



THE INTEGRATION OF THE GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR THE GOOD LIFE OF THE THAI SOCIETY

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Abstract

This research was to investigate the integrating governance principles for good life achievement in the current Thai societies and to find directions to back-up its accomplishment. As such, in-depth interview, focus groups, and non-participatory observation were qualitatively employed for data collection during July-December 2019. The ten interviewees comprising two each with the entitled monks, scholars, laities, Buddhapanya Sri Thawarawadee Buddhist College postgraduates and undergraduates mostly prioritized equity and inclusiveness (opportunities to improve wellbeing) while human rights was the last priority and proposed Rājadhamma 10 to replace the existing governance. The four focus groups each assembling an entitled monk, a scholar, a laity, similarly prioritized as the interviewee group. In Rājadhamma 10, every focus group prioritized Attha (advantageous welfare) followed by Dhamma-vepulla (life value enhancement); Kāmabhogīsukha (happy family life) and Vimokkha (sense of public). With non-participatory observations, the entitled monks were prone to Buddhist Dhamma and Ethics. The rest partly agreed with the them but weighed more on rule of law, transparency, participation, accountability and cost-effectiveness. Some voiced governance indicators, application process and publicity. Two directions were found, first the imperative participative leadership (democratic) training and second, behaviorism and cognitivism training since the former was responsive to rule of law while the latter was the

mindfulness and wisdom development welfare equality, social responsiveness and why human rights were least recognized so on.

Keywords: Integration, Good governance, The good life, Thai society

Introduction

Saying the Greek “Call no man happy until he’s dead or call no man happy until he’s long dead”. But Epicurus, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle agreed that happiness involved virtuousness, health, prosperity, friendship, respect, luck and engagement. The Chinese influenced by Confucianism however emerging into the lead in happiness not through acquiring wealth but knowledge and arts. Significantly, good life must be free from extreme nationalism, extreme xenophobia, extreme racism, extreme religious fanaticism, and extreme politics. As such the Maslowian’s Hierarchy of Needs may reflect hierarchical good life well.

However, the good life flourished with wellbeing of plentitude, harmony, like Buddhist Noble Eightfold Path. In the fall of 20th Century, Carl Rogers defined good life as enriching wealth amid life experience diversion with happiness, blissfulness, condiment and enjoyability abundant with excitement, enrichment, reward, meaningfulness thought and challenges. Rogers encouraged to fully launch oneself into the rivers of life for Becoming. Nearing defined good life as an ideal to which people looked and for which they strived while its reward contributed good life to those who pursued after it. Good life since Chinese civilization to the Hellenistic until today evolved worldly gratifications of good and gains but unlikely envisioning of the afterlife, wherewith today good life combined worldly happiness and spiritual life to attain peaceful afterlife (Etzioni, Amitai, 2008).

Review Literatures

International Good Governance: in 1992, UN initiated good governance for sustainable development goal with eight principles: participation, rule of law, consensus orientedness, equity and inclusiveness,



effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, transparency, responsiveness (Sheng, Yap Kioe, 2009 July 10).

In 2008, the Council of Europe at the local level embraced the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance and its 12 Principles, agreed upon in the 2007-Ministerial Conference in Valencia, Spain. Alina Tatarenko, Head of the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform, Council of Europe proposed to impose the 12 Good Governance principles, i.e., participation, representation, fair conduct of elections, responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness, openness and transparency, rule of law, ethical conduct, competence and capacity, innovation and openness to change, sustainability and long-term orientation, sound financial management, human rights, cultural diversity and social cohesion, and accountability (Tatarenko, Alina, 2008).

The Thai government enacted good governance in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 1997 found in Section 71 Paragraph 1 and Section 78 with major principle of creating administrative transparency, inspection of the state power enforcement, participation of all national and local sectors, and also enacted in the Constitution of The Kingdom of Thailand AD 2007 (Prathan Suwannamongkol, 2015). In 1999, the Prime Minister Office has regulated its ministerial rules on systematizing the Good Administrative Affairs on Homeland and Societies, B.E. 2542 (1999) and became effective since 11th August 1999 (but already dissolved) for the state agencies with six significant principles of rule of law, integrity, transparency, participation, responsibility and cost-effectiveness.

Religious Good Governance: His Lord Buddha for over 2,600 years ago advocated that good life is through moderate life -Majjhimāpaṭipadā (Pāli) involving Antā 2 [not living in any extremes of either Kāmālasukhallikānuyoga (extreme of hedonism) or Attakilamathānuyoga (extreme asceticism)]. Second, it was Ariyasacca 4 (the Four Noble Truth) to enhance good life which included the truth of Dukkha [sufferings and miseries], Dukkha-samudaya (causes of sufferings and miseries), Dukkha-nirodha (cessation of sufferings and miseries), and Dukkhanirodha-gāminī paṭipadā (path leading to the cessation). The Buddhist Dhamma for good life in fact pertained 27 Dhammas in the Dhamma to Lead Growing Life for the Purpose of Happy Utilization and 8 Dhammas for Economic Welfare (Phra Brahmagunabhorn, (P.A. Payutto), 2013).

Dhamma felicitas beatus (beneficial happiness) involves 27 dhamma of the growing life for achieving beneficial happiness and 7 dhamma for economic wellbeing economy. However, the Buddhist governance bringing public good and gains was the 10 Royal Virtues or Dasabidha-Rājadhamma exercised by the leaders or rulers. They are (1) Dāna (philanthropic deeds) - it is the leadership duty to secure welfare for the needy by feeding, clothing and providing them with other necessities. (2) Śīla (morality or beneficence) - the leader must behave himself in public and private life in an exemplary way. (3) Pariccāga (donations) - privileges are granted by the leader to the ones who loyally serve the homeland and acknowledges their loyal services while encouraging all people to act in the same way. (4) Ajjava (uprightness and kindness) - the leader, the rulers must be unconditionally straightforward, never having recourse with any unfair means to attain their ends. (5) Majjava (gentleness and impartiality) - the leader's candidness and rectitude, should require firmness but with gentleness rather than harshness and cruelty. A corresponding balance is demanded between firmness and gentleness. (6) Tapa [self-control/composure] - the leader must control his/her five senses, avoid excessive indulgence, and walk the middle path. (7) Akkodha [non anger and hatred] - a leader should not anchor grievances but forbearance and affection. (8) Avihimsa (nonviolence) - leader must observe nonviolence to the maximum extent reconcilable with his/her obligations. (9) Khanti (forgiveness, tolerance and patience) a leader must behave himself/herself with courage, patience, and fortitude, in time of joy, sorrow, victory and defeat, and act consciously with calmness, magnanimity and dignity. (10) Avirohata (Non- revengefulness, non-enmity, non-vindictiveness, but friendship) - a leader must never indulge in 'bheda' (divide and rule) but always act with spirit of benevolence and amity Ratwatte, Charitha, 2014).

His Lord Buddha has experienced emperorship or kingship, He should have been the world emperor if He chose kingship. From His Lord teachings, as the Enlightened One; He preached common people, arahants and devas. The principle of the 10 Royal Virtues is the Dhamma, the missions of the king and administrators and in the Buddhist polity (government) it is founded on the Buddhist understanding of the mind; and historically speaking, the Buddhist view of mind is best exemplified in the emperor Asoka's understanding of good governance and polity by way of his understanding and definitions of Dhamma (Varma, Chandra B. 2018).



The Buddhist principle of good life was popularly eyeing the Middle Way and the Four Noble Truth reinforced by Rājadharmma¹⁰ while Christianity encouraged their believers to unchain oneself from mammon added with contention with what one had and left the rest to God through the 10 Commandments. In Islam too, Allah convinced that He shalt bring good life for His true believers through abide in 10 Furū‘al-dīn (Arabic: فروع الدين). Then UN emphasized 8 principles while EU imposed 14 principles and the Thai government enforced 6 principles. Were global governance principles likely unfit as one shoe or multiple shoes unlikely fit some. Thailand imposed just 6 principles since 1997, still around 1.85 billion people, or 36% of the world's population lived in extreme poverty and nearly half the population in developing countries lived on less than \$1.25 earning a day. To a certain extent, the paracetamol Governance drove Thailand from 2015 to 2018, the climbing poverty rate from 7.2% to 9.8% and deprived people surged from 4.85 million to around over 6.7 million Bangkok Post Reporter. (2020).

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the integrating governance principles for good life achievement.
2. To find approachable directions to back-up the achievement of good life in the current Thai societies.

Research Methodology

This ethnographically qualitative research employed in-depth interview, focus groups, and non-participatory observations to collect data. 10 willful interviewees were two entitled monks, two scholars, two laities, two postgraduates and two undergraduates who were different from the 40 focus group participants. 40 Participants in four focus groups for triangulation were willfully attended by four entitled monks, four scholars, four laities, four postgraduates and four undergraduates. The 4 researchers coordinated each four focus-group and attended as the non-participatory observers. These 50 participants were 32 years old by average and mostly were the personnel and students in the Buddhapanya Sri Thawaravadhee Buddhist Monastic College: Mahachula-longkornraja-vidyalaya University in the programs of Certificate in Saṅgha Affairs Administration, Master in Buddhism in Social Development and Bachelor in Public Administration. The team began with interviewing 10

volunteers; then process and exegesize the interviewed data. Apart of integrating governance principles, the team found Rājadhamma 10 proposed by interviewees. In data analysis, the researchers have employed Content and Discourse Analysis with descriptive explanatory exegesis and presentation.

Results

Good life achievement through integrating governance. The priority principle reflected by interviewees: Most interviewees prioritized the equity and inclusiveness (opportunities for improving wellbeing) followed by cost-effectiveness, competence and capacity, efficiency and effectiveness, innovation and openness to change, sound financial management and sustainability and long-term orientation. However, majority of interviewees remarked individuals had to adhere to rule of law, accountability, ethical conduct, integrity, openness and transparency, responsibility and responsiveness. In long-term, most interviewees moderately agreed with consensus-orientedness, cultural diversity and social cohesion, participation, representation and fair conduct of elections and least agreed with human rights to draw good life. 90% of interviewees proposed Rājadhamma 10 which might contribute both good worldly life and blissful afterlife.

Most members of each focus group prioritized the equity and inclusiveness (opportunities for improving wellbeing) followed by consensus-orientedness, responsiveness, cultural diversity and social cohesion, participation, representation and fair conduct of elections. Still, each democratic community members either individually or wholly should abide in rule of law, accountability, ethical conduct, integrity, openness and transparency and responsibility. For long-term good life each societal individual should be well mindful about or otherwise trained on cost-effectiveness, competence and capacity, efficiency and effectiveness, innovation and openness to change, sound financial management, sustainability and long-term orientation, and human rights (see the Table 1, below)

Table 1: Prioritization of the Integrating Governance Factors of UN-EU-TH by IW and FG

No	The integrating governance factors of UN-EU-TH	UN	EU	TH	IW	FG
1	Accountability	6	14	-	9	8



2	Competence and capacity	-	8	-	3	14
3	Consensus-orientedness	3	-	-	15	2
4	Cost-effectiveness	-	-	6	2	13
5	Cultural diversity and social cohesion	-	13	-	16	4
6	Efficiency and effectiveness	5	4	-	4	15
7	Equity and inclusiveness	4	-	-	1	1
8	Ethical conduct	-	7	-	10	9
9	Human rights	-	12	-	19	19
10	Innovation and openness to change	-	9	-	5	16
11	Integrity	-		2	11	10
12	Openness and transparency	7	5	3	12	11
13	Participation	1	1	4	17	5
14	Representation and fair conduct of elections	-	2	-	18	6
15	Responsibility	-	-	5	13	12
16	Responsiveness	8	3	-	14	3
17	Rule of law	2	6	1	8	7
18	Sound financial management	-	11	-	6	17
19	Sustainability and long-term orientation	-	10	-	7	18

Notes: UN = United Nations; EU = European Union; TH = Thailand;
IW = Interviewees; FG = Focus Group

His Lord Buddha practiced Rājadharmā 10 during his reign before this imperial governance and his kingdom was orderly, prosperous and peaceful before he left his worldly life to search approaches to overcome birth, aged, infirmity and death for the permanent happiness not only for himself but to all beings. The proposal was Rājadharmā 10 as the imperial governance philanthropic deeds, morality or beneficence, donations, uprightness and kindness, gentleness and impartiality, self-control composure, non-anger and

hatred, nonviolence, forgiveness, tolerance and patience, Non-revengefulness, non-enmity, non-vindictiveness, but friendship.

Attha (advantageous welfare) was worth $\bar{x} = 4.26$ (85.20%) which included 1) associating with philanthropist, 2) healthily long life, 3) security of life and property, 4) co-existence with trust, and 5) bridge interrelationship. Kāmabhogīsukha (happy family life) was worth $\bar{x} = 4.17$ (83.38%) which involved 1) Happy family life, 2) blissful worldly life and afterlife, 3) rewarded higher position and sit in the heart to people, 4) successful in career life, 5) new life creation and more social fairness, 6) Safeguard and balance life and societies. Dhamma-vepulla (life value enhancement) was worth $\bar{x} = 4.24$ (84.80%) which engulfed 1) precept upholder, 2) heavenly afterlife, 3) turning enemy to be friend, 4) Creating mutual delight, 5) counter-corruption and distrust, 6) alleviate retaliation, 7) promote acceptance, respect and harmony, 8) being revered, 9) being morally prudent, 10) able to restrain greed, hatred, delusion, conceit, wrong view, suspicion, sloth/disheartenment, restlessness/ distraction, shamelessness to immorality, and dread to immorality, 11) internalize non-violence, and 12) forgiving forbearance. Vimokkha (sense of public) was worth $\bar{x} = 4.11$ (82.20%) which embraced 1) becoming the beloved to public, 2) gloriously famous in public, 3) accountably impressive and euphonic speech, 4) being mindful and moral erudite for public, 5) beneficial lucks and happiness sharing, 6) enemy free, 7) emersion of group solidarity and true friends, 8) rise to civil right, 9) support NGO activities, 10) encourage researches in the fields of history, sociology, religious studies, theology, and comparative political philosophy, 11) popular community natural leader and guardian, and 12) having mental health (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Contributions of Rājadhamma10

	Contributions of Rājadhamma10	\bar{x} & %
	Dhamma-vepulla (life value enhancement) 1) precept upholder, 2) heavenly afterlife, 3) turning enemy to be friend, 4) creating mutual delight, 5) counter-corruption and distrust, 6) alleviate retaliation, 7) promote acceptance, respect and harmony, 8) being revered, 9) being morally prudent, 10) able to restrain greed, hatred, delusion, conceit, wrong view, suspicion, sloth/disheartenment, restlessness/ distraction,	$\bar{x} =$ 4.24 84.8 0%



	shamelessness to immorality, and dread to immorality, 11) internalize non-violence, and 12) forgiving forbearance.	
	Vimokkha (sense of public) 1) becoming the beloved to public, 2) gloriously famous in public, 3) accountably impressive and euphonic speech, 4) being mindful and moral erudite for public, 5) beneficial lucks and happiness sharing, 6) enemy free, 7) emersion of group solidarity and true friends, 8) rise to civil right, 9) support NGO activities, 10) encourage researches in the fields of history, sociology, religious studies, theology, and comparative political philosophy, 11) popular community natural leader and guardian, and 12) having mental health.	\bar{x} = 4.11 82.2 0%
	Kāmaabhogīsukha (happy family life) 1) Happy family life, 2) blissful worldly life and afterlife, 3) rewarded higher position and sit in the heart to people, 4) successful in career life, 5) new life creation and more social fairness, and 6) Safeguard and balance life and societies.	\bar{x} = 4.17 83.3 8%
	Attha (advantageous welfare) 1) associating with philanthropist, 2) healthily long life, 3) security of life and property, 4) co-existence with trust, and 5) bridge interrelationship	\bar{x} = 4.26 85.2 0%

Approachable directions to achieve good life: Most focus groups finalized four leading practical directions to back-up the good-life accomplishment and they were first participative leadership (democratic) training because consensus-orientedness, responsiveness, cultural diversity and social cohesion, and participation required lifelong trainings and exposures to various experiences. Second, behaviorism and cognitivism should be trained since the former was responsive to adherence to rule of law while the latter was conducive to mindfulness and wisdom development. Third, amid volatile economic environment, societal members particularly leaders should be educated on sound financial management and cost-effectiveness because both were helpful in budgeting and financing. Finally, natural-born leader was a person who displayed his/her vision, effectiveness, socially skills, self-confidence,

assertiveness and boldness, whom societies should exploit for the common good.

Discussions

Good life achievement through integrating governance: Most interviewees prioritized equity and inclusiveness (opportunities for improving wellbeing) followed by cost-effectiveness, competence and capacity, efficiency and effectiveness, innovation and openness to change, sound financial management and sustainability and long-term orientation. It was certainly true that an army marched on its stomach said Napoleon Bonaparte (Nattress, Daniel et al..2009). Had armforces, workforces or everyone expected to fulfill tasks, to be competitive, efficient, effective, innovative, creative to change, sound financial management and sustainable only if they were well fed. Majority commented also anomie and anarchism would outbreak if civilians thought “Rule is to Break” (Steven, John and Christy, Jana, 2012). Had it been so, there would be despair, unaccountability, unethical conduct, non-integrity, reservedness and non-transparency, irresponsibility and irresponsiveness, which would then be a fail state and max- underdeveloped country. It was surprised that over half of interviewees reserved to share on topics consensus-orientedness, cultural diversity and social cohesion, participation, representation and fair conduct of elections and human rights. Even these topics were democratic and the talk of the nation but almost 90% of the interviewees proposed to apply Rājadhmma 10 because it was prone to be republican governmental system since His Lord Buddha enthroned (Phra Brahmapundit, Chief Editor, 2017).

With the triangulated four focus groups, most members believed that equity and inclusiveness (opportunities for improving wellbeing), should be the prime concern. The focus group participants commented “hunger leads to anger.” All knew hunger could occasionally affect human perceptions and emotions of the world around, but just not long ago the hangry, is a bad-tempered or irritating caused by hunger. If as such, it was imperative to break discussions on consensus, responsiveness, cultural diversity and social cohesion, participation, representation and fair conduct of elections because all participants would fight rather than talks. Still, rule of law, accountability, ethical conduct, integrity, openness and transparency and responsibility were needed else, the community would have been anomic, distrustful, immoral, close and non-transparent and irresponsible if community activities had been assigned



(Whitton, Howard, 2001). For sustainability and long-term orientation, societies should otherwise trained on cost-effectiveness to be capable to calculate break-even point and profits, to upgrade competence, capacity, efficiency and effectiveness for greater performance. Societal members should learn innovation and be ready for change while studying sound financial management to help budgeting and financing. Had all these sustainability and long-term orientation been fulfilled then human rights would automatically be recognized – survival first human rights later, if one died one could not claim one's rights.

It was observed that most interviewees and focus group members prioritized equity and inclusiveness (opportunities for improving wellbeing) while human rights was the last thing they recognized. It was assumed that the nature of underdeveloped and developing countries prioritized their family daily living: stomach to be filled and full; survival first human rights later. Therefore, they needed such opportunities while other topics or encouragement were second or the last one. It was witnessed with this research that ten interviewees and the forty focus group members recognized 'Human Rights' as the last account to be discussed or never because human rights were claimed most in the developed countries but Thailand the land of freedom enjoyed human rights since 1932; had all levels and systems of the government authorities imposed rigid laws to all.

In the proposed of Rājadharmma¹⁰ for good life; we found that the priority was Attha (advantageous welfare) was worth $\bar{x} = 4.26$ (85.20%) followed by Dhamma-vepulla (life value enhancement) was worth $\bar{x} = 4.24$ (84.80%); Kāmabhogīsukha (happy family life) was worth $\bar{x} = 4.17$ (83.38%); and Vimokkha (sense of public) was worth $\bar{x} = 4.11$ (82.20%). It is observed that worldly welfare came first which was corresponded with the integrating UN, EU and Thai governance. The rationale was at least one third of citizens in the underdeveloped and developing countries struggled in their daily living; it is common that their welfare and wellbeing (Attha: $\bar{x} = 4.26$) should come first. Here we found that though they struggled still they never left gods or their beliefs to enhance their value of life (Dhamma-vepulla: $\bar{x} = 4.24$). The Buddhists believed that everything was impermanent and changes were always possible. The way to Enlightenment was through the development and practice of morality, wisdom and meditation. The Buddhists believed life was endless and susceptible to impermanence, misery and uncertainty (BBC reporter, 2009). It seemed that participants were mindful to the religious belief and rites were in

their DNA since birth showing that worldly life was walking to the afterlife which motivated them to endeavor the religious final goal - Nibbāna. Nevertheless, participants still longed for happy family life which would support them to engage themselves religious activities while they could at the end help public in the practices of Vimokkha (sense of public) that was worth $\bar{x} = 4.11$. It was observed that when coming to Dhamma, the participants weighed so very high of its nobility which reflect the background of participants who were all Buddhists and involved in the Buddhist College personnel. It reflected that participants who depended on Dhamma, honored Dhamma, paid respect to Dhamma, esteemed Dhamma, worshipped Dhamma, venerated Dhamma, had Dhamma as the flag, had Dhamma as the banner, and had dhamma as the authority.

Approachable directions to achieve good life: The participants finalized four leading practical directions. They were first participative leadership (democratic) training was necessary because to lead communities in order to host consensus, to brainstorm responsiveness amid cultural diversity and social schism demanded for well-equipped and experienced leaders and significantly failure or success were weighed much on leaders. Second, training on behaviorism and cognitivism should be staged since behaviorism was a systematic method to comprehend the beings' behaviors though behaviorists usually accepted the leading role of heredity in specifying behaviors, they primarily focused on environmental phenomenon (Araiba, Sho, 2019). Cognitivism as a learning theory was focused on the processes to accumulated knowledge not behaviors and the cognitivists did not need an external learning exhibition but eyed more on inward processes and nexus taken place while learning. Third, amid volatile economic environment, community members and leaders should be educated on sound financial management and cost-effectiveness. They were the prudent tracking and management of the financial resources and cash-flow. Would absence of sound financial management exist, decision-making might have been flawed and opened doors to trifle issues to becoming critical problems and risks. Fourth, natural-born leaders contributed vision, effectiveness and equipped with social ability, self-confidence, assertiveness and boldness, which were useful and societies should exploit such traits for the common good. They dared to fail in experiment, they followed their purposes, they gave, they gave themselves a break, they really listened,



they sought out new experiences and ways of thinking, and they empathized with others (Gregoire, Carolyn, 2017).

Conclusions

The findings with integrating governance, most interviewees prioritized equity and inclusiveness (opportunities for improving wellbeing) followed by cost-effectiveness, competence and capacity, efficiency and effectiveness, innovation and openness to change, sound financial management and sustainability and long-term orientation. However, majority of interviewees remarked individuals should adhere to rule of law, accountability, ethical conduct, integrity, openness and transparency, responsibility and responsiveness. Nevertheless, in long-term good life was similar to the priority of the focus groups. The wonder was 90% of most interviewees proposed Rājadhama 10 which might fit worldly and path to the afterlife. Most members of each focus group prioritized also equity and inclusiveness (opportunities for improving wellbeing), followed by consensus-orientedness, responsiveness, cultural diversity and social cohesion, participation, representation and fair conduct of elections. Still, they agreed to adhere to rule of law, accountability, ethical conduct, integrity, openness and transparency and responsibility. For long-term good life either individuals or societies should be well mindful to cost-effectiveness, competence and capacity, efficiency and effectiveness, innovation and openness to change, sound financial management, sustainability and long-term orientation, and human rights. The proposal Rājadhama 10 would contribute primarily Attha (advantageous welfare) followed by followed by Dhamma-vepulla (life value enhancement), Kāmabhogīsukha (happy family life) and Vimokkha (sense of public). Finally, the approachable directions were training and educating on participative leadership (democratic), behaviorism, cognitivism, financial management and inviting natural-born leader to work for the common good.

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