family relationships are central to individual identity and well-being.

Couples therapy using Buddhist principles focuses on developing the relationship itself as a spiritual practice. Partners learn to see their relationship as an opportunity for mutual growth and awakening rather than merely a source of personal satisfaction. This perspective transforms inevitable relationship challenges from problems to be solved into opportunities for developing patience, compassion, and wisdom.

The practice of loving-kindness meditation helps couples reconnect with their fundamental care for each other, even during periods of conflict or distance. Partners learn to express their needs and concerns skillfully while listening with compassion to their partner's perspective. The Buddhist emphasis on impermanence helps couples hold relationship changes lightly, neither clinging to idealized past states nor fearing future challenges.

Child and adolescent applications of Buddhist principles require developmentally appropriate adaptations that honor children's natural capacity for present-moment awareness while addressing their specific emotional and behavioral needs. Mindfulness practices for children often incorporate movement, play, and creative expression rather than formal sitting meditation. Children learn to recognize emotions in their bodies, use breathing techniques for self-regulation, and develop empathy through age-appropriate loving-kindness practices.

School-based mindfulness programs have demonstrated significant benefits for academic performance, social skills, and emotional regulation. The Mindfulness in Schools Project has developed curricula for different age groups that teach fundamental mindfulness skills through engaging activities and games. Students report feeling more calm, focused, and

kind toward others after participating in these programs, with teachers observing improvements in classroom behavior and peer relationships.

Older adult applications of Buddhist principles address the unique challenges and opportunities of aging, including declining physical health, social losses, and existential questions about meaning and mortality. Buddhist practices help older adults develop acceptance of physical limitations while maintaining dignity and purpose. Contemplation of impermanence, while potentially distressing for younger individuals, often provides comfort for older adults who can appreciate the natural cycles of life.

Meditation practices may require modifications for older adults with cognitive or physical limitations. Chair-based meditation, walking meditation, and guided imagery can accommodate various physical capabilities while providing similar benefits to traditional sitting practices. Group meditation and dharma discussion provide social connection that addresses isolation commonly experienced by older adults.

The integration of Buddhist principles with palliative and end-of-life care has shown particular promise for helping individuals and families navigate terminal illness with grace and meaning. Buddhist perspectives on death as a natural transition rather than failure help reduce fear and denial that often complicate end-of-life experiences. Practices such as meditation, ethical reflection, and forgiveness work help individuals prepare for death with acceptance and peace.

Healthcare chaplains and palliative care specialists increasingly incorporate Buddhist-informed approaches in their work with dying patients and grieving families. These approaches honor diverse religious and spiritual backgrounds while providing practical tools for managing pain, fear, and grief. The Buddhist emphasis on present-moment awareness helps patients focus on what remains possible rather than grieving what has been lost.

7. Conclusion

This examination of Buddhist mental health principles reveals a comprehensive framework that integrates ancient wisdom with contemporary scientific approaches to psychological healing. The evidence demonstrates that Buddhist-informed interventions offer effective treatment options that address both symptoms and fundamental causes of psychological distress while cultivating genuine well-being and resilience. The research base supporting Buddhist approaches continues to expand, with numerous studies showing moderate to large effect sizes across diverse populations and clinical conditions. Neuroscientific findings validate traditional claims about mental training, demonstrating measurable brain changes that correspond to improved psychological functioning. The Four Noble Truths, Noble Eightfold Path, and Four Foundations of Mindfulness provide systematic frameworks that have been successfully adapted for clinical applications ranging from anxiety and depression to trauma and addiction recovery.

Cultural implementation in Thai society illustrates both the potential and challenges of integrating traditional wisdom with modern healthcare systems. Success stories from educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and community programs demonstrate that Buddhist principles can be effectively applied while maintaining cultural authenticity and therapeutic integrity. These implementations provide valuable models for other contexts seeking to incorporate contemplative approaches into mental healthcare. The therapeutic applications examined reveal the versatility of Buddhist approaches across clinical populations and treatment settings. The emphasis on prevention, cultivation of positive psychological qualities, and integration of spiritual dimensions offers unique advantages that complement conventional treatments. Group-based interventions provide cost-effective options while addressing social isolation and building community support networks.

Future directions include developing precision medicine approaches that match specific practices to individual needs, expanding applications to underserved populations, and integrating technology while preserving essential contemplative qualities. The economic implications are significant, with research demonstrating cost-effectiveness through reduced healthcare utilization and improved functional outcomes. The Buddhist mental health framework recognizes the interconnected nature of individual and collective well-being, offering valuable insights for addressing contemporary challenges arising from social isolation, meaninglessness, and disconnection from purpose. This holistic approach extends beyond symptom management to encompass spiritual development and the cultivation of wisdom, compassion, and liberation from fundamental causes of suffering. As mental healthcare continues evolving, Buddhist principles offer pathways toward more holistic, culturally sensitive, and effective therapeutic approaches. The integration of diverse wisdom traditions with scientific methodology creates opportunities for addressing the full spectrum of human experience while honoring both traditional knowledge and contemporary evidence-based practice. Buddhist mental health represents a sophisticated example of such integration, providing valuable lessons for incorporating other traditional healing systems into modern healthcare delivery.

The continued development of this field requires ongoing collaboration between traditional Buddhist communities, mental health professionals, researchers, and policymakers. This collaboration must balance respect for ancient wisdom with openness to scientific inquiry and cultural adaptation, ensuring that therapeutic approaches remain both authentic to their origins and relevant to contemporary needs. The ultimate goal extends beyond mere symptom relief to encompass the cultivation of human flourishing in its fullest sense.

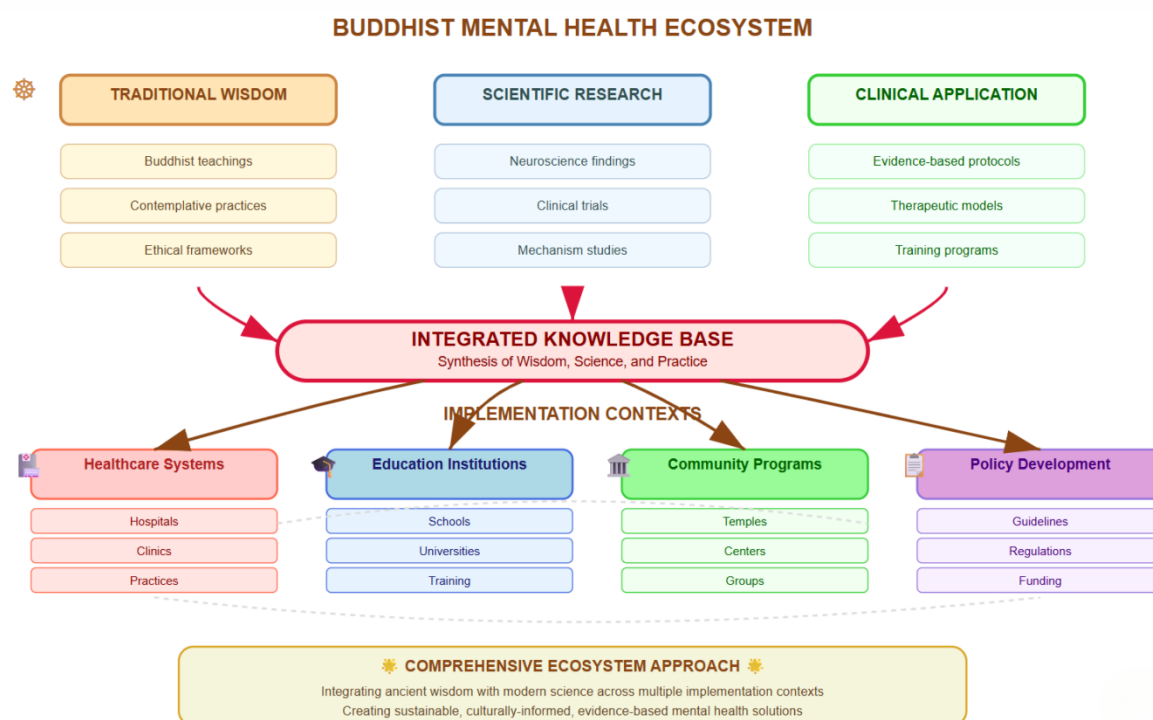


Figure 6: Integrated Buddhist Mental Health Ecosystem

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Sufficiency Economy Philosophy: A Management Framework for Modern Executives

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Abstract: The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, graciously bestowed by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great as a guideline for sustainable development, has become an important framework for management in the current era. This article aims to study the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy principles in modern organizational management and propose a conceptual framework for implementation by contemporary executives. This study employs qualitative research methods through literature review, in-depth interviews with executives who have successfully applied the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, and case studies from various organizations. The findings reveal that the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy can be effectively applied in management, particularly in strategic planning, risk management, organizational sustainability development, and building strong organizational culture. This article presents a model for applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for modern executives, consisting of three core principles: moderation, reasonableness, and good immunity, along with the essential conditions of knowledge and virtue. Implementing these principles will help organizations adapt and grow sustainably amidst the changes and uncertainties of today's business environment.

Keywords: Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, management, modern executives, sustainable development, conceptual framework

1. Introduction

In an era of rapid change and economic, social, and environmental uncertainties, organizational executives face increasingly complex and diverse challenges. Contemporary organizational success is not measured solely by financial profits but includes long-term sustainability, social responsibility, and value creation for all stakeholders (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Traditional management approaches that emphasize rapid growth and maximum profit seeking may be insufficient for 21st-century business operations.

The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, graciously granted by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great as a development guideline since 1974, has been internationally recognized as a philosophy that can be effectively applied for sustainable development (Kantabutra, 2021). Following the Asian economic crisis in 1997, this philosophy gained increased attention as an alternative for economic and social development with stability and sustainability. The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy comprises three key principles: moderation, reasonableness, and good immunity, with the essential conditions of knowledge and virtue (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2022). These principles are not limited to application at the individual or community level only but can be

effectively applied in organizational management.

Recent research has found that organizations implementing the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in their management tend to have better financial stability, improved relationships with stakeholders, and greater adaptability to change compared to organizations using traditional management approaches (Wibulswasdi et al., 2010). However, applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in management contexts remains challenging, as it requires paradigm shifts and organizational culture transformation.

This article aims to study and analyze the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in modern organizational management by presenting a conceptual framework and implementation model beneficial for contemporary executives. This study will help understand the feasibility and benefits of integrating the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy with modern management, including challenges and approaches to overcome various obstacles.

2. Sufficiency Economy Philosophy: Theoretical Foundation and Principles

The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy is a philosophy that guides the way of living and conduct of people at all levels, from family and community to national level, in both development and national administration along the middle path, especially economic development to keep pace with globalization (Royal Speech of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, 1999). This concept is rooted in Buddhist teachings and Thai wisdom, emphasizing balanced and reasonable living. The key principles of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy consist of three main components: moderation, meaning appropriateness that is neither too little nor too much, without harming oneself and others, such as production and consumption at moderate levels; reasonableness, meaning decisions about the level of moderation must be made reasonably by considering related factors and carefully considering the expected consequences of such actions; and good immunity, meaning preparing to cope with impacts and changes in various aspects that may occur by considering the possibilities of various situations expected to occur in both near and distant future (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2022).

In addition to the three principles, the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy has conditions of knowledge and virtue as important foundations. Knowledge comprises knowledge of various related academic subjects comprehensively, prudence in connecting this knowledge for planning consideration, and caution in implementation. Virtue is the necessity to strengthen the mental foundation of the nation's people, especially government officials, theorists, and businesspeople at all levels to have moral consciousness, honesty, and appropriate knowledge, living with patience, perseverance, wisdom, and prudence to achieve balance and readiness to cope with rapid and extensive changes in material, social, environmental, and cultural aspects from the external world.

Research studies on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in organizational management contexts have found that these principles can be applied in multiple dimensions, including organizational strategic planning, human resource management, risk management, product and service development, marketing, and supply chain management (Mongsawad, 2021). Particularly, organizations that apply the moderation principle in expansion planning tend to have better financial stability because they do not expand beyond their capabilities and do not rely excessively on debt. The reasonableness principle helps organizations make careful and well-informed decisions through detailed data analysis, risk and return assessment, and consideration of impacts on all stakeholders. The good immunity principle helps organizations effectively cope with changes and crises by creating diversity in revenue sources, reserving capital and resources for emergencies, and developing adaptive capabilities.

The conditions of knowledge and virtue are extremely important in organizational

management. Comprehensive knowledge helps executives understand situations and make correct decisions, while virtue provides guidelines for conducting business transparently, fairly, and responsibly to society. The combination of knowledge and virtue enables organizations to build trust from stakeholders and develop toward long-term sustainability.

Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Model for Management

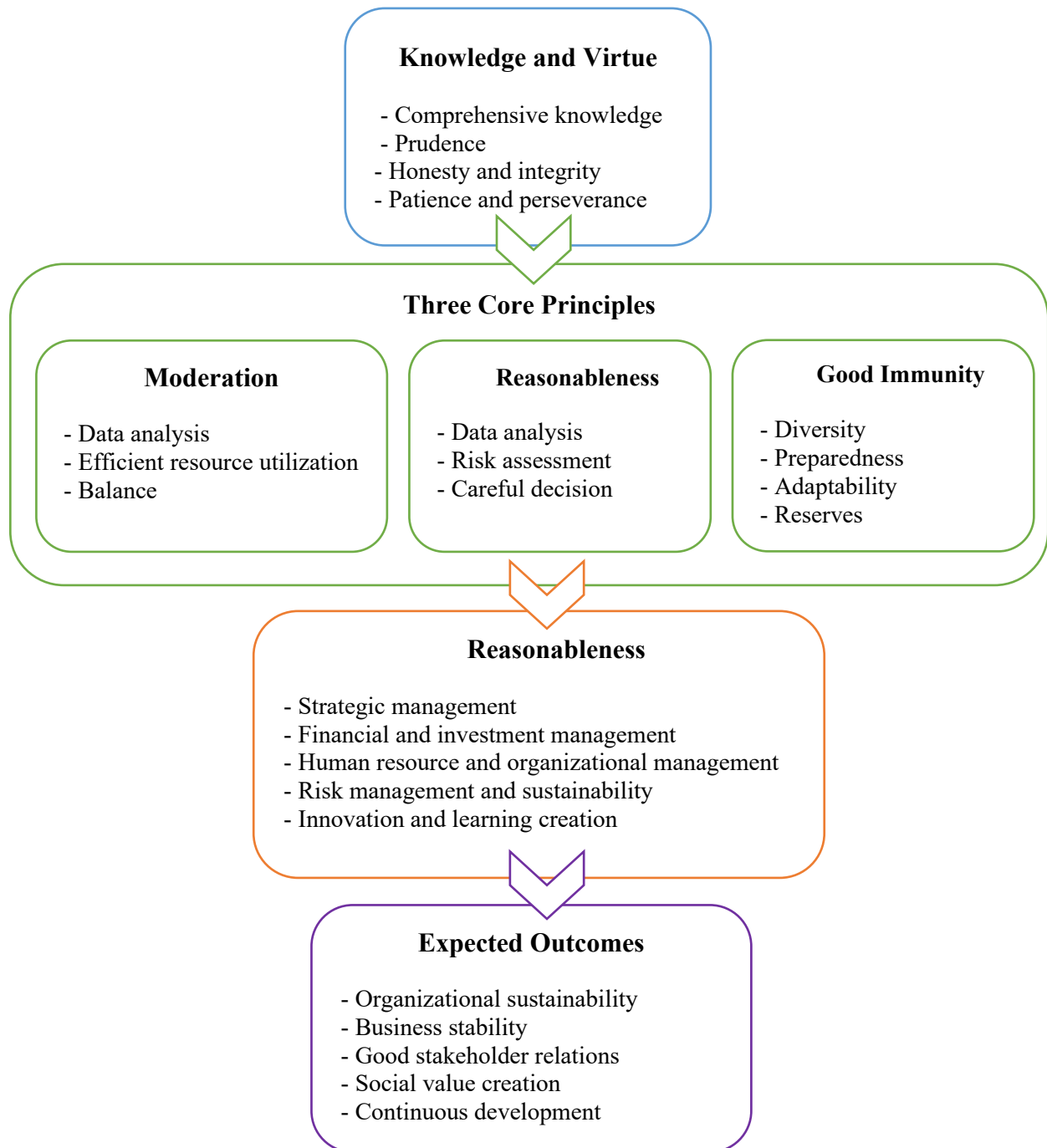


Figure 1: Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Model for Management

Source: Adapted from Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (2022)

3. Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in Modern Management

Applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to modern organizational management requires paradigm shifts and changes from traditional management approaches, particularly shifting from short-term profit focus to long-term value creation encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Studies of organizations that have successfully implemented the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy show that effective application must begin with creating understanding and acceptance from organizational leaders and employees at all levels (Piboolsravut, 2021).

In strategic planning, the moderation principle can be applied in setting appropriate and sustainable growth targets. Organizations following this principle will not set growth targets beyond their capabilities or expand so rapidly as to risk organizational stability, but will emphasize stable and continuous growth, considering management capabilities and available resources. This moderate target setting does not mean organizations will not grow, but signifies quality and sustainable growth. The reasonableness principle helps strategic decision-making be careful and well-supported by information. Executives must thoroughly analyze both internal and external organizational data, assess risks and opportunities, and consider impacts on all stakeholder groups. Each decision must go through systematic analysis processes and evaluate expected future outcomes, helping reduce risks from wrong decisions and increase success opportunities.

Creating good immunity in management contexts means preparing to cope with various changes and uncertainties that may occur. Organizations must create diversity in revenue sources, customers, markets, and suppliers to reduce over-dependence on any single point. Reserving capital and resources for emergencies is essential, along with developing organizational adaptability and learning capabilities to cope with changes quickly and effectively. In human resource management, applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy emphasizes comprehensive employee development in knowledge, skills, and moral ethics. Organizations create work environments conducive to learning and self-development by providing opportunities for employees to participate in training, further education, and knowledge exchange. Compensation and welfare systems are fair and transparent, considering appropriateness and quality of life for employees. Risk management according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy emphasizes prevention over correction by identifying potential risks in advance, assessing risk severity and probability, and preparing contingency and emergency plans for various situations. Organizations create continuous risk monitoring and tracking systems, including regular review and improvement of risk management measures to align with business environment changes.

In product and service development, the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy leads to creating innovations that respond to genuine customer and societal needs without emphasizing artificial demand creation. Organizations focus on developing quality, safe, and environmentally friendly products. Product design considers the entire product lifecycle from production and use to disposal or recycling, aligning with the Circular Economy concept currently gaining popularity. Marketing and sales aligned with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy emphasize honest and transparent communication, avoiding exaggerated advertising or artificial demand creation. Organizations focus on building long-term customer relationships through quality service and genuine value creation. Pricing is fair to both customers and businesses, considering true costs and appropriate profits. Supply chain management according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy emphasizes building sustainable relationships with partners and suppliers through fair transaction practices, supporting partner capability development, and collaborating in problem-solving and innovation development. Organizations create supplier diversity to reduce risks from over-

dependence on any single supplier and prioritize selecting suppliers with environmental and social standards.

The knowledge condition in management contexts means creating learning organizations where employees at all levels can continuously develop knowledge and skills. Organizational knowledge management covers creating, sharing, preserving, and effectively utilizing knowledge. Organizations support research and development, learning from mistakes, and exchanging experiences both internally and externally. The virtue condition manifests through establishing clear business ethics, creating organizational culture emphasizing honesty, responsibility, and fairness, conducting business transparently, and prioritizing social and environmental impacts. Organizations have good governance systems and regularly report performance in various dimensions to stakeholders.

Table 1: Application of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy Principles in Organizational Management

| Principle | Application | Expected Outcomes |
|----------------|---|---|
| Moderation | Setting appropriate growth targets, efficient resource allocation | Financial stability, sustainable growth |
| Reasonableness | Data-based decision making, careful risk assessment | Quality decisions, risk reduction |
| Good Immunity | Creating diversity, preparing for change | Adaptability, organizational stability |
| Knowledge | Creating learning organizations, employee capability development | Innovation, competitive advantage |
| Virtue | Transparent and ethical business conduct | Trust, long-term sustainability |

4. Conceptual Framework for Management According to Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Modern Executives

Developing a management conceptual framework according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for modern executives must consider the rapidly changing business environment, complexity of global market competition, and increasing stakeholder expectations regarding business responsibility. The proposed framework consists of five main dimensions: strategic management, financial and investment management, human resource and organizational management, risk management and sustainability, and innovation and learning creation.

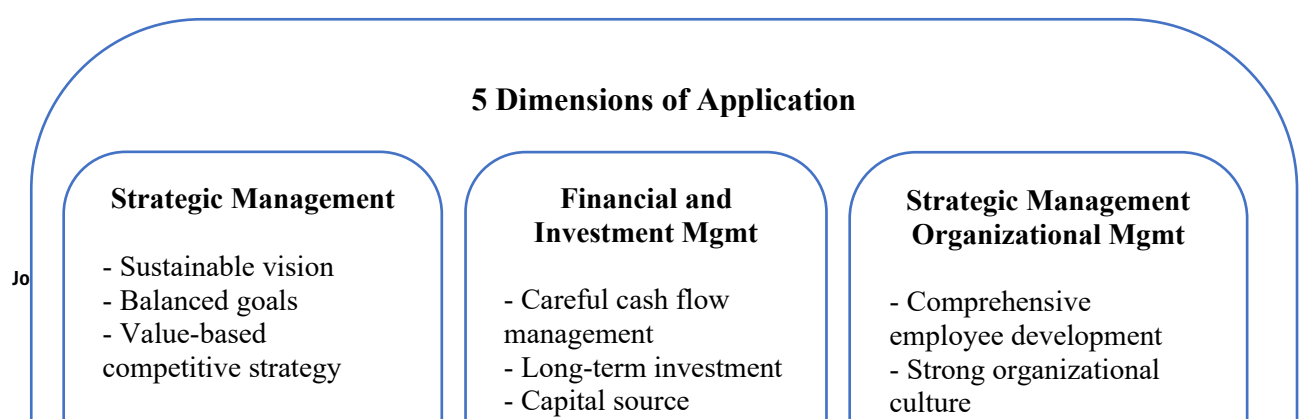
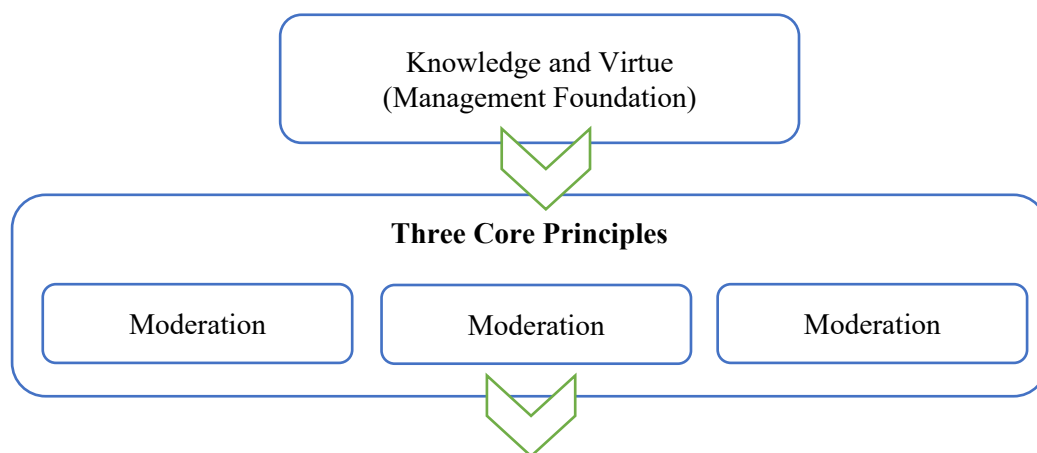
In strategic management dimension, modern executives must be able to integrate the moderation principle with organizational long-term planning by establishing vision and mission that reflect the need to create sustainable value for all stakeholders. Business goal setting must balance economic growth with social development and environmental care. Competitive strategies will emphasize creating differentiation through genuine value, not just price competition.

Applying the reasonableness principle in strategic management manifests through using comprehensive data and analysis in decision-making, studying industry trends and changes, analyzing competitors and business opportunities, and assessing organizational potential and strengths. Strategic planning processes will involve participation from multiple stakeholder parties and will be regularly reviewed and improved to align with situational changes. In financial and investment management dimension, the moderation principle leads to careful cash flow management, avoiding excessive debt use, and maintaining balance

between growth investment and capital reserves for emergencies. Investment decisions go through detailed return and risk assessment processes, considering long-term impacts over short-term profits. Creating financial immunity includes diversifying investment risks, creating diversity in capital sources, and preparing financial plans for various potential scenarios. Organizations have strict expenditure monitoring and control systems and regularly evaluate investment performance.

In human resource and organizational management dimension, applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy emphasizes comprehensive employee development and creating work environments conducive to learning and development. Human resource management systems are fair and transparent, from recruitment and selection, development and training, performance evaluation, to compensation and benefits. Creating organizational culture aligned with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy emphasizes promoting teamwork, knowledge sharing, learning from mistakes, and prioritizing virtue and ethics. Organizational leaders serve as good examples and inspire employees to work toward common organizational goals. the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to modern organizational management requires paradigm shifts

Management Conceptual Framework According to Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Modern Executives



5 Dimensions of Application

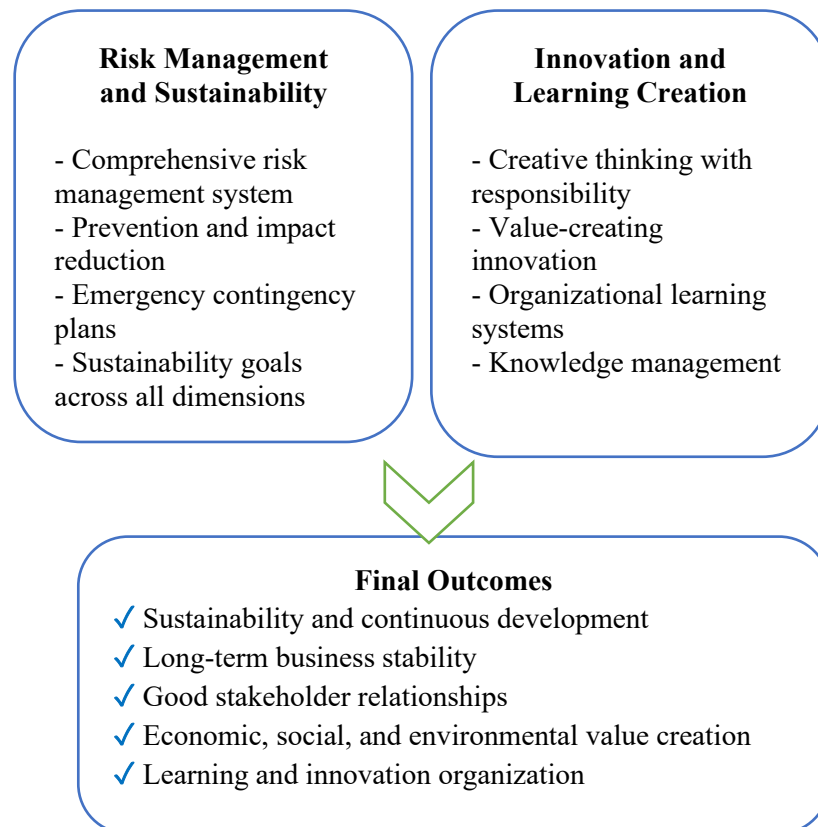


Figure 2: Management Conceptual Framework According to Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Modern Executives

Source: Compiled by the author (2023)

In risk management and sustainability dimension, executives must develop comprehensive risk management systems covering risks from both internal and external organizational factors. Risk identification and assessment are continuous processes with participation from all organizational units. Risk management measures emphasize prevention and impact reduction, along with preparing contingency plans for emergency situations.

Integrating sustainability concepts into business operations covers economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Organizations set clear and measurable sustainability goals, transparently report sustainability performance, and continuously develop improvements. For innovation and learning creation dimension, organizations promote creativity and experimentation with new concepts within frameworks of responsibility and reasonableness. Innovation development focuses on creating genuine value for customers and society, not just

innovation for competition alone.

Organizations create learning systems that promote knowledge and experience exchange both internally and externally. Learning from mistakes is viewed as opportunities for development and improvement, not punishment. Knowledge management systems help organizations accumulate and transfer knowledge effectively.

5. Challenges and Implementation Approaches

Applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to modern organizational management faces several significant challenges. The first challenge is changing paradigms and attitudes of executives and employees from short-term profit focus to long-term value creation. This mindset change requires time and continuous communication, along with creating correct understanding about the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy concept, as many people may misunderstand that applying this principle will slow organizational growth or prevent competitiveness (Avihingsanon, 2021).

The second challenge is creating balance between shareholder demands focusing on financial returns and conducting business according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy that emphasizes sustainable development. Executives must be able to explain and demonstrate that applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy will lead to better long-term returns, even though short-term costs may increase from investments in human resource development, environmental management, or good management system creation.

The third challenge is measuring and evaluating success of applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. Traditional indicators emphasizing profits and financial returns may be insufficient for comprehensive success evaluation across all dimensions. Organizations must develop measurement systems that can reflect performance in various aspects such as employee satisfaction, customer trust, social and environmental impacts, and organizational sustainability.

The fourth challenge is competing in markets where some competitors may not follow the same principles, potentially creating short-term advantages by reducing costs without considering social and environmental impacts. Executives must be able to create competitive strategies that can cope with this situation by emphasizing value differentiation and building long-term customer relationships.

To overcome these challenges, executives can use the following approaches. First, creating understanding and acceptance from organizational leaders at all levels is most important. Senior executives must exemplify and demonstrate commitment to seriously applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. Continuous training and internal organizational communication help create correct understanding and reduce resistance to change.

Second, starting with pilot projects in specific units or activities before expanding to the entire organization. Gradual implementation helps organizations learn and improve implementation approaches while building confidence and acceptance from stakeholders.

Third, developing balanced measurement systems covering all dimensions. Organizations should use Balanced Scorecard or Triple Bottom Line concepts covering financial, customer, internal process, and learning and development performance, as well as social and environmental impacts. Setting appropriate indicators helps organizations track progress and improve operations effectively.

Fourth, creating networks and cooperation with other organizations having similar concepts and objectives. Exchanging experiences and good practices helps organizations learn and develop faster. Moreover, cooperation can create momentum for driving change at industry or societal levels.

Fifth, communicating and creating understanding with external stakeholders such as customers, shareholders, partners, and communities about reasons and benefits of applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. Creating this understanding helps gain support and cooperation from all parties, which is crucial for change success.

Case studies from Thai and international companies successful in applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy show these organizations share several common characteristics: having visionary and committed leadership, creating strong organizational culture aligned with the philosophy, continuous investment in human resource development, having transparent and efficient management systems, and building good relationships with all stakeholders (Tisdell, 2020).

6. Impacts and Benefits of Applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy

Applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to organizational management creates positive impacts at organizational, stakeholder, and overall societal levels. At the organizational level, the significant impact is increased business stability and sustainability. Organizations practicing the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy tend to have stable and continuous growth rates, although may not be as rapid as organizations emphasizing short-term growth, but have lower risks and volatility (Christensen et al., 2021).

Adaptability and coping with change capability is another important benefit. Organizations with good immunity can better handle crises and uncertainties. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations with careful resource management, business diversity, and flexible work systems could adapt and continue operations while other organizations faced problems. Building good relationships with stakeholders is a valuable long-term benefit. Customers have trust and loyalty to organizations conducting business transparently and ethically. Employees have commitment and work motivation when feeling they are part of organizations with good purposes. Partners and suppliers have confidence in long-term transactions when receiving fair treatment.

Impact on organizational human resources is another important benefit. Emphasizing comprehensive employee development and creating good work environments enables organizations to attract and retain quality employees. Turnover rates decrease and work efficiency increases. Investment in employee skill and knowledge development creates sustainable competitive capabilities for organizations. In financial dimension, although applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy may require additional investment initially, it leads to cost reduction and efficiency increase in the long term. Efficient resource management, waste reduction, work process improvement, and risk reduction help organizations save significant expenses. Moreover, organizations with good social responsibility images can access lower-cost capital sources and may receive support from governments or international organizations.

Social and environmental impacts are another important benefit. Organizations practicing the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy contribute to solving social problems, reducing inequality, and environmental conservation. Creating quality jobs, developing local communities, and using resources efficiently create benefits for society overall.

Table 2: Impacts and Benefits of Applying Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in Management

| Dimension | Impact/Benefit | Indicators |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Organization | Business stability and sustainability | Stable growth rate, reduced revenue volatility |
| Finance | Resource utilization efficiency | Return on investment, reduced operating costs |
| Human | Employee commitment and | Turnover rate, employee |

| Resources | development | satisfaction |
|-------------|---|---|
| Customers | Trust and loyalty | Customer satisfaction scores, repeat purchase rates |
| Society | Social value creation | Job creation, community development |
| Environment | Conservation and sustainable resource use | Greenhouse gas reduction, energy savings |

7. Conclusion

The study of applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to modern organizational management shows that the principles graciously granted by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great can be effectively applied as a framework for contemporary executives. Integrating the principles of moderation, reasonableness, and good immunity, along with conditions of knowledge and virtue, helps organizations conduct business sustainably and create value for all stakeholders. From analysis and case studies, organizations successful in applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy have outstanding characteristics: visionary and committed leadership, strong organizational culture, investment in human resource development, and efficient and transparent management systems. The results are business stability, adaptability, good stakeholder relationships, and positive impacts on society and environment.

However, applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy still faces significant challenges including paradigm changes, balancing shareholder demands with philosophy principles, developing appropriate measurement systems, and competing in markets with competitors who may not follow the same principles. Overcoming these challenges requires leadership commitment, creating correct understanding, gradual implementation, and building cooperative networks. For implementation recommendations, executives should begin by studying and deeply understanding the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, then assess organizational situation and readiness, establish clear change plans, and start with pilot projects before expanding to the entire organization. Creating appropriate measurement systems and continuous communication are crucial for success.

In the future, research on applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in management contexts should focus on developing specific tools and practices for different industries, studying long-term impacts, and comparing performance between organizations using this philosophy and those using traditional approaches. Additionally, studying application in digital transformation and new technology contexts would benefit developing frameworks aligned with the digital age. The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy is not merely a concept for national or community development but a framework with potential for application in modern organizational management to create genuine sustainability and prosperity. Contemporary executives' ability to effectively apply these principles depends on understanding, commitment, and capability to shift paradigms from short-term profit focus to long-term value creation covering all dimensions of sustainability.

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Private vs. Public Education: An Analysis of Quality and Access Differences in the Thai Education System

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Abstract: Thailand's current education system comprises both public and private educational institutions that play crucial roles in the country's human resource development. This article aims to analyze the differences between private and public education in terms of educational quality and access to education. The study employs literature review and secondary data analysis from relevant agencies. The findings reveal that private education excels in efficient management, modern facilities, and skills development that responds to labor market demands. Meanwhile, public education has strengths in broad educational access, lower costs, and accommodating large numbers of students. However, educational inequality issues arising from differences in families' socioeconomic status were identified. This study highlights the necessity of developing balanced education policies between quality and access to ensure all citizens receive equal and quality educational opportunities.

Keywords: Private education, Public education, Educational quality, Educational access, Educational inequality

1. Introduction

Thailand's education system has developed continuously from the past to the present, particularly after the enactment of the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999), which opened opportunities for the private sector to play a significant role in education provision alongside the public sector (Ministry of Education, 1999). This change has resulted in diversity in Thailand's education system, comprising both public and private educational institutions with different management styles, teaching methods, and objectives. Private education in Thailand has grown rapidly over the past three decades, especially at the higher education level with continuous expansion of private universities. Meanwhile, the public education system continues to play a primary role in providing education services to the general public, particularly at the basic education level, which the Constitution guarantees as a fundamental right of citizens (Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, 2017).

The differences between private and public education are not limited to management aspects alone but also encompass other important issues such as educational quality, access to education, curriculum appropriateness, and relationships with the labor market. These factors influence parents' and students' choices of educational institutions, which affect educational opportunities and individual potential development in society.

Comparative studies between private and public education are therefore important for

developing appropriate education policies to ensure citizens receive quality and equitable educational opportunities, considering the differences in Thailand's social context and needs (OECD, 2016).

2. Overview of Thailand's Education System

Thailand's current education system can be divided into two main parts: public education and private education, both of which play important but different roles in the country's human resource development. Thailand's education system has a structure covering from early childhood to higher education levels, with clearly defined educational standards for all levels. Public education in Thailand operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, with various agencies responsible for each education level, such as the Office of the Basic Education Commission, the Office of the Vocational Education Commission, and the Office of the Higher Education Commission. A key characteristic of public education is its focus on providing education services broadly, considering principles of fairness and educational access for all social classes.

Conversely, private education has developed under specific regulatory frameworks with more management autonomy than public educational institutions. Private educational institutions often have flexibility in curriculum design, administration, and budget utilization, enabling them to respond to market demands more quickly. Statistical data shows that the distribution of students between public and private educational institutions differs significantly. At the basic education level, approximately 85% of students study in public educational institutions, while 15% study in private institutions. However, at the higher education level, this ratio changes dramatically, with approximately 60% of students studying in public institutions and 40% in private institutions (World Bank, 2018).

Thailand's economic and social changes have significantly impacted education system development, particularly the transition to the digital economy era and becoming an aging society, which requires more specialized skills and knowledge (Fry, 2018). These factors have resulted in both public and private education needing to adapt to align with society's and the economy's needs.

Table 1: Number of Educational Institutions in Thailand by Type and Education Level

| Education Level | Public Educational Institutions | Private Educational Institutions |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Basic Education | Approximately 28,000+ | Approximately 5,000+ |
| Vocational Education | 421 | 1,237 |
| Higher Education | 156 | 78 |

3. Differences in Educational Quality

Educational quality is a crucial factor that parents and students use when selecting educational institutions. Educational quality can be measured through various indicators such as students' academic achievement, teacher quality, facilities, and teaching and learning processes (UNESCO, 2017). In Thailand's context, the differences in educational quality between public and private educational institutions have diverse and complex characteristics. Private education in Thailand often has advantages in management flexibility, enabling rapid educational quality improvements. Private educational institutions typically have lower teacher-to-student ratios, which facilitates more individual attention (James, 1993). Additionally, private education invests in modern facilities such as laboratories, libraries, and educational technology, which affects students' learning quality.

In curriculum development, private education has agility in designing and improving curricula to align with labor market and social demands. Particularly at the higher education level, many private universities have developed curricula emphasizing industrial applications and providing real experience through internships and projects. Meanwhile, public education has strengths in other areas, particularly the stability of the education system and international standard recognition. Public educational institutions often have long histories and social acceptance. Teachers in public educational institutions have job security and continuous development through systematic training systems. Research comparing academic achievement of students in private and public educational institutions found that at the basic education level, students in private institutions had higher academic achievement in some subjects, particularly English and mathematics (Paweenawat & Vechbanyongratana, 2015). However, at the higher education level, this difference becomes more complex, depending on specific fields and universities.

Nevertheless, differences in educational quality do not mean that private education is better than public education in all aspects. Public education has strengths in developing good citizenship, creating social consciousness, and promoting national identity, which are important values no less than academic knowledge (Fry, 2018). Educational quality development currently requires integration between the strengths of both systems. Public education can learn flexibility and innovation from private education, while private education can apply stability and social development concepts from public education.

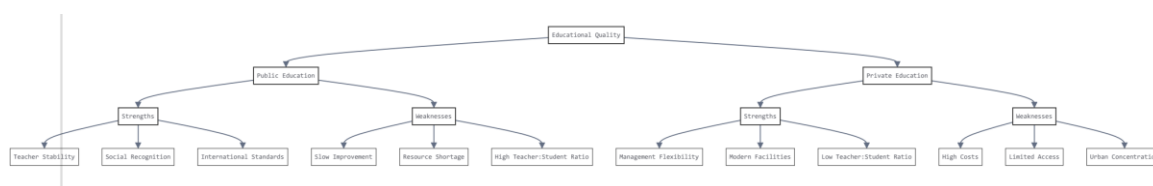


Figure 1: Educational Quality Comparison Mode
Source: Adapted from OECD (2018) and World Bank (2018)

Table 2: Comparison of Educational Quality Indicators

| Indicator | Public Education | Private Education |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Teacher: Student Ratio | 1:25 | 1:18 |
| Technology Investment | Moderate | High |
| Curriculum Flexibility | Low | High |
| Teacher Stability | High | Moderate |

4. Differences in Educational Access

Educational access is a fundamental right of citizens guaranteed by Thailand's Constitution. The differences in access between public and private education are complex and impact educational inequality in society (OECD, 2018). Analyzing educational access requires considering multiple factors such as costs, institutional location, admission requirements, and family readiness. Public education has a main strength in broad educational access, particularly free and compulsory basic education. Public educational institutions are distributed throughout the country, enabling children and youth in remote areas to access education. Educational costs in public institutions are much lower than private education, which is a crucial factor for low-income families (Colclough, 1996).

According to data, the average annual costs of education at different levels show clear differences. At the primary level, costs in public institutions are approximately 15,000 baht per year, while private institutions cost approximately 80,000-150,000 baht per year. At the higher

education level, this difference becomes even more pronounced, with public universities costing approximately 30,000-50,000 baht per year, while private universities cost approximately 80,000-300,000 baht per year. Research on factors affecting educational institution selection found that cost is the second most important factor after educational quality. Families with monthly income below 20,000 baht typically choose public education, while families with income above 50,000 baht tend to choose private education more frequently (World Bank, 2010).

Regarding admission requirements, public education often has selection processes emphasizing academic achievement and competitive examinations, which may be barriers for students with potential but poor exam performance. Conversely, private education often has more diverse admission requirements, but the main limitation is the ability to pay costs. Educational access issues also relate to geographical inequality. Most private education is located in major urban areas and economic zones, making it less accessible for children and youth in rural areas even if they can afford the costs. Public education therefore plays an important role in reducing this geographical inequality by having public institutions distributed throughout the country.

Information and communication technology development has opened new opportunities for educational access, particularly online teaching and learning that helps reduce geographical limitations. However, technology readiness and digital skills remain important factors creating differences in educational access (OECD, 2016). Well-off families often have more readiness in this area, enabling them to fully utilize online education.

Government policies to promote educational access have been continuously developed, such as scholarships, student loan funds, and various projects aimed at reducing inequality. However, gaps still need improve

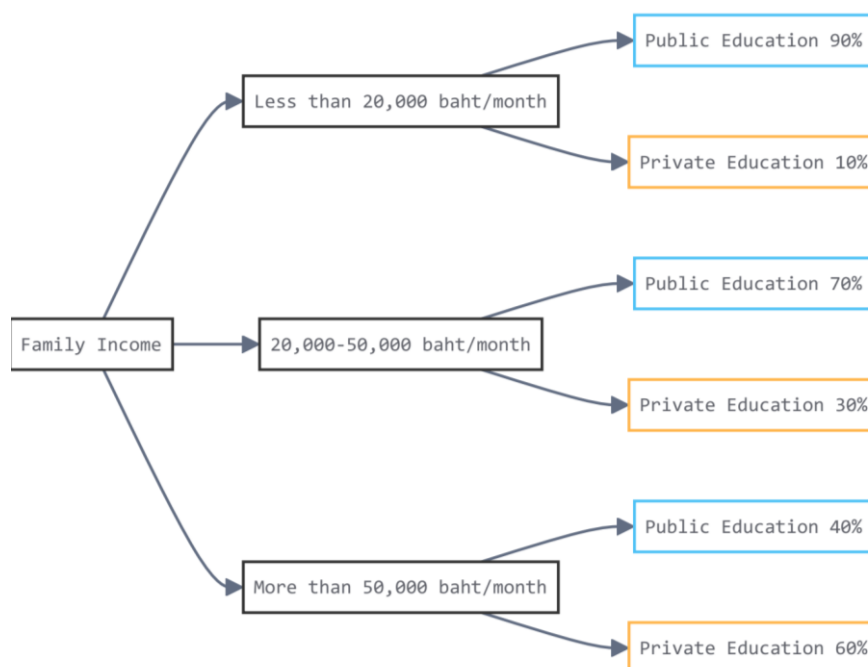


Figure 2: Educational Access by Family Income Chart

Source: World Bank (2018) and OECD (2018)

Table 3: Average Annual Education Costs (Unit: Baht)

| Education Level | Public Education | Private Education |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Primary Education | 15,000 | 80,000-150,000 |
| Secondary Education | 18,000 | 90,000-180,000 |

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Vocational Education | 20,000 | 60,000-120,000 |
| Higher Education | 30,000-50,000 | 80,000-300,000 |

5. Factors Affecting Educational Institution Selection

Selecting educational institutions is a complex decision-making process with multiple influential factors. Research on educational institution selection behavior among Thai parents found six main important factors: educational quality, costs, safety, institutional location, reputation and recognition, and curriculum appropriateness (World Bank, 2010). Educational quality remains the top factor in educational institution selection, with parents typically considering students' academic achievement, teacher quality, facilities, and extracurricular activities. Private education often has advantages in this area, particularly regarding teacher-to-student ratios and individual attention.

Cost is the most important factor for low and middle-income families, while high-income families often prioritize quality over cost. Research found that high-income families are willing to pay more for their children to receive quality education, even if it means reducing expenses in other areas (James, 1993). Safety is a factor receiving increased attention currently, particularly in large urban areas with crime and accident problems. Private educational institutions often have stricter security systems, such as access control, security personnel, and CCTV systems. Institutional location significantly affects decision-making, with parents typically considering distance from home, transportation convenience, and community environment. Public education has advantages in nationwide distribution, while private education is often located in urban and developed areas.

Institutional reputation and recognition affect employment and further education opportunities. Many public universities such as Chulalongkorn University and Thammasat University have high reputation and employer recognition, while some private universities also have reputations in specific fields such as management, information technology, and design (Fry, 2018). Curriculum appropriateness is an increasingly important factor, particularly in an era of rapid labor market changes. Parents and students often consider curriculum modernity, emphasis on market-demanded skills, and internship and employment opportunities. Private education often has flexibility in improving curricula to align with market demands more quickly.

Social and technological changes have created new factors in educational institution selection, such as online teaching and learning systems, digital skills development, and future work preparation. These factors increasingly influence parents' decisions, especially after the COVID-19 situation that increased the importance of online learning (UNESCO, 2017).

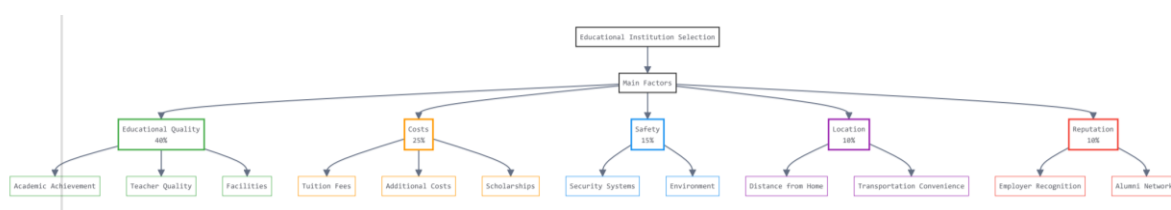


Figure 3: Educational Institution Selection Factors Model

Source: Adapted from World Bank (2010)

6. Impact on Educational Inequality

The differences between private and public education significantly impact educational inequality in Thai society. Educational inequality does not arise solely from differences in educational quality but also includes access to educational opportunities, development of

necessary skills for the labor market, and creation of social networks (OECD, 2018). Research on educational inequality in Thailand found that families with higher socioeconomic status tend to send their children to private educational institutions more than others (Paweenawat & Vechbanyongratana, 2015). This results in these children receiving opportunities to develop more diverse skills and knowledge than children from lower-status families. This advantage accumulation affects opportunities for higher-level education and labor market entry.

The phenomenon called "Matthew Effect" in education, which refers to those with initial advantages receiving increasingly more opportunities and resources, is found in Thailand's education system. Children studying in high-quality private educational institutions often receive diverse skills development, opportunities to participate in special activities, and good guidance, resulting in high opportunities to enter leading universities. Educational inequality also affects social mobility in Thailand. Research found that children from well-off families have fewer opportunities to change social status through education compared to children from low-status families, as they start from already higher positions (World Bank, 2018). Meanwhile, children from low-status families often face problems accessing quality education, making social mobility through education difficult. The impact of educational inequality is not limited to the individual level but also affects the country's economic and social development. Having only certain groups receive quality education causes the country to lose potential for full human resource development (Colclough, 1996).

However, educational inequality does not arise from private education alone but results from existing economic and social inequality. Private education may be a tool that reinforces existing inequality but is also an important option for education development and creating constructive competition in the education system. Reducing educational inequality requires multi-dimensional implementation, including improving public education quality to match private education, creating access opportunities to private education for disadvantaged groups, and developing policies that promote educational fairness (UNESCO, 2017).

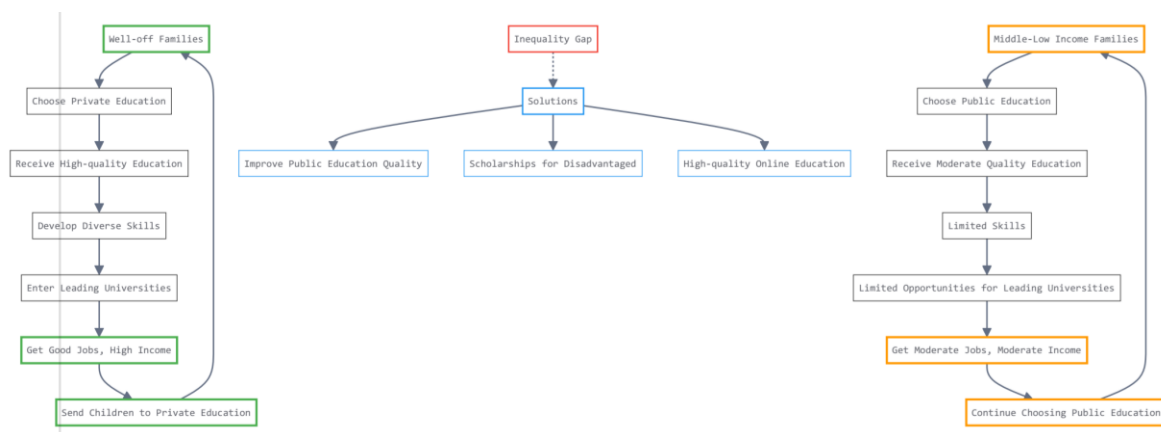


Figure 4: Educational Inequality Cycle
Source: Adapted from OECD (2018)

7. Policies and Development Directions

Developing education policies that balance quality promotion and ensuring equitable educational access is a significant challenge for Thailand. Current education policies have developed toward utilizing strengths of both public and private education through creating cooperation and constructive competition (World Bank, 2010). The 20-Year National Education Strategy (2017-2036) has set development directions emphasizing upgrading public education quality to international standards while promoting private sector participation in

quality education provision with appropriate regulatory mechanisms (OECD, 2016). This policy focuses on creating cooperation between public and private sectors in education development rather than viewing them as competitors.

Various projects arising from this policy, such as the School Partnership program that encourages private universities to help develop public schools, teacher and educational personnel exchanges, and resource sharing between public and private educational institutions, show preliminary implementation results demonstrating the possibility of creating beneficial cooperation for both sides. Digital technology development for education is another important direction that can help reduce educational inequality. The Digital Education Platform project promoted by the government hopes to enable all students to access high-quality teaching and learning through online systems regardless of location and economic status. Many private educational institutions have joined this project by sharing content and expertise.

Policy for establishing strict and fair educational standards for both public and private education is necessary. Establishing independent and credible educational quality assessment agencies will help parents and students select educational institutions with information (UNESCO, 2017). This assessment system should cover academic achievement, life skills development, and work readiness. Promoting vocational education is another important direction requiring development. Both public and private education should cooperate in developing vocational education curricula that respond to new industry and economic demands. Creating cooperation with the private sector in organizing internships and employment will help vocational education gain higher value and recognition.

Future development directions should emphasize creating flexible education systems that can adapt to world changes. Lifelong learning should be an important principle that both public and private education must implement to enable citizens to continuously develop new skills and knowledge according to labor market and social demands (Fry, 2018).

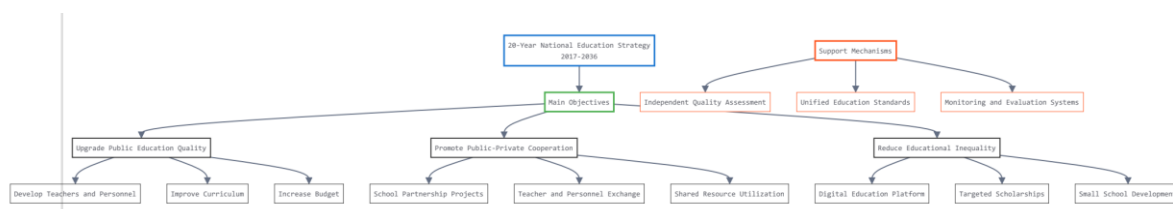


Figure 5: Thai Education Development Policy Framework

Source: World Bank (2010) and OECD (2016)

8. Conclusion

The comparative study between private and public education in Thailand reveals the complexity and diversity of Thailand's current education system. The differences between these two systems are not one-dimensional but encompass multiple important dimensions including educational quality, educational access, and impacts on social inequality. Private education has outstanding strengths in management flexibility, investment in modern facilities, and ability to improve curricula to align with labor market demands. Lower teacher-to-student ratios and individual attention are factors that make private education popular among well-off families. However, the main limitations of private education are high costs and concentration in major urban areas, resulting in limited access.

Conversely, public education plays an important role in guaranteeing citizens' basic education rights and reducing educational inequality. Lower costs and nationwide distribution make public education the main choice for most people. System stability and social recognition are important strengths of public education. However, significant limitations include delays in

system improvement and resource shortages in some areas. The impact on educational inequality is an issue requiring serious attention. Differences in access to quality education affect life opportunities and individual social mobility. Having only certain groups able to access quality private education may create advantage accumulation affecting social fairness.

Future education policy development should focus on creating balance between quality promotion and ensuring equitable access. Utilizing strengths of both systems through creating cooperation and constructive competition will be key to developing Thailand's education system with quality and fairness. Digital technology development for education and creating quality online learning platforms will help reduce geographical and cost limitations, enabling all students to access quality education more. Investment in teacher and educational personnel development in both public and private systems is necessary for overall educational quality improvement.

Ultimately, the success of Thailand's education system does not depend on choosing between public or private education alone but depends on the ability to create a diverse, quality, and fair education system that can appropriately respond to the needs and potential of all Thai

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The Sustainability of Buddhist Culture in the Era of Globalization: Approaches to Protecting Buddhism

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Abstract: In the era of globalization where the world is interconnected more closely than ever, Buddhist culture, which represents one of humanity's most significant spiritual and intellectual heritages, is facing numerous new challenges. This article aims to study and analyze the current situation of Buddhist culture within the context of globalization, focusing on exploring both positive and negative impacts arising from globalization trends on the existence and transmission of Buddhist traditions and practices. This study employs document analysis and synthesis of concepts from diverse secondary sources, including academic research, religious documents, and reports from international organizations. The study findings reveal that globalization affects Buddhist culture in multiple dimensions, both creating opportunities for Buddhism to spread to new areas and generating challenges in maintaining cultural purity and identity. This article proposes comprehensive approaches to protecting Buddhism covering five main dimensions: education and learning, dharma practice, community building, technology utilization, and international networking. These approaches will help create balance between adapting to the modern world and preserving the traditional values of Buddhism.

Keywords: Buddhist culture, globalization, sustainability, Buddhist protection, adaptation

1. Introduction

Buddhism has been recognized as one of the most ancient and influential religions in the development of human civilization for over 2,500 years. Since the Buddha achieved enlightenment and propagated the dharma in ancient India, Buddhism has spread to various lands throughout Asia and become a crucial foundation of culture in this region (Harvey, 2013). Buddhist culture encompasses not only religious rituals and traditions but also value systems, life philosophy, arts, architecture, literature, and ways of life that reflect Buddhist teachings. In the contemporary era, the world has entered the age of globalization, a process that interconnects the world closely through technology, trade, human mobility, and information exchange. This globalization trend has profoundly impacted cultures worldwide, including Buddhist culture (Obadia, 2011). These impacts are both positive and negative, creating the necessity to study and deeply understand in order to find appropriate solutions.

On one hand, globalization has opened opportunities for Buddhism to spread to new territories previously unfamiliar with it, creating new Buddhist communities in Europe, America, and Australia, along with the application of Buddhist principles to solve modern social problems. However, simultaneously, globalization has brought new challenges such as the invasion of consumerist culture, changes in traditional lifestyles, and the loss of cultural

identity in Buddhist communities (McMahan, 2008).

The importance of studying this topic lies not in opposing or completely accepting globalization, but in finding ways to create balance between adapting to the modern world and preserving the core values of Buddhism. This study therefore aims to analyze the current situation of Buddhist culture in the context of globalization, identify challenges and opportunities that arise, and propose sustainable approaches to protecting Buddhism that are compatible with the conditions of the 21st century world.

2. Buddhist Culture in Historical Context

Understanding the development of Buddhist culture from past to present is essential for gaining an overall perspective of the changes and adaptations of Buddhism in each era. Buddhist culture has undergone continuous transformation and development throughout the 2,500 years since its inception, with each period having distinct characteristics and different challenges. In its early period, Buddhism emerged in ancient India during the 6th-5th centuries BCE within the context of a society with caste divisions and complex religious belief systems. The Buddha presented a new approach emphasizing dharma practice and achieving enlightenment through personal effort, without attachment to rituals or caste systems (Gethin, 1998). During this initial phase, Buddhist culture was characterized by simplicity, emphasizing practice over creating elaborate architecture or artistic works.

The expansion of Buddhism began seriously during the reign of Emperor Ashoka (approximately 268-232 BCE), who supported the propagation of Buddhism to various territories both within and outside India. From that point onward, Buddhist culture began adapting and integrating with local cultures of each region, creating diverse distinctive characteristics such as Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia; Mahayana Buddhism in China, Japan, and Korea; and Tantric Buddhism in Tibet and Mongolia (Robinson & Johnson, 1997). In Southeast Asia, Buddhist culture came to play a crucial role in shaping society, politics, and arts and culture, particularly in Thailand where Buddhism became the national religion and profoundly influenced the development of national identity, education, and social value systems (Swearer, 2010). Temples and Buddhist architecture became community centers, not only for religious activities but also for education, healthcare, and social development.

However, upon entering the colonial era in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Buddhist culture faced major challenges from the arrival of Western civilization, modern education systems, technology, and new religious concepts. In many countries, Buddhist culture was pressured to adapt and find ways to coexist with external influences (Lopez, 2002). This transformation led to the emergence of Buddhist reform movements in various countries that attempted to reinterpret Buddhist teachings to align with the modern world.

In the 20th century, particularly after World War II, Buddhism began spreading to Western countries seriously. Scholars and interested individuals from Europe and America traveled to study Buddhism in Asia and brought the teachings back to propagate in their own countries. This movement led to the emergence of modern Buddhism adapted to Western cultural contexts (Prebish, 1999). Simultaneously, academic study of Buddhism was greatly developed, creating deeper and more comprehensive understanding of Buddhist teachings and history.

3. The Impact of Globalization on Buddhist Culture

The globalization trend has impacted Buddhist culture in multiple dimensions, both beneficially and challengingly. Analyzing these impacts comprehensively will help us

understand the current situation and plan appropriate responses.

3.1 Positive Impacts

Globalization has opened opportunities for Buddhism to spread to continents and countries that had never been exposed to Buddhism before. Over the past 50 years, the number of Buddhists in Western countries has increased dramatically, particularly in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and Australia (Baumann, 2001). This growth stems from people in Western society beginning to show interest in meditation practice, teachings about impermanence, and approaches to living that emphasize peace and mindfulness.

Information technology has become an important tool in propagating Buddhism. Websites, applications, and various online media have made access to Buddhist teachings easier. People can study dharma, listen to sermons, and learn dharma practice through digital media anytime, anywhere (Campbell, 2013). The translation of the Tripitaka and Buddhist documents into various languages worldwide has been supported by modern translation and communication technology.

Furthermore, globalization has brought about exchange and learning between different Buddhist traditions that were previously separated. Monks and dharma practitioners from various countries can meet, exchange experiences, and learn from each other more frequently. International conferences, monk exchanges, and academic cooperation projects have helped strengthen understanding and unity among Buddhist communities worldwide (Queen, 2000).

The application of Buddhist principles in solving modern social problems has also received increased attention, particularly in mental healthcare, meditation therapy, and developing environmental consciousness. Buddhist teachings on loving-kindness, non-violence toward animals, and balance in living have been applied to create sustainable and environmentally friendly societies.

3.2 Negative Impacts

Although globalization brings new opportunities, it has also created several significant challenges for Buddhist culture. One major problem is the emergence of consumerist culture that conflicts with Buddhist teachings about contentment with what one has, non-greed, and non-attachment. In societies that emphasize material accumulation, competition, and material success, Buddhist teachings about letting go and sufficiency become difficult to practice (Loy, 2002).

Changes in traditional Buddhist community lifestyles represent another concerning issue. The fast pace of modern life, population migration from rural to urban areas, and changes in family structures have made the transmission of Buddhist knowledge and traditions from generation to generation more difficult (Keyes, 1999). Temples and monks, who were once community centers, are beginning to lose their roles and influence in some areas.

The problem of distortion or misinterpretation of Buddhist teachings is a significant concern. When Buddhism spreads to societies with different cultural foundations, sometimes teachings are interpreted or presented in ways inconsistent with the true essence of the teachings. The emergence of "commercial Buddhism" that emphasizes selling books, courses, and various products claiming to relate to Buddhism but not focusing on genuine dharma practice is an example of this problem (Wilson, 2014).

The loss of local languages and traditional knowledge is another significant impact. In many Buddhist communities, particularly in developing countries, English and other international languages have come to play important roles in education and communication, resulting in local languages previously used in dharma study being used less or disappearing entirely. Local knowledge and wisdom accumulated over long periods also risk being lost.

4. Challenges in Preserving Cultural Identity

Preserving Buddhist cultural identity in the era of globalization is a complex challenge requiring consideration from multiple dimensions. These challenges do not occur in isolation but are often interconnected and impact each other in the nature of complex systems.

4.1 Positive Impacts

Modern education systems that emphasize scientific and technological knowledge have made dharma study and Buddhist philosophical principles seem outdated or unnecessary. In many countries, Buddhist education in schools has decreased or been replaced by other subjects (Jackson, 2004). Many young people lack basic understanding of their own Buddhist history, teachings, and traditions.

The loss of monks' roles as intellectual leaders and community advisors is another significant issue. In the past, monks not only performed religious ceremonies but also provided education, life counseling, and community development leadership. However, in modern society, these roles have been replaced by specialists in various fields, weakening the connection between people and Buddhism (Swearer, 1995).

4.2 Practice and Lifestyle Challenges

Modern lifestyles filled with rush and pressure have made dharma practice requiring peace, contemplation, and time for mental development challenging. Many people feel they lack sufficient time for meditation, temple visits, or dharma study (Loy, 2008). Work stress and various responsibilities make maintaining peaceful and mindful mental states difficult.

Consumption and materialism widespread in globalized society have created conflicts with Buddhist teachings about contentment and non-attachment. Advertising and various media have instilled the idea that happiness comes from having and getting, which is opposite to teachings that suffering arises from attachment and greed (Sulak Sivaraksa, 1999). This conflict makes many people confused and uncertain about how to apply teachings in real life.

4.3 Tradition and Ritual Preservation Challenges

Buddhist rituals and traditions that were once important parts of community life are beginning to be viewed as outdated or incompatible with modern life. Many young people do not understand the meaning and importance of these rituals, leading to decreased participation (Gombrich & Obeyesekere, 1988). Politics and social changes in some countries have also impacted the organization and practice of Buddhist traditions.

The transmission of Pali and other ancient languages used in studying the Tripitaka and Buddhist documents is another challenge. The number of people knowledgeable in these languages continues to decrease, making study and interpretation of original texts more difficult (Hinüber, 2000). Reliance on translations into modern languages may cause subtle and profound meanings of teachings to be lost.

4.4 Technology Adaptation Challenges

Although technology is a useful tool for propagating Buddhism, it has also created new challenges. Using digital media and social media may make dharma learning superficial and lack depth (Campbell, 2013). People may easily find information about Buddhism, but actual practice and developing true understanding become more difficult.

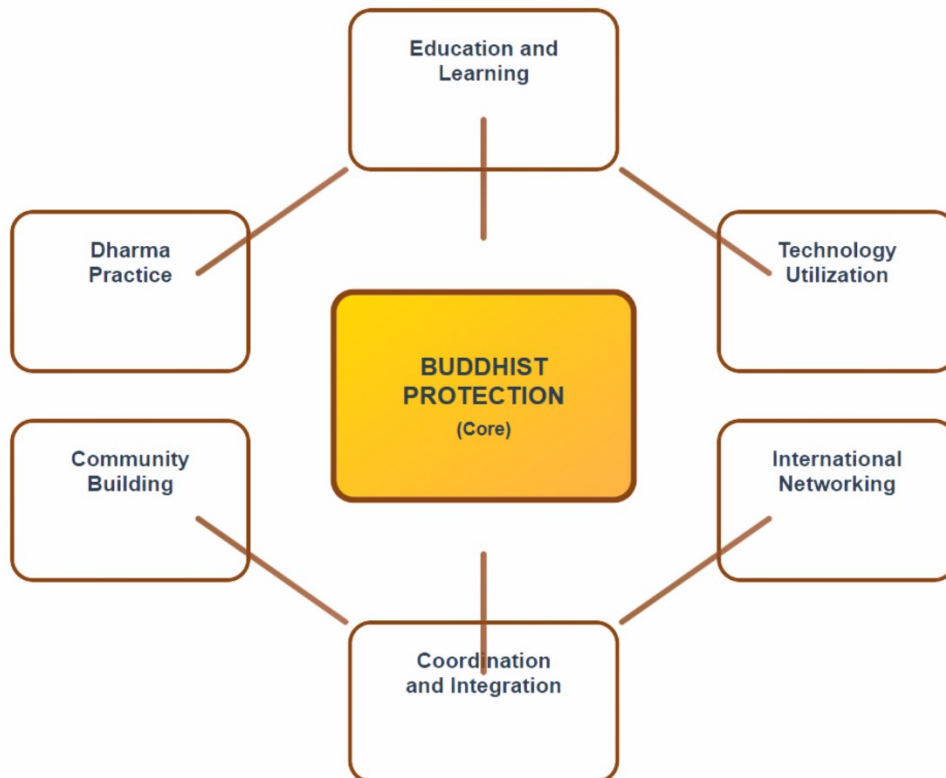
The spread of incorrect information or wrong interpretations about Buddhism through the internet is a problem requiring vigilance. Those without basic knowledge may accept incorrect information as their understanding, which may lead to practices deviating from true

teachings.

5. Approaches to Protecting Buddhism in the Era of Globalization

Protecting Buddhism in the era of globalization requires balanced approaches between preserving the core values of Buddhism and adapting to modern world conditions. From studying and analyzing works of various scholars and Buddhist leaders, approaches to protection can be synthesized into five main dimensions, as shown in Figure 1.

Five-Dimensional Model for Protecting Buddhism in the Era of Globalization



Dimension Descriptions:

- **Education and Learning:** Curriculum development, modern teaching methods, multilingual resources
- **Dharma Practice:** Meditation centers, retreat programs, practical application
- **Community Building:** Youth engagement, interfaith dialogue, local networks
- **Technology Utilization:** Digital platforms, mobile apps, virtual reality experiences
- **International Networking:** Global conferences, academic exchanges, policy coordination

Figure 1: Model for Protecting Buddhism in the Era of Globalization

Source: Synthesized from the authors (2023)

Dimension 1: Developing Education and Learning

Education is a crucial foundation for protecting Buddhism. There needs to be reform and development of Buddhist education systems to align with contemporary times while maintaining the purity of teachings. Creating modern and engaging Buddhist education curricula for youth is an urgent necessity (Prebish & Keown, 2006). These curricula should integrate traditional dharma study with practical applications in daily life.

Developing diverse and easily accessible learning materials is another important approach. Creating books, videos, applications, and educational games with Buddhist content will help make learning enjoyable and effective. Translating important Buddhist documents into various languages and creating easily understandable explanations for beginners are equally important.

Creating international exchange programs and scholarships for Buddhist studies will help strengthen understanding and cooperation among Buddhist communities worldwide. Establishing Buddhist learning centers in universities and educational institutions will help Buddhism receive academic study and reach more people.

Dimension 2: Promoting Dharma Practice

Dharma practice is the essential heart of Buddhism. Protecting Buddhism must therefore emphasize creating opportunities and supporting people to truly practice dharma. Adapting practice forms to suit modern lifestyles is necessary without destroying the essence of practice (Bodhi, 2011).

Organizing short-term dharma practice programs for working people and students will help people have opportunities to experience dharma practice even with limited time. Teaching meditation techniques and mindfulness practice in daily life will help people apply teachings in real situations. Creating dharma practice groups in communities and workplaces will help create mutual support in practice.

Developing modern and environmentally friendly dharma practice centers will help attract people to practice dharma. These places should be designed to facilitate meditation and mental development, equipped with technology that supports practice, such as meditation guidance applications and progress tracking systems.

Dimension 3: Creating and Strengthening Communities

Communities are crucial foundations for transmitting and preserving Buddhist culture. Creating strong Buddhist communities with participation from all age groups is key to protecting Buddhism (Numrich, 1996). These communities should not be limited to religious activities only but should expand to mutual assistance, collaborative learning, and working together for society.

Establishing groups for youth and children will help new generations learn and understand Buddhism from an early age. These activities should be fun and age-appropriate, such as Jataka storytelling, Buddhist-related art activities, and dharma camps for youth. Creating opportunities for youth to participate in organizing activities and decision-making in communities will help them feel ownership and connection to the community.

Creating networks between various Buddhist communities at local, national, and international levels will help strengthen mutual support. Exchanging experiences, resources, and knowledge between communities will help all communities learn and develop in better directions.

Dimension 4: Creative Technology Utilization

Modern technology can be a powerful tool for propagating and conserving Buddhism if used appropriately and creatively. Developing digital platforms for Buddhist education will help people worldwide access teachings conveniently and effectively (Campbell, 2013). Creating digital libraries that collect Buddhist documents from around the world will help preserve knowledge and make study and research easier. Using AR (Augmented Reality) and VR (Virtual Reality) technology to create new dimensional learning experiences, such as virtual visits to important Buddhist sites or creating simulations of significant events in

Buddhist history.

Developing applications for dharma practice will help people practice dharma anywhere, anytime. These apps may have various features such as meditation technique guidance, daily practice reminders, progress tracking, and connection with practitioner communities.

However, technology use must consider Buddhist principles as paramount. Technology should not become something that creates attachment or hinders mental development. Technology use should be a tool that supports dharma practice, not an end in itself.

Dimension 5: Creating International Cooperation Networks

In the era of globalization, creating cooperation networks between Buddhist organizations, educational institutions, and Buddhist communities worldwide is extremely important. These networks will help strengthen understanding, exchange experiences, and mutual support in facing shared challenges (Queen, 2000).

Establishing international organizations representing Buddhist communities worldwide will help Buddhist voices be heard on the world stage. These organizations can serve as intermediaries in coordinating various projects, exchanging resources, and supporting Buddhist communities in difficult situations.

Creating educational and research cooperation projects between universities and educational institutions will help develop knowledge and understanding about Buddhism in new aspects. Organizing international conferences and academic exchanges will help create collaborative learning and development.

Collaborating in solving world problems using Buddhist principles will help Buddhism play important roles in creating a better world. Various problems such as climate change, social inequality, and international conflicts all require solutions emphasizing loving-kindness, balance, and sustainability, which are fundamental principles of Buddhism.

6. Case Studies: Successes in Protecting Buddhism

To demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of approaches to protecting Buddhism in practice, studying successful examples from various countries will provide important information that can be applied.

Case Study 1: Buddhist Development in the United States

The United States represents an interesting example of Buddhism's adaptation and growth in Western society. Over the past 50 years, the number of Buddhists in America has increased from 200,000 people in 1970 to more than 1.2 million people in 2020 (Pew Research Center, 2021). This success results from appropriate adaptation and use of diverse strategies.

The first important factor is presenting Buddhism in forms that are easily understood and compatible with American lifestyles. Emphasizing practice over beliefs and rituals, particularly teaching meditation techniques for stress reduction and mental development, has received great interest. Meditation centers and dharma practice centers have been established in major cities throughout the country, designed simply and focusing on functionality.

Using technology and modern media for dharma propagation is another important factor. Books, podcasts, applications, and various websites have helped people access Buddhist teachings more easily (Wilson, 2014). Many American writers and dharma teachers have been able to interpret and present teachings in ways compatible with American culture without losing the essence of the teachings.

Case Study 2: Buddhist Culture Conservation in Japan

Although Japan is a country with a long Buddhist tradition, it faces challenges from modern society and decreased participation in religious activities among younger generations. However, temples and Buddhist organizations in Japan have developed interesting strategies to attract young people and maintain relevance to society.

One successful approach is organizing activities that blend tradition and innovation. Many temples have organized various projects such as judo and karate classes emphasizing mental development alongside physical development, music concerts and art exhibitions with Buddhist content, and markets and festivals that connect communities together (Reader, 2005).

Using technology to improve temple visitor experiences is another interesting innovation. Some temples have implemented QR codes to provide information about the history and significance of various places in temples, created applications for meditation guidance and dharma practice, and developed websites with interesting content for all age groups.

Case Study 3: Buddhist Education Reform in Thailand

In Thailand, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has been a leader in reforming Buddhist education to be modern and aligned with societal needs. Developing new curricula that integrate Buddhist teachings with modern sciences such as psychology, management, and information technology has helped make Buddhist education more relevant to real life (Payutto, 2007).

The "IT Monk" project that trains monks in information technology knowledge is an example of successful adaptation. Monks who completed training can use technology for dharma propagation, temple administration, and community communication effectively. Creating temple websites, producing digital content, and using social media to reach new target groups have become important tools for modern monks' work.

Establishing youth development centers in temples throughout the country is another project receiving attention. These centers not only teach Buddhist principles but also organize life skills activities, non-formal education, and personality development, making youth see the relevance and benefits of coming to temples for self-development.

Lessons from Case Studies

From all three case studies, important lessons can be summarized as follows:
Importance of Adaptation: Adapting to local contexts and contemporary times is necessary, but this adaptation must be done carefully to avoid losing the essence of teachings.
Creative Technology Use: Technology can be a powerful tool for propagating and conserving Buddhism if used appropriately and with clear purposes.
Emphasis on Practice and Application: Presenting Buddhism in ways emphasizing practice and real-life application receives good responses from people in modern times.
Importance of Education and Personnel Development: Developing teachers and leaders with knowledge in both teachings and modern skills is key to success.

7. Policy and Practice Recommendations

From analysis and studying various examples, policy and practice recommendations for protecting Buddhism in the era of globalization can be presented, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Policy Recommendations for Protecting Buddhism

| Level | Recommendations | Primary Responsibility | Success Indicators |
|-------------------------|--|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Government Level | Support Buddhist education in national | Ministry of Education | Number of schools providing Buddhist |

| | education system | | education |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | Allocate budget for Buddhist cultural heritage conservation | Ministry of Culture | Number of conservation projects supported |
| Educational Institution Level | Develop modern Buddhist curricula | Universities and educational institutions | Number of new curricula developed |
| | Create interdisciplinary Buddhist research centers | Universities and research institutes | Number of published research works |
| Community Level | Establish Buddhist learning centers in communities | Temples and community organizations | Number of activity participants |
| | Create cooperation networks between temples | Monks and community leaders | Number of joint projects |

7.1 Policy-Level Recommendations

Government Support: The government should have clear policies supporting the protection and propagation of Buddhism without conflicting with the principle of separating religion from politics. Allocating budgets for conserving Buddhist archaeological sites, supporting research and education, and promoting Buddhist cultural tourism are appropriate approaches (Ishii, 2003).

Education Reform: The national education system should integrate Buddhist education into curricula, emphasizing teaching values and ethics over rituals. Developing modern and interesting teaching materials and training teachers to have appropriate knowledge and skills.

Creating Coordination Mechanisms: There should be organizations or mechanisms coordinating between various agencies involved in protecting Buddhism, both nationally and internationally, to ensure consistent and efficient operations.

7.1 Practice-Level Recommendations

Personnel Development: Training monks and religious leaders to have modern knowledge and skills is urgently necessary. Training programs should cover communication skills, technology use, management, and understanding modern social problems (Payutto, 2007).

Content and Media Development: Creating diverse, modern, and easily accessible Buddhist educational content is important. There should be development of books, videos, applications, educational games, and other online media appropriate for different target groups.

Creating Networks and Cooperation: Creating cooperation networks between temples, communities, organizations, and educational institutions will help strengthen and increase work effectiveness. Exchanging resources, experiences, and knowledge will benefit all parties.

7.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Approaches

Monitoring and evaluating the success of protecting Buddhism is important to enable appropriate improvement and development of operational approaches. Indicators to consider include:

Quantitative Indicators: Number of Buddhist activity participants, number of courses

and projects organized, number of media and content produced, number of participating organizations and networks, and amount of budget used.

Qualitative Indicators: Level of understanding and knowledge about Buddhism among the public, level of applying teachings in real life, satisfaction of activity participants, quality of content and learning media, and impact on communities and society.

Opinion Surveys: Conducting regular surveys of public opinions and attitudes toward Buddhism will help understand changes and long-term trends.

8. Conclusion

Buddhist culture in the era of globalization is at an important turning point. The challenges that arise require careful and creative responses, but simultaneously, emerging opportunities open doors to exciting new possibilities. Protecting Buddhism in this era does not mean isolating oneself from change but means learning to dance to the rhythm of the modern world while maintaining the spirit and core values of Buddhism. Buddhist teachings about impermanence, change, and adaptation are highly relevant to current situations. The Buddha himself adapted teaching methods to suit different audiences and situations. Learning from this example will help Buddhist communities find ways to create balance between preserving traditions and adapting to the modern world wisely.

The sustainability of Buddhist culture does not depend on clinging to old forms but depends on the ability to make Buddhist teachings and values relevant and beneficial to people in all eras. True Buddhist protection means making Buddhism an effective "medicine" for the suffering and problems of the modern world while being a "light" that helps guide people toward true happiness and peace. Future operations must rely on cooperation from all parties, including monks, community leaders, scholars, policymakers, and general community members. Success in protecting Buddhism will occur when everyone works together sincerely and committedly, using Buddhist principles as guidance. Working with loving-kindness, patience, and wisdom will help us overcome various challenges and create a bright future for Buddhism and all humanity.

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Finding the Right Balance in a Fast-Paced World: Creating Life Balance in the Digital Age

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Abstract: Living in an era of rapid technological advancement and continuous social change presents unprecedented challenges for individuals seeking to create balance between the urgency of modern life and fundamental human needs for meaningful and quality existence. This article presents an analysis of the concept of "finding the right balance" in the context of contemporary Thai society through an integrative framework combining Buddhist philosophy, modern psychology, and sustainable development concepts. The study demonstrates that finding the "right balance" is not about escaping the pace of modern life but learning to live with it mindfully and creatively. Research findings indicate that effective approaches to creating life balance include developing mindfulness, effective time management, building quality relationships, and maintaining mental health through practices aligned with traditional Thai values while adaptable to the globalized context. The integration of ancient wisdom with modern knowledge, between speed and slowness, between connection and solitude, serves as a key to creating meaningful and sustainable life in an accelerated world.

Keywords: Right balance, Life balance, Digital age, Mindfulness, Sustainable development

1. Introduction

In an era where the world is changing at an unprecedented pace and digital technology plays a crucial role in every dimension of life, humans in the 21st century face challenges never before encountered in history. The 24/7 connectivity, speed of information processing, and heightened expectations in all aspects of work and living create continuous pressure for people to adapt and respond constantly (Bauman, 2007). This situation raises the critical question of how we can maintain complete humanity amidst the currents of haste and unceasing change.

The concept of "finding the right balance," rooted in traditional Thai wisdom, has become an important tool for addressing these challenges. The Sufficiency Economy philosophy bestowed by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (King Rama IX) is not merely an economic approach but a life philosophy applicable to creating balance between individual needs and the reality of changing environments (Piboolsravut, 2004). Understanding and applying this concept in the context of modern society is therefore of paramount importance. Sociological studies of modern society's acceleration reveal that speed is not merely a technical characteristic of tools and systems but has become a value and way of life deeply embedded in contemporary culture. Rosa (2013) explains that social acceleration occurs in three main dimensions: technical acceleration, acceleration of social change, and acceleration of life pace. These dimensions interconnect and profoundly impact time perception, decision-making, and

meaning-creation in people's lives. In the Thai context, the transition from agricultural to industrial and information society has occurred rapidly over the past few decades, creating tension between traditional values emphasizing tranquility, moderation, and community relationships, and modern values emphasizing speed, efficiency, and material success (Hewison, 2000). This tension is reflected in mental health problems, alienation in family relationships, and loss of connection with community and nature.

However, viewing these problems solely negatively may not be constructive for finding creative solutions. The pace of modern life is not merely a problem to be solved but a reality we must learn to coexist with. Technological development and communication speed open new opportunities for learning, creativity, and connecting with people worldwide while simultaneously creating challenges in maintaining balance and meaning in life.

The purpose of this article is to explore and analyze approaches for creating sustainable life balance in an era of global acceleration, using the concept of "finding the right balance" as the main framework. This article presents integration between traditional Thai wisdom and modern scientific knowledge to create deep understanding of how to live while maintaining complete humanity amidst the changes and challenges of our times.

2. Meaning and Dimensions of "Finding the Right Balance" in Modern Times

Understanding the concept of "finding the right balance" in contemporary society must begin with recognizing that the meaning of "balance" does not refer to stagnation or surrender to circumstances, but rather finding appropriate equilibrium between one's needs and environmental realities, requiring continuous assessment and adaptation. Aristotle's concept of the Golden Mean demonstrates that true virtue lies at the balance point between two extremes, not in avoiding action but in choosing actions appropriate to situations and contexts (Sherman, 1989). In Buddhist philosophy, the Middle Way (Majjhima Patipada) profoundly aligns with the concept of finding the right balance. The Buddha taught that true dharma practice does not lie in self-torture or unlimited desire pursuit but in finding appropriate balance that enables sustainable learning and development (Bodhi, 2000). This principle can be effectively applied to modern life, particularly in managing the pace and pressure of rapidly changing environments.

Modern psychological studies provide crucial information about stress effects on brain and body function. Selye (1978) demonstrated that appropriate stress levels can stimulate learning and development, while excessive stress negatively affects both physical and mental health. Finding appropriate balance is thus key to maintaining good wellness and efficient work performance. In the context of digital-age work, the concept of work-life balance has gained significant attention. However, recent studies suggest that clearly separating work and personal life boundaries may not align with the reality of a digitally interconnected society without limits. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) propose work-life integration that emphasizes creating harmony between different life roles rather than separating them.

One significant challenge in finding balance in modern times is managing information overload. The human brain has limited capacity for processing information, and when receiving more information than can be processed, stress, confusion, and inefficient decision-making occur (Miller, 1956). Learning to select important information and discard unnecessary information is therefore a crucial skill in creating life balance. Studies on mindfulness practice demonstrate that developing the ability to fully perceive the present moment can significantly help reduce stress and increase life happiness. Kabat-Zinn (2003) developed the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program showing positive results in helping people better manage stress and life challenges. Mindfulness practice is not about escaping the pace of the

world but learning to live with it mindfully and creatively.

In interpersonal relationships, finding the right balance means creating equilibrium between giving and receiving, between being oneself and adapting to others. Bowlby (1988) in attachment theory demonstrated that good relationships require balance between intimacy and independence. Learning to create secure attachment relationships is therefore an important foundation for creating happiness and stability in life.

3. Effects of Haste on Human Well-being

The pace of modern society affects humans in multiple dimensions: physical, mental, and social relationships. Medical and public health studies demonstrate that continuously rushed living can lead to various health problems, from hypertension and heart disease to digestive system problems, depression, and anxiety disorders (Sapolsky, 2004). The human autonomic nervous system, evolved to handle temporary dangerous situations, was not designed to function under continuous stress. When this system is stimulated for extended periods, wear and deterioration occur. Psychologically, haste affects memory and learning systems. When the brain must process information rapidly and continuously, the ability to store information in long-term memory decreases. True learning, requiring time for reflection and connecting new information with existing knowledge, is thus impacted (Brown et al., 2016). Additionally, haste affects decision-making ability. When making decisions rapidly and continuously, the brain experiences decision fatigue, reducing decision quality.

Twenge and Campbell's (2018) study found that young people raised in the smartphone and social media era have significantly higher levels of anxiety and depression than previous generations. Comparing oneself with others through social media, pressure to respond to messages and notifications immediately, and loss of time for rest and reflection all negatively affect mental health. In family relationships, haste affects communication quality and shared time. When family members are caught up in their individual activities and responsibilities, time for meaningful conversation and bonding decreases. Putnam (2000) in "Bowling Alone" demonstrated that community participation and social relationships in American society have significantly decreased over the past few decades, affecting both individual happiness and social strength.

However, interestingly, some studies show that haste does not always have negative effects. In appropriate situations, challenges and pressure can stimulate learning and development. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) in the concept of flow state demonstrated that when challenge levels balance with individual skill levels, a state occurs where individuals feel happy, focused, and highly efficient. The key is learning to systematically create such states. Research on resilience provides crucial information about factors helping individuals effectively cope with haste. Bonanno (2004) found that people with high resilience typically have the ability to adjust perspectives on situations, strong social support networks, and systematic stress management practices.

In the Thai context, the Department of Mental Health (2019) study found that mental health problems in the Thai population are trending upward, particularly among working-age populations living in urban areas. Key risk factors include excessive workload, lack of work-life balance, rapid technological changes, and loss of connection with community and traditional values.

3. Strategies for Creating Balance in Daily Life

Creating balance in life filled with haste requires diverse strategies that can be practically implemented in daily life. Developing these strategies must consider individual differences, cultural contexts, and work environments while remaining flexible enough to adapt

to changing situations. Mindful Time Management is the most fundamental and important strategy. Unlike traditional time management that emphasizes efficiency and maximizing work within given time, mindful time management focuses on awareness of activity quality and alignment with true life values and goals. Allen (2001) in the Getting Things Done system proposed work organization concepts that help reduce stress from remembering and worrying about pending tasks by recording and systematizing all work in easily accessible and reviewable formats.

Meditation practice and mindfulness development are other crucial strategies widely confirmed by scientific studies. Davidson and Lutz (2008) found that regular meditation practice can beneficially change brain structure and function, particularly in areas related to attention control, emotional management, and self-awareness. Meditation practice does not require long periods; even short daily practice of 10-15 minutes can positively affect mental health and stress management ability. Creating Meaningful Rituals and Routines helps create stability and anchoring points in life filled with uncertainty. Duhigg (2012) in habit formation studies demonstrated that creating good habits can reduce mental energy use in daily decision-making, leaving energy for more important tasks. Good morning rituals such as exercise, meditation, or reading can start the day with positive feelings and prepare for various challenges. Creating Digital Boundaries is a necessary skill in an era where technology plays roles in all life aspects. Setting rules for mobile phone, computer, and social media use helps prevent unnecessary disturbance and preserve time for important activities. Newport (2016) in "Deep Work" proposed creating environments conducive to work requiring high concentration by reducing technological disturbances and various notifications.

Developing Effective Communication Skills helps reduce conflicts and misunderstandings that may occur in relationships. Learning to express needs and boundaries clearly and appropriately, listening with understanding, and collaborative problem-solving are all skills that help create good relationships and reduce stress in working with others. Rosenberg (2003) in Nonviolent Communication proposed communication frameworks emphasizing understanding and empathy rather than judgment or attack. Holistic Health Care is an important foundation for creating life balance. Regular exercise, nutritious eating, adequate and quality sleep, and finding time for true rest all affect the ability to cope with stress and challenges. Walker (2017) in sleep studies demonstrated that inadequate sleep affects brain function in multiple areas, including memory, decision-making, and emotional control.

Nature Connection is a strategy with substantial scientific evidence support. Ulrich (1984) in landmark studies found that even viewing nature through windows can help reduce stress and increase recovery speed from surgery. Spending time in nature, whether walking in parks, sitting under trees, or planting, helps connect us with natural rhythms that are slower and calmer than urban society rhythms. Developing Mental Flexibility helps better adapt to change and uncertainty. Beck (1976) in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy theory demonstrated that changing thought patterns can affect emotions and behavior. Learning to view situations from multiple perspectives, distinguishing between controllable and uncontrollable factors, and accepting imperfection are all skills that help reduce stress and increase life happiness.

4. Mindfulness Principles and Their Application

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5. Creating Balance in the Digital Age

Technology in the current era has a complex role in creating life balance. While technology may cause haste and stress, it can also be a tool for creating balance. Correct understanding of constructive technology use is therefore an important part of finding the right balance in the digital age.



Figure 1: Diagram of the relationship between technology and life balance creation

Applications and digital tools designed to support mindfulness practice, time management, and mental health care are gaining popularity. Examples include Headspace and Calm applications providing guided meditation services, or the Forest application using Pomodoro technique for managing work and rest time. Firth et al.'s (2017) study found that mental health applications can provide good results, particularly when designed based on scientific evidence and with continuous monitoring. Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning are beginning to play roles in helping analyze lifestyle patterns and provide recommendations for balance improvement. Systems capable of tracking and analyzing sleep, exercise, stress levels, and daily activities can provide useful information for life quality improvement. However, using these technologies requires caution about privacy and excessive technology dependence.

Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technologies are beginning to be used to create experiences that aid relaxation and meditation practice. Riches et al.'s (2021) study found that VR relaxation programs can significantly reduce stress levels, particularly in environments where nature access is difficult. These technologies open new opportunities for creating experiences conducive to life balance. Remote work tools and online communication have dramatically changed work characteristics. Working from home and online meetings can

reduce travel time and increase time management flexibility while creating new challenges in separating work and personal life boundaries. Barrero et al. (2021) found that working from home positively affects work-life balance in many cases but requires appropriate management to prevent overwork and feelings of isolation from colleagues.

Social media and online communication platforms have both positive and negative effects on life balance creation. Positively, these technologies help connect with family, friends, and communities more easily, share experiences and receive support, and access useful information and knowledge. However, excessive social media use may lead to self-comparison with others, feelings of inadequacy, and time loss for important activities. Primack et al. (2017) found relationships between excessive social media use and depression and anxiety symptoms in teenagers and young adults.

Developing Digital Literacy is therefore an important skill everyone should have. Learning to use technology purposefully, questioning received information, protecting privacy, and creating healthy technology use habits are all part of creating balance in the digital age. Jenkins et al. (2016) proposed participatory culture frameworks emphasizing meaningful technology use for creativity, learning, and social participation. The key is recognizing that technology is merely a tool. Success in creating balance depends on usage methods and purposes. Developing the ability to select appropriate technology for needs and situations, setting clear boundaries, and maintaining balance between digital and real worlds are crucial keys to using technology to support life balance creation.

6. Applying Buddhist Philosophy in Managing Haste

Buddhist philosophy, over 2,500 years old, contains tools and concepts that can effectively help manage modern society's challenges. Buddhist principles and practices are not merely religious beliefs but thinking and practice systems confirmed by modern scientific studies to positively affect mental health and life happiness. The Four Noble Truths provide an important thinking framework for understanding and managing suffering caused by haste. The First Noble Truth is accepting that suffering or dissatisfaction is part of life. This understanding helps reduce resistance and anger about situations that cannot be immediately changed. The Second Noble Truth shows that suffering arises from desire and attachment. In the context of haste, attachment to wanting everything to happen as we want and when we want is a source of stress. This understanding helps us relax attachment and open minds to other possibilities (Anlayo, 2003).

Mindfulness practice, the heart of Buddhist dharma practice, has become a widely accepted tool for stress management and life balance creation. Mindfulness practice does not mean only sitting meditation but developing the ability to fully perceive the present moment, whether working, eating, walking, or conversing with others. Thich Nhat Hanh (1999) demonstrated that bringing mindfulness to daily routines can transform ordinary activities into opportunities for learning and mental development. The concept of Impermanence (Anicca) teaches us to understand that everything changes continuously. This understanding helps us not become overly attached to current situations, whether good or bad. In the context of haste, awareness of impermanence helps us understand that feelings of stress or overwhelm are temporary states, and we can learn to be with them without fighting or fleeing. Garland et al.'s (2015) study found that meditation practice emphasizing impermanence awareness can reduce anxiety and increase mental flexibility.

Loving-kindness (Metta) plays an important role in creating good relationships with oneself and others. In an era of high competition and pressure from comparison, developing self-compassion helps reduce harsh self-criticism and create tolerance for one's mistakes and limitations. Neff (2011) in self-compassion studies found that people with high self-

compassion have greater mental flexibility, happiness, and sustainable self-development motivation than those with high self-criticism tendencies. Insight Meditation (Vipassana) practice helps develop the ability to observe and understand one's mental processes. When we can clearly observe our thoughts, emotions, and responses, we can choose appropriate responses instead of automatic reactions. Goleman and Davidson (2017) in "Altered Traits" studies demonstrated that long-term meditation practice can beneficially change personality traits and stress responses.

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness (Satipatthana) provide systematic guidance for developing mindfulness in all life aspects. Body mindfulness (Kayanupassana) helps recognize stress signals in the body and better care for physical health. Feeling mindfulness (Vedanupassana) helps understand response patterns to pleasant and unpleasant feelings. Mind mindfulness (Cittanupassana) helps recognize one's mental states and emotions. Dhamma mindfulness (Dhammanupassana) helps understand principles and patterns underlying various experiences. Applying the Middle Way principle in managing technology and modern society's haste is an effective approach. The Middle Way does not mean staying neutral in everything or avoiding challenges but finding appropriate balance for situations and individuals. In technology use, the Middle Way might mean using technology for true benefit without attachment or infatuation. In work, the Middle Way might mean caring and working diligently without excessive attachment to results.

The concept of Karma in its correct meaning is the principle of cause and effect teaching us that present actions affect the future. This understanding helps us take responsibility for our choices and actions while helping us not worry about things beyond our control. Focusing on correct present actions rather than worrying about future results helps reduce stress and increase mindfulness in work.

7. Educational Approaches and Self-Development in an Era of Haste

Education and self-development in an era of rapid global change require shifting from traditional learning concepts emphasizing knowledge accumulation to new learning emphasizing adaptation, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. 21st-century skills do not focus solely on technical knowledge but include social and emotional skills that help work with others and manage stress effectively. Dweck (2006) in Growth Mindset concepts demonstrated that beliefs about one's abilities significantly affect learning and development. People who believe abilities can be developed (Growth Mindset) tend to face challenges, learn from mistakes, and continuously develop themselves, while those who believe abilities are fixed (Fixed Mindset) often avoid challenges and give up easily when facing problems.

Developing Emotional Intelligence is an important skill in creating life balance. Goleman (1995) defined emotional intelligence components as five areas: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and relationship management. These skills help work better under pressure, create good relationships with colleagues, and maintain emotional balance even in challenging situations. Self-Directed Learning is increasingly important in an era where knowledge changes rapidly. Knowles (1975) proposed Andragogy or adult education science emphasizing learning from experience, problem-solving, and real-life application. Developing self-learning skills helps adapt to changes and continuously develop new skills.

Creating Learning Networks is an important strategy for self-development in the digital age. Connecting with people having similar interests and goals, sharing knowledge and experiences, and learning from each other accelerates learning processes and creates inspiration. Siemens (2005) in Connectivism theory proposed that digital-age learning occurs through connections and networking more than accumulating knowledge in individuals alone. Developing Critical Thinking is a necessary skill for managing abundant information and

evaluating source credibility. Paul and Elder (2006) proposed thinking frameworks emphasizing questioning, evidence analysis, assumption consideration, and decision impact evaluation. These skills help make reasoned decisions and reduce risks from incorrect information deception.

Managing Information Diet or controlling information consumption is an important new concept in the information overflow era. Johnson (2012) proposed consciously selecting information similar to choosing beneficial food for the body. Creating habits of reading quality information, avoiding unnecessarily anxiety-inducing information, and reserving time for reflection and processing received information.

Digital Age Lifelong Learning Model



Figure 2: Digital Age Lifelong Learning Model

Developing Resilience is an important skill helping cope with change and failure. Seligman (2011) in PERMA concepts proposed well-being components including Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Achievement. Developing all five areas helps create strong foundations for facing challenges. Creating Personal Learning Environment

(PLE) using technology to effectively support learning. Selecting appropriate applications, websites, and digital tools for one's learning style, organizing information and tracking progress, and creating clear boundaries between learning and entertainment help make learning efficient and sustainable.

8. Effects on Relationships and Community

Modern society's haste profoundly affects the nature and quality of interpersonal relationships and community functioning. These changes have both positive and negative aspects and require adaptation and creating new strategies for maintaining and developing meaningful and sustainable relationships. In family relationships, haste affects communication patterns and shared time. Robinson and Godbey's (2019) study found that although modern families have many advanced communication tools, communication quality has decreased. Deep conversations are replaced by brief information exchanges. Shared time often occurs in parallel rather than true interaction, such as sitting in the same room but each person staring at their own screen.

Creating quality relationships in the digital age requires intention and systematic practice. Setting tech-free time for conversation and joint family activities, practicing active listening skills, and showing genuine interest in family members' experiences and feelings are all methods that help maintain and strengthen family bonds. Gottman (2015) in long-term relationship studies demonstrated that attention and response to spouses' or family members' communication initiation is the most important factor in creating strong relationships. In friendship and social relationship contexts, technology has dramatically changed how relationships are created and maintained. Dunbar (2016) in "Dunbar's Number" studies demonstrated that although social media helps us connect with many people, the ability to maintain meaningful relationships remains limited by human brain nature. Having hundreds or thousands of friends on social media does not mean having real relationships with them.

Creating meaningful relationships in the digital age requires combining online and face-to-face communication. Using technology for contact and coordination while reserving time for real-world meetings and joint activities, choosing to deepen relationships with fewer people rather than having superficial relationships with many, and developing skills for building trust and understanding in rapidly changing environments. In community and society dimensions, haste affects participation and local attachment feelings. Florida's (2017) "Creative Class" study demonstrated that modern people often have high geographical mobility, frequently changing residences and workplaces, making local community bonding challenging. Simultaneously, technology opens opportunities to create online communities with shared interests.

Creating balance between online and offline communities is a significant challenge. Online communities can provide opportunities to connect with people having similar interests or experiences worldwide, learn and share knowledge, and receive support in matters not found in local communities. However, local communities are important for creating sense of place belonging, collaborative problem-solving, and social security creation. Aldrich (2012) in Social Capital studies demonstrated that social relationships and community trust are important factors in facing crises and creating community resilience. Participating in community activities, helping neighbors, and creating relationship networks in the area are all investments in long-term security and happiness for both individuals and society.

Applying the "finding the right balance" concept in relationship creation means finding equilibrium between giving and receiving, between intimacy and independence, between caring for others and self-care. Learning to set appropriate boundaries, clearly communicate needs, and respect others' boundaries are all important skills in creating sustainable and

fulfilling relationships.

Table 1: Comparison of relationships in pre-digital and post-digital eras

| Aspect | Pre-Digital Era | Post-Digital Era |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Communication | Slow but deep | Fast but superficial |
| Geographical scope | Limited locally | Geographically unlimited |
| Network quantity | Few but tight | Many but loose |
| Continuity | Lifelong sustainable | Frequently changing |

Developing Conflict Resolution skills is necessary in an era of increasing diversity of opinions and lifestyles. Learning to separate people from problems, listening to understand rather than to argue, finding common ground and solving problems together helps maintain relationships even in situations with different opinions.

9. Conclusion

Living in an era of global acceleration requires perspective adjustment and developing new skills to create balance between needs to keep pace with the world and fundamental human needs for meaningful and quality life. The concept of "finding the right balance" rooted in traditional Thai wisdom and Buddhist philosophy can be an important tool for navigating through these challenges.

From studies and analysis in this article, important points can be summarized as follows. First, modern society's haste is a reality we must learn to coexist with, not something to escape or resist. Developing appropriate skills and strategies will help utilize the speed and connectivity of the modern world while maintaining complete humanity.

Second, creating life balance does not mean equally dividing time and energy in all aspects but finding appropriate balance for each individual's situation, values, and goals at each time period. Flexibility and continuous adaptation are key to creating sustainable balance.

Third, mindfulness practice and self-awareness development are important foundations for creating life balance. Learning to observe and understand one's mental processes, manage emotions and stress, and make mindful decisions helps choose appropriate responses instead of automatic reactions.

Fourth, technology can be both problem and solution in creating life balance. Developing digital literacy and using technology mindfully helps utilize technology benefits in supporting balance creation rather than being controlled by technology. Setting clear boundaries and selecting appropriate tools are important skills in the digital age.

Fifth, quality relationships are important components of creating life balance. Investing time and intention in creating and maintaining relationships with family, friends, and community helps create strong support networks and feelings of belonging to something greater than oneself.

Sixth, lifelong learning and continuous self-development are necessities in a rapidly changing world. Developing diverse skills, both technical and social-emotional, helps increase flexibility and adaptability to change.

From this study, practical approaches for creating balance in daily life can be recommended as follows:

For individual level: developing mindfulness skills in daily routines, creating morning and evening rituals that help start and end days mindfully, setting goals aligned with life values and meaning, managing time efficiently emphasizing quality over quantity, caring for physical and mental health holistically, and creating clear boundaries in technology use.

For family level: creating time and space for quality communication, establishing shared rules about technology use, doing joint activities unrelated to technology, teaching and learning stress management skills together, and creating family traditions and rituals that strengthen bonds.

For organizational and workplace level: creating organizational culture emphasizing work-life balance, providing training on stress management and mindfulness practice, designing work environments conducive to well-being, supporting work flexibility, and evaluating work performance focusing not only on productivity but including sustainability and quality of life.

For society and public policy level: developing education systems emphasizing life skills and emotional management learning, creating public spaces conducive to rest and community building, developing transportation systems reducing travel time and stress, controlling advertising and marketing promoting excessive consumption, and supporting research and development on well-being and citizen happiness.

Recommendations for future research should include comparative studies of life balance approaches in different cultures, developing and testing life balance measurement tools with accuracy and reliability, studying long-term effects of mindfulness practice and balance strategies on health and happiness, researching new technology use such as AI and VR in supporting life balance creation, and studying approaches for creating communities and societies conducive to well-being in the digital age.

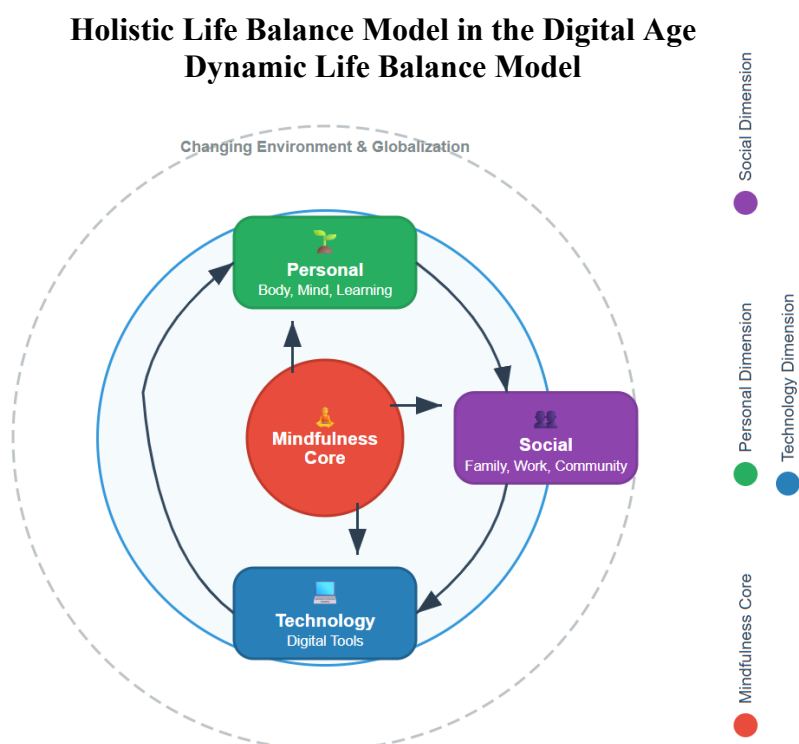


Figure 3: Holistic Life Balance Model in the Digital Age (Dynamic Life Balance Model)

The holistic life balance model proposed in this article consists of four main interconnected components: (1) Mindfulness Core as the center for awareness and decision-making, (2) Personal Dimension covering physical and mental care, learning, and self-development, (3) Social Dimension including family relationships, work, and community participation, and (4) Technology Dimension involving creative and bounded digital tool use.

Arrows connecting different components show dynamic interaction and mutual

influence. Changes in any dimension affect other dimensions and overall balance. The outermost circle represents continuously changing environments and globalization influences everyone must face. Balance creation success depends on the ability to maintain stable mindfulness core while flexibly adapting to changes in all dimensions.

The model presented in this article is not merely a theoretical framework but a practical tool applicable to real daily life. Using this model must begin with assessing current conditions in each dimension, identifying strengths and areas needing development, and planning systematic and continuous improvement. Success is not measured by perfection in all dimensions but by the ability to maintain appropriate balance for situations and sustainable growth.

Ultimately, finding the right balance in a fast-paced world is not a goal achievable once and finished but a continuous process of learning, adaptation, and selection. Developing awareness, flexibility, and compassion toward oneself and others will help us navigate through the challenges of our times with wisdom and grace. Combining ancient wisdom with modern knowledge, between speed and slowness, between connection and solitude, will be key to creating meaningful and sustainable life in an accelerated era.

The most important thing is recognizing that creating balance does not mean stopping or escaping change but learning to dance with the rhythm of modern life with grace and self-confidence, maintaining stable centers while adapting to changing currents around us, and creating true meaning and happiness amidst the complexity and uncertainty of our times. This is the heart of finding the right balance in a fast-paced world and the ultimate goal of the holistic life balance model proposed in this article.

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