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### **Aims and Scopes**

Global Interactive Journal of World Religions and Cultures (GIJWRC) is a trilingual (English, Thai and Chinese Mandarin) and an interdisciplinary journal seeking an engagement between scholars working across a range of disciplinary fields, including world philosophical studies, religious studies, cultural studies, critical theory, and interdisciplinary humanities and social sciences. Lying at the interface between the study of philosophy, religion and other academic studies of culture. In particular, the journal will consider why philosophical, religious and cultural studies have hitherto neglected the significance of religious manifestations in cross-cultural perspectives, and define ways in which religious studies needs to engage with contemporary areas of cultural critique. The principal aim of the Global Interactive Journal of World Religions and Cultures (GIJWRC) is to promote critical investigation into all aspects of the study of philosophy, religions, cultures, and interdisciplinary humanities and social sciences, particularly with an innovative and global interactive focus.

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## Preface

Global Interactive Journal of World Religions and Cultures (GIJWRC) hosted by the Community Enterprise of the Banana Conservation Center in Suphanburi, No.8/3 Suphanburi Railway Station Road, Ruoa Yai Subdistrict, Muang District, Suphanburi Province 72000, biannually publishing research papers (January-June, July-December) and special issues, both via a double-blind peer review process.

The principal aim of the Global Interactive Journal of World Religions and Cultures (GIJWRC) is to promote critical investigation into all aspects of the study of philosophy, religions, cultures, and interdisciplinary humanities and social sciences, particularly with an innovative and global interactive focus. We are pleased to present **Vol.3. 1.1 of the GIJWRC, the first issue of the 2023.** This volume consists of eleven articles covering a wide range of topics in the areas of education, music, healthcare, marketing, and management. We continue to welcome contributions of multidisciplinary nature, that can help to improve aspects of understanding, competencies, and applications to manage operations, innovation, and creativity, of any nature, at any level – individual, team, group, organizational, societal, national, ecosystemic or at the global level.

All submitted papers must be original and not submitted or published elsewhere. Submitted papers will undergo originality assessment. Manuscripts will pass through an initial editorial screening and are sent for double-blind review to anonymous independent referees. Apart from research articles, we also accept quality book reviews. All accepted articles, after appropriate revisions, will be published online on our Journal's website, and are downloadable free of charge. We recommend that potential authors review our publishing policies, manuscript requirements, and formats, before submitting their manuscripts to the Journal.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Yota Chaiworamankul

Editor in Chief

## Table of Contents



<b>Buddhism in Thailand and The Ethnic Coexistence</b>	
Bhatskorn Piyobhaso (Kota), Sura Charnatharo, Punvalee Sermsupt	1-14
<b>The Study of U-Thong City: History of Buddhist Propagation</b>	
Thanutchaporn Ketkong	15-29
<b>The Kālāmasūta Conviction</b>	
Christie Shang, John Thomas Giordano	30-37
<b>The Eight Perspectives of the Cooperative Pedagogy and Teaching Internship to Leverage the Competencies of the Pedagogical Students in the Higher Education-based Theravada in the Global Shifts</b>	
Phanommas Bamrungsin, Roman Meinhold	38-55
<b>Morality and Purification for Healing the Future World</b>	
Bhatskorn Piyobhaso (Kota), Thupstan Lundup	65-68
<b>A Relationship Investigation between the Life Quality Viewpoints and the Equilibrium between the Worklife with the Routine –life among the Support Personnel: XYZ Outlets</b>	
Nattira Horpibulsuk, Punnakarn Tongyou	69-79



# **BUDDHISM IN THAILAND AND THE ETHNIC COEXISTENCE**

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## **Abstract**

This article aimed to point out how Buddhism can be one of the approaches to the generous coexistence of ethnic groups in Thailand in the aspect of social, economic, and politics. This article also reviews the sustainable practices of the ethnic groups, generous coexistence of ethnic groups, and protection of ethnic rights for coexistence in Thailand. Buddhism for the generous coexistence of ethnic groups in Thailand will support them to live with their own unique cultures and customs while contributing certain benefits to the community both in business and socio-economy. This article gives suggestions on a Buddhist approach to develop generous coexistence of Thailand's ethnic groups, conserve their sustainable way of life which teaches us about how to live in multi-culture, and finally protect ethnic rights for coexistence in the future world.

**Keywords:** Buddhism, Coexistence, Ethnic groups

## **Introduction**

This article explores Thailand's largest ethnic groups, their way of life, their worldview, and what they can teach us about sustainability and conservation (Benjamin Rujopakarn,2020). On the occasion of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, celebrated each year on 9 August, and with the theme of "Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a





new social contract”, the exhibition highlights the importance of genuine participation to promote equal opportunities and respect for all human beings’ rights, dignity, and freedom. Most importantly, building a concrete and mutual understanding between the people, including people from ethnic groups, and the state is the main goal of the exhibition. Building trust and strengthening social cohesion is a key enabler for the achievement of the sustainable development goals to support ethnic minorities in multiple ways, one of them through advocacy to increase the public’s knowledge and awareness of the challenges they face.

Ethnic groups are considered some of the best stewards of nature, and there is much we can learn from them about ways to live harmoniously with nature and each other. Though their way of life grows more and more dominated by modern cities and industrial expansion, many ethnic groups still keep to their traditional lifestyles in their ancestral homelands both with and without influence from modern societies. There are 3 largest ethnic groups in Thailand; Karen, Hmong, and Moken. Each group has its unique way of life as described below. The Karen is the largest ethnic group in Thailand, with an estimated population of around one million. Originally, they lived in eastern Tibet and China, but after being invaded, they migrated to live along the Mekong and Salween Rivers. There too, however, they faced oppression and even slavery under the rule of Burma, Siam, and British colonization. Eventually, they migrated from Myanmar and are now widely spread out across 16 different provinces in western and northern Thailand, which contain large areas of mountainous and dense forest. While they are best known for the neck rings worn by Karen’s women, that only represents one of the many tribes which compose their diverse community.

The Hmong originally migrated from southern China into what is now Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand, with some having migrated further to the United States. In Thailand, they make their homes in the mountainous North. They are highly distinguishable by their traditional clothing, which often displays colorful, sophisticated patterns as art pieces unto themselves. The Moken live along the ocean, the Moken people, or “people immersed in water,” have never placed their roots in a single region. Sometimes glossed over as “gypsies of the sea,” they are a nomadic seafaring tribe who once traversed the Andaman Sea, living on wooden Kabang boats and diving to fish for food and

sometimes trade. However, since the horrific tsunami hit Thailand in 2004, they've been forced onto land—primarily residing in the South and are now limited in their mobility and traditional way of life.

## **Buddhism: The Ethic Coexistence**

Every individual is valued and should be treated fairly and therefore with justice. Mahayana Buddhists believe that everyone should be treated equally because we all have Buddha Nature that is the ability to become enlightened. It does not matter about our culture, race, or background.

Theravada Buddhism is often practiced in contexts of significant ethnic diversity in Southeast Asia, but much scholarship has not sufficiently accounted for the role of this diversity in shaping the imagination of Theravada Buddhism among its practitioners in the region. Examination of Theravada Buddhist communities in the three very different contexts of Singapore, Southwest China, and Thailand serves as the basis for consideration of this role. Despite the differences among these settings, Theravada Buddhism in each is shaped by state discourses on race and religion. Theravada Buddhism and ethnicity in both local and state forms mark each other merits more attention (Thomas Borchert, 2014).

Dhamma is a way of life, mental cultivation, and a deep awakening with the ultimate goal of self-transformation. So, the main question for discussion in this paper is: Is Buddhism the root for development in a multicultural society? Multiculturalism is the co-existence of different races and ethnic groups of different languages and religions in society with their cultural heritage and beliefs. In other words, multiculturalism is associated with cultural and religious diversity. In the following sections, we explore Singapore's approach to diversity and draw lessons on how the social strategies and government policies help to build a cohesive multicultural society. Whereas Pascal Boyer (2001) argues that since religion is a cultural construct, it cannot fit into any definition of religion. To him, religious ideas are created inside individual minds because concepts in the mind are constructed due to external influences. The result may fail or succeed during cultural transmission, if a cultural phenomenon takes place, the result is a successful selection. Boyer asserts that all religions share a common characteristic, that is, the belief in supernatural agents, for instance, God, spirit or ancestor; and that people have religious ideas and beliefs since



they acquire such concepts from others. The supernatural agent definition of religion by Boyer is based on the concept of an unknown agent with strength and power, which is beyond the understanding of an individual (Boyer, Pascal. 2001).

Culture and Buddhism are interrelated and interdependent in each other. The social development of multiculturalism may contain elements of Buddhism, but it is impossible to conclude that Buddhism is the root of multiculturalism for societal development. As the Buddha taught about the *paticcasamupada* (Interdependent Co-arising), some conditions lead one factor to the arising of another, some conditions lead one factor to the ceasing of another (Lim 2019). This core principle of Buddhism on the interconnected relationship of everything in reality and the world can be expressed in the formulae below: When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases (Bodhi 2012). Finally, it is meaningful to look at the reason why Buddha gave the spiritual path he taught as Dhamma-Vinaya. The goal of the Buddha is to teach Dhamma in its practicality and applicability way to benefit sentient beings and lead them to liberation. The goal of the teachings is to offer the truth and morality as a guide in a relevant way, to motivate one to live life to the fullest in every mindful way. and to transform oneself towards the path of awakening. The history and evidence have indicated that both the teachings and discipline are inseparable and interdependent, suggesting a strong foundation in understanding and practice is needed in transforming oneself. In other words, given any cultural context, the importance of the relationship between Dhamma and Vinaya cannot be underscored (Bodhi, Bhikkhu,2012).

The vast majority of people, both ethnic and indigenous peoples of the world, have different lifestyles, different people, different origins, and what everyone can do in the same way. Respecting Buddhism as a tool to hold people's minds in the community born of faith and respect This Buddhist doctrine will help build good relations among people in the community. It is also a tool that will help create peace and order in a sustainable community coexistence model which is consistent with the concept of Phra Phromkunaphorn (Ph.D. Payutto (2012) said that living together as a community makes us feel that we have friends that we know first and foremost is our own family. Next are the neighboring families, villages, sub-districts, provinces, and

finally the country, and usually people live together well. only when there is one belief or one that binds the mind the same is like a rod or string that is strung harmonized among beliefs or devices hold all those minds It can be said that religion is the most powerful creed and the strongest and most profound anchor of the mind. This is consistent with Mon Thongchat's research (2010), which states that, in addition, religion helps build good relationships with each other, helps to eliminate social gaps, and builds mutual trust. It is the foundation of unity and unity in community development. and create peace and stability for the community. Social coexistence is a group of at least two or more people living together in a certain area that has both direct and indirect relationships. Direct relationships such as speaking, greeting, working together, trading, and giving each other generosity. For the indirect relationship walking through people, we don't know but he is from the same province. caused by the fact that all parties come to understand each other and find a way to live together peacefully and orderly within a clearly defined framework. There are meetings to discuss with various departments to organize activities to build relationships. to create awareness, understand and implement as a guideline for sustainable development Under the participation of all people in the community This is consistent with the research of Anand Kanjanaphan (2015) which found that another duty of society is to take care of members to live together in peace and to create fairness by coordinating benefits for members to perform their duties efficiently. fit to drive creative thinking and invent new things for the advancement of society including creating awareness allowing people in society to conserve and preserve their own culture.

### **Buddhism: Contribution to Sustainable Ethnic Coexistence**

As a major result of the Earth Summit, the Earth Charter listed guiding principles of sustainable development. It contains a broad array of economic, social, political, and environmental policies and acknowledges the interdependence between these elements in addressing the peoples' well-being. Both approaches are consistent with the importance of satisfying present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, they differ in "how" this sustainable development mandate can be achieved (Mukesh Kumar Verma, 2019). According to the teachings of Buddhism, human beings are born in a state of ignorance. Ignorance is a lack of knowledge, and it is this lack of knowledge that causes problems in life". This is because people



without knowledge or wisdom simply follow their desires or cravings for sense pleasures. When people act in a blind craving manner, they are unable to perceive what is of true benefit. However, “when ignorance is replaced with wisdom, it is possible [for people] to distinguish between what is of true benefit and what is not”. Wise actions occur when people’s efforts and actions are founded on intelligent reflection. If not, people’s actions will too often be based on self-interested feelings and ignorant reactions. When people acquire knowledge and wisdom during their lives, they can become more skillful and improve their relationships with people and the things around them. Then they are much more inclined to act out of a desire for the well-being of others (Payutto, 1998).

Buddhism deals with the spiritual realm. It concerns wisdom about how best to live one’s life in light of the realities of human existence. To understand the essence of Buddhism, it is important to start with the most basic teachings of the Buddha, i.e., the Four Noble Truths. The first of these truths is the existence of suffering. Suffering includes birth, old age, sickness, and death as well as anger, jealousy, worry, anxiety, despair, dissatisfaction, and discontent. The second truth is the cause of suffering. Suffering occurs because of ignorance of important life truths that cause people to cling, crave, or otherwise become attached to external worldly phenomena in the erroneous belief that their possession will bring sustained consummate happiness or satisfaction. The third truth is that there is a way out of suffering. We can free ourselves from attachment and clinging by making transformative life changes. To make such changes requires us to gain an understanding of important life truths, gaining the wisdom that not only enables us to cease suffering but to realize the rise of peace and joy. To overcome suffering, people may need training and changes in their mental attitudes. Old harmful habits of thought and action need to be dissolved. The fourth truth is that there is a path (along with particular practices) that leads to the cessation of suffering. This path is known as the Noble Eightfold Path. “The Eightfold Path details the multifaceted nature of changes in understanding, mental processes, patterns and thoughts, and actions and behavior that are required for progress towards reducing suffering” At the heart of this path is living mindfully. Mindfulness involves the kind of concentration and understanding about oneself and others that helps us live compassionately and with peace and joy. The teaching of Lord Buddha on leading life along the middle path is therefore teaching on choices in life. The Dhammacakkavattana

Sutta presents the Noble Eightfold path which is described as the Noble Truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering. The practice of the middle path consists of eight deeds of righteousness. The following eight factors are 1) Right View, 2) Right Thought, 3) Right Speech, 4) Right Action, 5) Right Livelihood, 6) Right Effort, 7) Right Mindfulness, and 8) Right Concentration. Buddhist lifestyle aims to improve these three synergistic abilities to perfection by ongoing practice, which is a development process. Nevertheless, in this case, development is just a by-product of Buddhist practice, not a direct aim that must be attained. The development process is an inner spiritual advancement, which is emerging through ongoing practice and leads to liberation (Mukesh Kumar Verma, 2019).

According to the research conducted by Natthapas Yot-Arlai, *Ethnic Groups' Participation in Sustainable Tourism*, the important findings were the popular trend in visiting the area induced the utility system development to facilitate the traveling and the better way of life of the hill tribes in the area. They not only acquired extra income from tourism activities, but also learned, realized, and comprehended the significance of maintaining, preserving, and conserving the natural resources, culture, and tradition of the ethnic groups. Additionally, participation in the implementation level by taking part in the Area development, cooperation with the Project's operation, or evaluating the tourism activities in the community were scanty. This was because the majority of them were hill-tribe people having a low level of education. Some of them were not able to read, write or communicate in the Thai language and held highland identity cards or nationality unproved. Therefore, they had limitations in accessing data and information from public organizations (Natthapas Yot-Arlai, 2018).

Sustainable practices and livelihoods, modern technology, and ethnic groups have been able to utilize and manage natural resources with methods that are scientifically proven to be more sustainable and more effective than many "modern" practices. While each village has its unique principles and practices, we will explore some useful examples relevant to our changing climate and society, drawing upon the Hmong, Karen, and Moken. These examples are by no means representative of the entire spectrum of ethnic lifestyles and cultures.



## **Thailand: Reviewing the Circumstances of the Ethnic Coexistence**

In the economic view, Waraporn Cherdchoo found out in his study of Tai-Yuan Ethnic Group: Conceptual Framework for Creation and Product Development that the Yuan origin has a sense of belonging in cultural heritage, especially the senior members who were more customary and pursued inheritance passed on from their predecessor. They look for the development of a locally unique identity that would sustainably bring back a sense of awareness and appreciation for the local wisdom. Textiles and outfits were demonstrations of the local identity as they reflected sentimental and cultural values as well as history, and Tai-Yuan identity was represented as a creation of new products. The finding showed that workshops would increase the cooperation between researchers and local people. The young generation could generate the newer contemporary patterns, adding value to the existing product. The young generation will become more aware of the sustainable preservation of their cultural inheritance as well (Waraporn Cherdchoo,2020). This can indicate that the ethnic coexistence in Thailand is one of the factors to generate a unique product that brings income both domestically and internationally as well as other businesses could do.

In the social view, prejudice and language barriers are still the obstacles between ethnic groups and government officials as they cannot understand ethnic languages, while the ethnic groups cannot communicate in Thai. Incomplete communication often led to misinterpretation and can result in maltreatment; mistaken diagnosis and incorrect prescriptions. Additionally, those who lacked the confidence to communicate in Thai tend to be afraid to ask questions, and in many cases where men with ID cards ignore women's health, many pregnant women cannot access prenatal care. In several ethnic communities, their knowledge about giving birth is not relevant to modern practices. Some families prohibit their women from coming to the hospital for delivery. The rationale includes beliefs such as that the baby may have deformed eyes if their head was exposed to the wind. Some refuse the food arranged by the hospitals. For the women who chose to come for services at the hospitals, they face unfriendly service and the service providers' ignorance of ethnic

diversity. This shows that ethnic peoples are concerned about losing their cultural identity, including their mother tongue, rituals, and other traditional practices. Although efforts were made to revitalize their culture, traditional practices decreased at the household level.

In the view of politics, the report to the Thai Government on the human rights of ethnic minority women reflects some consequences of the prejudice and discrimination caused by the traditional belief system that leads to rights violations in several aspects, including a lack of opportunity and rights in making decisions in their own lives. Critical areas of concern for ethnic minority women are namely regarding socio-economic issues; access to nationality and political participation; education and training; lack of reproductive health and protection from violence committed against women. The reality and frequency of these situations reflect that the Thai government does not develop appropriate policies or measures to mitigate discrimination against ethnic minority women. Moreover, most data collection has not been done using a gender-specific approach although specific ethnic information exists. Responsible offices have not been aware of the importance to follow up on whether ethnic minority women were benefitting from the government policies and measures. Moreover, these offices are not aware of specific issues that ethnic minority women are facing. Ethnic minority women are under the protection of Thai laws, however, the Thai government has failed to provide effective law enforcement to protect them from being discriminated against and from gender-based violence. The Thai government should promote gender equality in a formal and informal education system and address the issues of harmful traditional beliefs and practices. Ethnic minority women also have no access to information that can help ensure their rights to health including sexual and reproductive rights. Ethnic minority women are still facing risks of unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortions, and HIV infections from their husbands. Lastly, we very much hope that the recommendations for all five issues will be considered by the Thai government and turn into appropriate measures to create positive changes for ethnic women. Moreover, people who belong to certain ethnic groups in Thailand have struggled for decades against restrictions on accessing ancestral lands and public services. This is because many ethnic groups have not yet been granted Thai citizenship. The Synthesis Report on Marginalization of Vulnerable Indigenous Peoples in Thailand accessed in August 2020 found that the study in 2018, indicated that the ten indigenous groups—Mlabri, Kaw (Umpi), Bisu, Chong,





Yakrul, Tai-saek, Moken, Moklen, Urak Lawoy, and Mani—have faced problems of rights to nationality, land and access to natural resources, including the recognition of their identity.

Many ethnic people have not yet been granted Thai citizenship, which means that they are excluded from the government's basic welfare services. The indigenous peoples' movement is expected to help Indigenous leaders regain political power with the aim of self-governance, self-determination, and self-identification. National policy and legislation changes have considerable impacts on the livelihoods of these ethnic groups, including the resettlement of the ethnic communities. Based on the collected data, the report emphasizes a concern over land use insecurity, restrictions to access and manage natural resources, and unsecured income from becoming seasonal hired labors, in particular for those ethnic groups of fisher folks in southern Thailand.

### **Thailand: Overview of the Ethnic Rights for Coexistence**

Over recent decades, ethnic groups in Thailand and around the world face growing threats to their traditional way of life from industrial expansion, human rights abuses, and climate change. Disappearing with them are their invaluable ingenuity, wisdom, and culture. Accumulated over hundreds and thousands of years, this wealth of past and evolving knowledge can provide us with lessons on how to progress toward a better future in which humans and nature can co-exist and thrive alongside one another. Whether it's in being resourceful and respectful of nature or valuing generosity and compassion as a community, there's much that urban dwellers can learn from ethnic groups and local communities.

To head toward truly sustainable and equitable development, it's important to recognize the value and contributions of ethnic groups, protect their rights, and preserve their rich culture, so they can continue to flourish and safeguard natural resources and environments that we all depend upon. To this end, the Thai government has made several legislative and policy changes to address civil rights problems surrounding ethnic groups and stateless persons in Thailand, including drafting the Protection and Promotion of Ethnic Groups Act to guarantee that ethnic groups enjoy equal rights without discrimination; implementing the Plan to Promote Coexistence under a Multicultural Society in Thailand 2018-2021 to promote coexistence in a multicultural society; and

amending the Registration of Residential Inhabitant Act and Civil Registration Act to provide pathways to citizenship for the children of foreign or stateless inhabitants.(Benjamin Rujopakarn,2020).

## **Buddhism: The Path for Generous Ethnic Coexistence**

There are at least three important areas in which Buddhist teachings could contribute to a generous ethnic coexistence. Moral discipline is the first. In this area, the market economy seems to be quite indifferent as long as our activities are legally permissible. The second important contribution of Buddhism is the teaching of selflessness (Pali: Anattā). While the market economy focuses on the self as the operating entity, the Buddhist teaching on dependent arising (Pali: Paticcasamuppāda) posits that there is no real self-entity independent of other conditions. Our happiness and well-being are inseparable from those of our past, present, and future generations, our natural environment, and the rest of the ecosystem. We cannot survive and operate in a vacuum. With this Buddhist perspective, we should abandon the silo mentality and see others' problems as our problems, and embrace their challenges as our challenges. It is a transformation from self-centeredness to selflessness. In a sharing economy, we need to share good fortune and bad fortune. Without this sense of commonality, the third Buddhist contribution is that changes at the individual and societal levels are inseparable. Bhikkhu Bodhi argued: "Two dimensions of our lives; the internal and the external, the personal and the social] are inseparably intertwined and mutually conditioning, so that our values reflect social and economic realities, while social and economic realities are shaped by our values at the individual level. Thus, while it is in our personal lives that we have the most power to instigate direct change, any alternations in our lifestyles must also reach outwards and exercise an impact on our interpersonal relations, our social order, our political agenda, and our relationship to the natural environment" (Bodhi,2000).

Moreover, the four noble truths and the eightfold path connect well with sustainability. The first and the second of noble truth explain about causes of suffering and unsustainability whereas the third and the last of the four noble truths explain about the effect or the way of achieving sustainability. The explanation of suffering and causes of suffering enable one to realized that unsustainability is cause through excessive greed or craving.

A change towards investment in goods and services with a minimum impact on nature, in term of more careful use of resources and the creation of less waste would make for an economic system aligned with sustainability. The



path of cessation of suffering which is the noble eightfold path defines the way toward sustainability. The noble eightfold path accentuates the value of moderation. To moderate and make full use of any resources drawn from the Earth is strongly emphasized as the remedy for exploitation of natural resources (Danniel, 2011). Right livelihood is the core aspect of the noble eightfold path that is pervasively used in showing the connection of achieving sustainability. The right livelihood means a life that conform to be five precepts that related to the morality and ethics. Danniel (2007) explained that right livelihood as wellbeing that emphasizes earning one's living in the ways that do not harm, deprive or exploit other people, animals and nature. The right view and the right conduct provided a sense of responsibility to one's self and towards socio-economy in enjoying the liberty of prosperity and happiness.

Muyzeberge (2011) noted that Buddhism encourages the creation of wealth as long as it is done honestly without harming the people besides making positive contribution to society. Wealth creation should encourage selflessness and cooperation rather than capitalist value of self-interest and competition. Another key attribute that explicates the connection between Buddhism and sustainability is the value of interconnectedness of all living beings. This means that both human and non-human being, including nature, cannot exist in their own right, but they coexist. The Buddhist principles pervasively adopted in making this connection with sustainability with law of Karma. It explains that mutual interaction between causes and effects that help understanding of the interconnectedness of all things. For example, nature is threatened due to ignorance of the interconnectedness of human and nature. If the human realized that the importance of saving nature for their existence, they would not destroy it. Thus, anything that has impact on the self, also has an impact on society and nature. The law of Karma enables individuals to infer their responsibility to find the balance between self-interest and the society that they live in. This understanding brings ethics and morality to the activity through the awareness of consequence emphasized by the law of Karma that are causes and effects. Wellbeing is also stressed in Buddhist socio-economic supposed to be driven by ethical motivation that seek to cause no harm to individual, to create no agitation in society and to have a beginning impact on socio-economy. The value of interconnectedness is stressed in initiatives to preserve the environment. Buddhist principle of compassion adds the value of empathy to the notion of sustainability. Gaining the capacity to be considerate of others and of their feelings allows one to respect each other. Compassion application in organization context enables better understanding of connections with stakeholders strengthening collaboration and harmony. Compassion also underlines the value of nonviolence. Moreover, the biodiversity conservation

efforts set forth towards ensuring sustainability are driven by the need for nonviolent coexistence between human and non-human.

## **Conclusions**

Buddhism inspires interconnectedness among all beings, moderation, and empathy in relation to sustainability at socio-economical level. Such relation made in light of Buddhism and value is different to the competitiveness of economic rationality. Mukesh Kumar Verma (2019) mentioned that Buddhism has the potential to link sustainable development at all levels—individual, national and global. A beginning can be made from anywhere. It also provides the reasons why doing so will not only make a world better but also a man happier. Buddhism can be one of the approaches to the generous coexistence of ethnic groups in Thailand in the aspect of social, economic, and politics. This article also reviews the sustainable practices of the ethnic groups, generous coexistence of ethnic groups, and protection of ethnic rights for coexistence in Thailand.

Buddhism for the generous coexistence of ethnic groups in Thailand will support them to live with their own unique cultures and customs while contributing certain benefits to the community both in business and socio-economy. This article gives suggestions on a Buddhist approach to develop generous coexistence of Thailand's ethnic groups, conserve their sustainable way of life which teaches us about how to live in multi-culture, and finally protect ethnic rights for coexistence in the future world. Everyone should come forward to save those people of the ethnic groups, not only in Thailand but also all over the world so that the society and mankind of all races can live peacefully in a sustainable way.

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# THE STUDY OF U-THONG CITY: HISTORY OF BUDDHIST PROPAGATION

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## Abstract

The history of the Buddhist missions in the U-thong city, its influence and the Buddhist footprints during the Dvaravati era (U-thong) from the testimonial works of art. Due data were collected from the Tipiṭaka, the Aṭṭhakathā, the archeological evidences, literatures and related researches. The researcher found that Buddhism was expanded to the U-thong land and through archives, the archeological scholars believed that the U-thong history has ever welcomed the Indian traders (Iron Age) since the 3rd Buddhist Century. However, with evidences, the archeological, sculptural, architectural and inscriptional scholars found that the Buddhist missions arrived around the 8-10th Buddhist Centuries for they found clay sculptures of three monks with monkhood frock and holding bowls for alms gathering. They were the oldest testimonies ever found compared to other sites. Later Buddhism took firmly deep rooted in the mind of its followers. This led to the creation of arts, cultures, customs, and refined religious rites in the site of the ancient U-thong city which were very during the 11-16th Buddhist Centuries, witnessed in “Dvaravati Arts”. It was seen that the U-thong city was older than any other cities in the ancient Dvaravati Age since this was the major trade center and the center of Buddhism in the first Dvaravati State era showing the footprints of the influences of the Brahman and Buddhism such as the stupas, the Dhammacakra stones, the pagodas, the printed Buddha images, the Buddha images and other inscriptions related to the Buddhist principles. It well heralded the Buddhist prosperity.

**Keywords:** Historical study, the U-thong city, Buddhist missions



## Introduction

Buddhism is one of the important religions of the world and prolong the national religion of Thailand and foremost influences the Thai cultures. At present, Thailand is counted the center of the World Buddhism because Thailand locates the World Fellowship of Buddhists attested with doctrines identical to the oceans of various sciences. Buddhism is not then just only philosophy or any theories but its contents ever cover ways of life, existence and all viewpoints of thinking. Around 95% of the Thais are Buddhists through each era. Buddhism as such most influences the Thai belief, their conducts and their ways of living (Phaitoon Maliwan and Sawai Malathong, 1999:1). It unavoidably requires to investigate Buddhist influences, its footprints, its roots in the Thai ways of life, its history amid the trendy tide of globalization including the authenticity of the national cultures. This is corresponded with the concept of Vinai Phongscripien contending, “Understanding the cultural soul or the national way of life is only to acclaim it from historical learning because it allows us to know what our societal singularity have been founded?” (Vinai Phongscripien, 2000:2). Besides exploring the meaning latent in the past episodes as such, learning history is then to explore how historians record them in each era. This is to realize and recognize the systems of politics, economy, social and historical knowledge creation especially the Buddhist history which has mastered the communal ways of life in the archaic U-thong city during the 9-15th Buddhist Centuries. It is witnessed from the legends or the religious inscriptions depicting that around the 3rd Buddhist Century, King Asoka the Great has consigned the 8th Batch of the Buddhist missionaries led by Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera to buddhisize<sup>1</sup> or proselytize Buddhism in the Land of Suvarnabhumi (Vi.A. (Pali) 1/58, Mahavaṅṣ (Pali) 1/6/82)<sup>2</sup>. The Thais believed Suvarnabhumi was located in the province of Nakhon Pathom and the U-thong district whereas the Burmese believed, it was Muang Satherm (Phra Dhammapitaka, (P.A. Payutto), n2004, p. 494) where Buddhism has been buddhisized, settled, solidified and disseminated.

The continuation of Buddhism seemed to gradually fade away. Still, during the Lord Buddha era, the Indians always traded with Suvarnabhumi and long-time settled and expanded their cultures to the local people in the areas of Southeast Asia. On account of Buddhism never rejected any contemporary sects; numbers of the Buddhist thus influx to the Indochina peninsulas (Sathien Phothinantha, 1972, p.2). With the current modern exploration, it discloses that the Dvaravati people have been mixed with many ethnic races and religious relation especially the Buddhism along the Chao Phraya basin while creating common customs and traditions having Buddhism as key to unlock into the historical lucidity. By acculturation, it rose the distinction of the Dvaravati arts

and cultures through Buddhism and due to Buddhism was rooted by the Indian cultures, it has been chosen and adjusted to be the core of the land and to become the center bridging diverse cultures, social and believes.

This clouded the investigative truth. If with real and serious examination, it was found that “Si praeteritum, praesens bquomodo sit? (Had there been no past, how can there be a present?). Where is at present the Buddhist Center located? With scholar archives explored and disseminated, most agreed, it is located in Dvaravati (U-thong) or the lower central region of Thailand because critical evidences have been found more than other sites including in many other appropriate sites to exposed and receive the external civilization. The archeological testimonies demanded scholars to hypothesize the center of Davaravati was located in 3 sites – Muang (city) U thong, Muang (city) Nakhon Pathom and Muang (city) Lopburi (Sakdhichai Saaisingh, 2004:61). In particular, it was found that the archic Muang (city) U-thong was the historical origin, the Suvarnabhumi civilization covering the territories of U-thong subdistrict, U-thong district: Suphanburi province engulfing 38.16 square kilometers. Archeological evidences assumed that there was a capital of the Dvaravati Kingdom centering the Land of Suvarnabhumi the historical origin of arts, cultures, and customs of various ethnic races before being annexed to be the Thai nationality at present. Still, the land of Suvarnabhumi was more translucent called “Muang (city) U-thong is the Archaic City” (Prof. Mom Chao (Monarch Grandson) Subhaddaradis Dissakul. Most scholars agreed that the capital of Suvarnabhumi should have been located at Muang (city) U-thong because a silver coin inscribed “Lava Pura” has been found in U-thong. Boeles, J.J. (1967) posited that while U-thong was the western center or as the capital of Dvaravati State explored from its geographical location incorporated with the testimony of archaeological sites, inscriptions and the Chinese archives found in these sites. Besides being the capital, the archaic U-thong should play the leading role of sea port during the Dvaravati age because it was located near the sea and exit-entry waterway directly adjoining the sea. Many terracotta seals belonging to Indian merchants in the latter Gupta period (the 12-14th Buddhist Centuries) were found in the archaic U-thong sites and its nearby areas. The ship terracotta seals revealed the trading roles in this city (Jira Jongkol, 1967; Indrawooth, Phasook, 1983) and the 2- sided seals of Kochalakshami (elephant seal). U-thong played another role of being the center of Buddhism as being found in many Buddhists artistic evidences in many major archaeological sites such as more than 30 Dhammacakkara Stones. Some were depicted with the crouching deer and Buddha images were also found with number of votive tablets.





## Inscriptional Evidences (History, Artist, Archeology)

These would lead to assumptions that Muang U-thong should have played the roles as a capital of the Dvaravati State in the first era around the 9-13th Buddhist Centuries (Phasuk Indrawudh, 1999 pp.101-106; pp.177-178). Muang U-thong has been found by archeologists on trading with India since the fall of the Iron Age (the 3-5th Buddhist Centuries/Chin Yoodee, 1966 pp. 43-50) and played very evident roles during the era of Indo-Roman of India (the 6-9<sup>th</sup> Buddhist Centuries). At the very U-thong itself where the Buddhist traders from the Krishna river basin had travelled for trading and settled themselves during the Indo-Roman age while ushering Buddhism from the Buddhist Center in the Southern India patronized by The Kings of the Sāttavāhna Dynasty (the 4-8th Buddhist Centuries) and extended to the Iksavāku Dynasty (the 8-10th Buddhist Centuries) having its religious artistry in Muang Amarāvādī and Muang Nāgārajunkoṇḍa to be buddhisized the archaic communities in Muang U-thong as being found with the terracotta sculptures of the 3 apostles of His Lord Buddha carrying their alms bowls, clothed and clad in monkhood robes according to the popular style of Amarāvādī art and the stucco sculpture of a Naga Buddha image loosely seated on his feet according to the style of Amarāvādī art (Boisselier, J. and Murthy, K. K. 1977: 1-10.). As such, Muang U-thong was counted an archaic port continuously prosperous to become the main water port of the kingdom and the oldest center of Buddhism in the Dvaravati State. Many scholars recalled the existence of this archaic city such as Thaksin Indrayotha (1991, p. 14) contended that along the Chao Phraya river basin and the Golden Axe Handle settled many communities since the Buddha era or before that for over 2,000 years. For example, they were Muang Nakhon Chai Sri, Muang Phong Tuek, Muang U-thong, Muang Khoo Bua, Muang Sri Mahosod, Muang Chaiya, and Muang Din Daeng and so on. There were also many contradictory data about the ethnic races of the Dvaravati (U-thong) people. Some scholars assumed that they were the Mon with the reasons (Siriwat Khamwansa, 1999, pp.1-8;p.20) that (1) The Mon language inscriptions were found in Lopburi aged around 13-14th Buddhist Centuries inscribed in the octagonal pole with molding like in Nakhon Pathom. (2) Phra Nang Cāmdevī moved from Lopburi to rule Haribhūñjaya in the 13th Buddhist Century. She was a Mon princess and (3) George Cœdès (1886-1969) read the inscriptions at Wat Bo Rang: Nakhon Pathom and disseminated them in Paris in 1952 supported that Dvaravati (U-thong) was the Mon Kingdom. Therefore, the center of the Dvaravati Kingdom met contradictory viewpoints but most scholars viewed the center of the Dvaravati Kingdom should have been located in the lower central region of Thailand since many critical evidences were found along within strategic location for being able to contact and receive civilization from the outside world.

However, even most scholars agreed with such idea but with the archeological evidences which some scholars assumed that there were 3 centers of the Dvaravati Kingdom – Muang U-thong, Muang Nakhon Pathom (Nakhon Chai Sri) and Muang Lopburi (Sakdhichai Saisingh, 2004:61- 74.). The backgrounds related to the Center of Buddhism in the Dvaravati Kingdom was Muang U-thong attracted the very investigation how was the situations of Buddhism on its first entry, its dissemination, its origin, its influences, its footprints and its development becoming? And what was about in the later era? They were still the challenges and always a waiting for additional investigation. As of the history of Muang U-thong in buddhizing, none investigation was directly conducted or few studies have been conducted but many historical studies were conducted such as archaeology and excavation. The exploration of evidences to affirm the existence of the archaic communities, to investigate the U-thong identity, and the U-thong tourism and so on where the researches of Buddhism for that period were interrupted. At present, historian and archeologists have conducted surveys, and excavations and found new data such as recently, many archeological research teams have excavated the sites of Plabplachai in 2017 which revealed the better background and the situations of Buddhism. However, the findings presented were scattered and discontinued because different people differently studied and made the history inconsistent as it should be.

## **The 2 Groups of Buddhism and the Arrival**

The arrival of Buddhism was mostly informed that since the 3rd Buddhist Century. Some documents insisted its arrival during the 7-8th Buddhist Centuries and some asserted its arrival during the 8-9th Buddhist Centuries and some confirmed its arrival the 9-13th Buddhist Centuries. They were conclusively divided into 2 groups. The First Group believed that Buddhism arrived the Land of Suvarnabhumi since the 3rd Buddhist Century and prospered since them until the Dvaravati era until the 11-16th Buddhist Centuries. Many scholars believed in this group and agreed that (1) Buddhism has deep rooted in Ban Khoo Bu. Muang District: Ratchaburi province in the era of King Asoka the Great unto King Kaniska during BE 273- 703. Prof. Prom Suthas Na Ayudhya (1968) believed that there had to be people who worshiped Buddhism in the land of Suvarnabhumi before King Asoka the Great has missioned Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera to buddhisize in Suvarnabhumi. At that time, people of Suvarnabhumi were the Mon and the Funan who together worshipped Buddhism. The capital of Suvarnabhumi was in the old Muang Kanchanaburi at the same side of Ban Khoo Bua and disembarked at Muang Ta Kho La and took north route to the central region of Suvarnabhumi the Buddhist missionaries might visit an international sea port to ease for alms gathering, buddisization, and travel. (2) In the Legend of the Buddha Cetiya, Somdej Phra Chao Borromawongther



Khrom Phraya Damrong Rajanuphab (2505, p.124-127) maintained that Buddhism would have arrived Siam (Thailand) before BE500. His Royal Highness assumed that its arrival into Siam because Buddhism arrived in many eras and with many sects causing the birth of many archeological sites of 7 eras. The first era was Dvaravati depicted since BE500.

It could be witnessed that more Dvaravati Buddha cetiya (pagodas/shrines) had been found in Nakhon Pathom than in other areas and they were the oldest cetiya in Thailand. It was assumed that these cetiya were influenced by the Magadharāj Dominion. The materials to construct the Buddha chetiya in this era were the Dhātu cetiya (a relic shrine: stupa enshrining His Lord Buddha's relics), the Baribhoga-cetiya (a shrine/stupa by use: things and places used by His Lord Buddha especially the Bodhi tree), the Dhamma-cetiya (a doctrinal shrine: the monument of the Teaching where inscribed palm-leaves/tablets/scriptures are housed), and the Uddesikacetiya (a shrine by dedication: a Buddha image). However, the Dhātu cetiya construction was reserved as the most important cetiya than the other three cetiya. It was possible that King Asoka the Great had also distributed His Lord Buddha's relics to be enshrined in the countries where the missionaries had been consigned (KhA.222; J.IV.228). (3) In the merit pilgrimage – the dhamma pilgrimage, Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto), 2004, p.494) maintained that Buddhism has arrived Thailand far back over 2000 years since the Suvarnabhumi era. His Most Venerable assumed that the territory to route India and Thailand in the past was in the book entitled “The Merit Pilgrimage – the Dhamma Pilgrimage” and concluded that the peninsular lands of Thailand were possibly the first site of Southeast Asia to meet continuous contact with India. They were the southern Indian merchants where Buddhism bloomed, expanded and became the center of the Indian cultural dissemination. (4) Where did Sukhothai come from? Prof. Sujitt Wongthes, (2006, p.12) believed that the buddhisization from India in the reign of King Asoka the Great missioning Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera first to Suvarnabhumi around the Tha Chin river–Mae Glong areas (the sites of U thong, U-thong district, Suphanburi province at present). The Buddhist Theravāda has continuously bloomed until today. (5) In the geo-history of His Lord Buddha Sathien Phothinantha, (1972, p.2) concluded that Buddhism has arrived Thailand since the 3rd Buddhist Century. At first, The Buddhist Theravāda was flourished for many centuries and mantled over the Indochina peninsular. Later in the 6th Buddhist Century, the Buddhist Mahayana arrived former Thailand by land route from Bengal to northern Burma whereas by sea route, they landed at Malayu Peninsular, Sumatra and encircled the bay to Cambodia. During that time, the Funan worshipped both the Theravāda and the Mahayana which were so flourished so much so two Buddhist missionaries, Phra Sangha Pāla and Phra Mandarasena travelled to translate the Buddhist

scriptures in China in the 10th Buddhist Century. (6) Saṅgītivon, a chronicle on the Dhamma Vinaya Saṅgāyanā (Capitulary) asserted (Somdej Phra Vannaratana, 2514 pp.46-75) that Buddhism arrived Suvarnabhumi after the 3rd Dhamma Vinaya Saṅgāyanā (Capitulary), King Asoka the Great missioning Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera associated with another 5 monks to buddhize in Suvarnabhumi. (7) Suvarnabhumi as the first current of the Thai history (Prof. Sujitt Wongthes, 2005, pp. 74-77) maintained that around the 3rd Buddhist Century, Phra Sona Thera and Phra Uttara Thera sailed with the trade ship to buddhize Buddhism for the first time in the Land of Suvarnabhumi around the waterway of the Mae Glong-Tha Chin Rivers.

At present, it is U-thong district, Suphanburi province and in Ban don Tapetch, Panom Thuan district, Kanchanaburi province. The Second Group believed that Buddhism arrived [Suvarnabhumi] after the 6th Buddhist Century. (1). The Archeology written by Somdej Phra Chao Borromawongther Khrom Phraya Damrong Rajanuphab and by Prof. Luong Paripāl Paribhaṅḍ (1960 p.34) and the latter saw that the Indian cultures had played roles in Thailand and neighboring countries since ancient times. Evidences began to appear since the 6th Buddhist Century and it was witnessed that Buddhism has arrived as the first wave since Amarāvati era (the 7-9th Buddhist Centuries). This was referred to the evidences of the clay sculptures of three monks and the stucco sculpture, the stone Nāga Buddha image of the Amarā style holding an alms bowl in U-thong. (2). The Land of Siam the background of Thailand since primeval period until the Ayudhya era the Siamese Kingdom, Assoc. Prof. Boisselier (2009) postulated the Buddhist and Hindu influences would expand into Thailand and were widely popular not less than found in the 7-8th Buddhist Century. (3) Suvarnabhumi by archeological evidences. Phasuk Indrawudh, (2005 pp.105-111) contended that U-thong has contacted with the Indian merchants since the 3-5th Buddhist Centuries. Buddhism from the southern religious center in India arrived Thailand in the Dvaravati era in around the 8-9th Buddhist centuries. References were the clay sculptures of three monks holding alms bowls. (4) Muang U-thong, in fact was one of the most important archaic cities in Thailand. Prof. Jean Boisselier a French archeologist (Boisselier, 1982, p.52) maintained that Muang Suphanburi was a bisected large city overlapping with Muang U-thong. This was another case licensing the previous conviction that Muang U-thong was Muang Suphanburi where His Majesty Phra Rāmādhībordī I (Phra Chao U-thong) left it behind because of plague and constructed Phra Nakhon Sri Ayudhya as a capital. On the contrary, it was in fact found that Muang U-thong at U-thong district, Suphanburi province was an ancient city and one of the most important city of Thailand. As such, a French archeologist conducted an archeological survey and at that time excavated the city weighing that U-thong was the very important city of the Funan dominion aged around the



7-8th Buddhist Centuries and ever being a capital before the important city like Muang Nakhon Pathom. This French archeologist admitted that Muang Uthong was evacuated before the reign of His Majesty Phra Rāmādhībordī I (Phra Chao U-thong) for not less than 200-300 years. 5) The ethnic group settled in the central region better clarified for the Department of Fine Art (1988: (1) pp. 121-29; (2) pp. 90-250) supported by archeological evidences. Though the testimony might be too old and far back to the 8-9th Buddhist Centuries; they could trail the ethnic groups of the central region on having sufficient development and advancement enabling them to embrace Buddhism. It was also found that Buddhism much glowed in the Dvaravati era during the 11-16th Buddhist Centuries including being the center of buddhisization. From the above documentary evidences, its analyses revealed that the arrival of Buddhism from India since the reign of King Asoka the Great began in the 3rd Buddhist Century and extensively glowed until the Dvaravati era but just not having any evidence to back it up because archeology interpreted and analyzed the archeological evidences found at the arrival sites that they were not before the 8-9th Buddhist Centuries. Similarly, the foreign literatures did not provide much clarity. Though the ancient Indian, Brahman, Buddhist and Jainism literatures did not mention about any expansions of Buddhism from India to the Land of Suvarnabhumi. Though the stone inscriptions of King Asoka the Great (BE269-311) have described consigning Buddhist missionaries for buddhisization outside India but not to Suvarnabhumi. Though the Indian literature did not however detail the Buddhist arrival to Suvarnabhumi or Dvaravati, on the contrary, critical ancient Lankan literatures by Dīpavongs (Phasuk Indrawudh, 2005 pp.199-203) wrote during the 9-10th Buddhist Centuries and Mahāvongs also wrote in the 11-12th Buddhist Centuries about King Asoka the Great consigned the Buddhist missionaries from India to the Land of Suvarnabhumi without depicting any sites.

In addition, the researcher still found that the Lankan scriptures mentioned about the Land of Suvarnabhumi on travelling to seek fortune and trade, i.e. Mahājanakajātaka, Saṅkhabrāhmjātaka and Susandhīdhajātaka and so on. As of buddhisization to Suvarnabhumi, there were also the Lankan scriptures as key, in particular, the Mahānides scripture and the Samantapāsādikā scripture and so on as mentioned above. In brief, the foreign documentary evidences about the Buddhisization from India to the Land of Suvarnabhumi were mostly from [Sri] Lanka. It was possible that Thailand had intimate relationship on cultures with [Sri] Lanka since after the age of His Lord Buddha in particular, the Buddhist cultures during the aftermath age until today. The researcher believed that documentary evidences about the Land of Suvarnabhumi (U-thong) contributed interested details and led to recognition that U-thong was an archaic port glowing into the important port of the Dvaravati State and the oldest center

of Buddhism in Dvaravati State and its capital at the first age. Muang U-thong was part of the Dvaravati State given it instituted from the local people, embracing Indian cultures adapted to meet the local cultures. Its identical features were the adoption of the Buddhist Gupta and post Gupta arts and cultures hybridized with the beliefs along the central region coasts of Thailand. The center of Dvaravati State was Muang U-thong because it was located on the waterway to the sea. The Dvaravati arts and cultures were spread to various cities being the small communities along the basins of the Chao Phraya River, the northeastern region, the northern region and the southern region. The tradition of imprinting the Buddha images, the Buddha images, the construction and worshipping the Phra Paramadhātu Cetiya were all influenced in the Buddhist inheritance as evidences found in the Thai archeology beginning from the arrival of the Indian civilization to Thailand during before the Dvaravati era with its archeological evidences in the post-Dvaravati era. They depicted such traditions especially the construction of the Phra Paramadhātu Cetiya in the center of various cities which bridged to witness the traditional continuation of each era arriving Thailand until today.

### **Buddhisization: U-thong and Its Premises**

Hierarchical order was as follows: (1) Over 4,000 years during the Neolithic Age, people dissipated among the northern part of Suphanburi province. At present, it was around Dan Chang district, Nong Rajwat District and the neighboring areas located in the provincial jurisdiction of Kanchanaburi province. (2). Around 2,500 years during Lithic Age, people from the upper areas of Suphanburi province at present have moved to the lower area around the areas of Don Cetiya, Sri Prajan: Muang Suphanburi and U-thong in the Tuan-Jarakhe Samphan basins, with the Tha Wa- Tha Jin basin or Suphanburi River basin; these communities would develop the land into the Dvaravati culture. (3). For the past 2,000 years, communities in the Tuan-Jarakhe Samphan basins, with the Tha Wa- Tha Jin basin or Suphanburi River basin having U-thong as their central city, there was intensive contact with other world regions. Many antiquities were imported from the external cultures. (4). For the past 1,500 years, U-thong embraced BuddhistBrahman cultures form India. It began with constructing worshipped images and religious sites in Buddhism and Brahman. 5) For the past 1,300 years, ditches around the U-thong city were seen at present. 6). For the past 1,000 years, Muang U-thong was faded in its importance but not abandoned on its eastern bank which was replaced by the glows of Tha Wa-Tha chin waterways and Tuan waterway. And 7) for the past 800 years, Muang Suphanburi became the important city of this cultural groups replacing Muang U-Thong. An archeological assumption believing that the U-thong as a State of the Dvaravati culture seemed to be a sea port but by revision



and by the evidences from the studies of Geology and Geological Palynology in the aftermath revealed the different direction. Though a State of the Dvaravati culture was attributed as a port but not a coastal sea-port since it was located deep into the land. A State of the Dvaravati culture bridged to the sea by rivers as in the case of Uthong was the rivers of Tha Chin and Mae Glong at the eastern side and western side respectively. Such identity was similar to the Ayudhya City in the later years which linked the sea through the Chao Phraya River. The attractive data related to the coast during the Dvaravati culture were the findings of the two ship remnants sank with their goods at that period in the archeological territory of Samut Sakhon province at Ban Khom, Khok Kham subdistrict, Muang district (Payoong Wongnoi, n.d./date unquoted) and in the Vat Visuddhivarāvās or Vat Klang Glong, Phan Taai Norrasingh subdistrict, Muang district [Samut Sakhon province]. The area of sank ships found connected with the Thai gulf was the gathering of silt flown down with continuous accumulation until becoming lands from sea mud for over 1,000 years along given winding waterways connected in a network since ancient times. Until the Ayutthaya period, there were evidences of digging up the Khok Kham canal as a shortcut route connecting the Chao Phraya River with the Tha Chin. The evidence of sank ships found at the Vat Visuddhivarāvās or Vat Klang Glong besides being the oldest finding in Thailand today, they also confirmed the uses of this waterways for over thousand years until the early Rattanakosin era (Prapas Choovichien, 2013, p.40). The reasons acquired from exploring the archeological documentary evidences came from four targets, i.e. (1) it is to recognized the present Thailand on its pre-historically consistent development at least from the Suvarnabhumi era developed through the Funan Kingdom into the Dvaravati period with its testimonial history in documentation, archeological evidences and its flourishing of Buddhism, its politics and governments which were influenced by the Indian civilization. (2) It is to recognize the birth and the arrival of Buddhism in this area through the documentary assertion and the glowing widespread of Buddhism since the time of King Asoka the Great in the 3rd Buddhist Century. There are also many waves of the Buddhist arrivals minimally found before the Davaravati era during the 9-10th Buddhist Centuries whereas the most Buddhist flourishing is during the 11-16th Buddhist Centuries in the Dvaravati (U-thong) era. (3) It is to realize Buddhism during the Davaravati era (U-thong) flourishes and is disseminated to various groups of people while best facilitating benefits and prosperity for them who have settled in Thailand. It is to lead the people to respective happiness by being deserved. It is to witness the inscriptions of the Dhamma principle in various levels in all parties. This is the confirmatory instrument people are happy and deeply understand Buddhism leading to the influences of cultures, traditions, and prosperity in various angles while being beautifully delivered them to the following Sukhothai period. (4). The recognize the trace of the

buddhist flourishing, the widespread of the Dvaravati (U-thong)-oriented Buddhist cultures and the Buddhists more deeply understand Buddhism than any eras in the Thai history. It can be witnessed with the footprints from the center of the Dvaravati cultures leaving their trails in every regions and particular the central region around the basin of the Chao Phraya River with the worship of Buddha images, the Buddha votive tablets and various inscriptions related to merit contributions, the inscriptions of the Dhamma principles and teachings in Buddhism and many remnants of the pagoda. All are the evidences well denoting the flourishing of Buddhism during the Dvaravati period so much so being the original models of arts and cultures for the Sukhothai and the later ages.

### **Buddhisization: Muang U-thong and Thailand**

It is believed that there are 2 phases in buddhisizing in U-thong, Thailand. The first phase is when King Asoka the Great has missioned Most Venerable Phra Sona Thera, Most Venerable Phra Uttara Thera and their venerable retinue monks to buddhisize or proselytize Buddhism in the Land of Suvarnabhumi in the 3rd Buddhist Century and it has been flourished ever since (In this case, it is compared to Sri Lanka denoted that Most Venerable Phra Mahinda Thera and Most Venerable Phra Saṅghamittā Therī at the same time with missioning Most Venerable Phra Sona Thera, Most Venerable Phra Uttara Thera to Thailand before the Dvaravati period, too. The Sri Lanka has more complete religious legends than Thailand. Rationally, Sri Lanka has been once a mega-center of Buddhist studies after India). The second phase, Buddhism arrives the Land of Suvarnabhumi (U-thong) around the 8-10th Buddhist Centuries at the vicinities verified by the archeological testimonies of (1) the terracotta sculptures of the 3 apostles of His Lord Buddha carrying their alms bowls with the popular style of Amarāvādī art, (2) the two inscription posts of the incantation on Ye Dhamma found in Sraiburi aged around the 8-11th Buddhist Centuries and (3) the incantational inscriptions of Ye Dhamma in the Theravāda Buddhism on the settling of a ring found in Vietnam.

### **New Knowledges**

It is the new knowledge of the lucidity on the arrival of Buddhism to be buddhisized in Muang (city) U-thong, its footprints and its influences facilitating the historical studies of Muang U-thong which involve Buddhism, cultures and traditions and the rest. Knowledge is acquired through archeological sites, antiques, and art objects related to buddhisization in Muang U-thong, the lined design of the terracotta sculptures of the 3 apostles of His Lord Buddha carrying their alms bowls. It was the oldest evidence witnessing there are





monks in the Land of Suvarnabhumi found at Muang U-thong, U-thong district, Suphanburi province. Another evidence is the stucco sculpture of a Nāga Buddha image loosely seated on his feet according to the style of Amarāvādī art at its ending aged around the 9-11th Buddhist Centuries found at Muang U-thong. Another evidence was inscribing the Lord Buddha's father in Pallava language at the sculptural basement nominated "Suddhodana". Still, an evidence of the "Dhammacakra and the Crouching Deer", it is said to be the representation of civilization because the Dhammacakra is the symbol of the proclamation of His Lord Buddha's Dhamma Teaching- the First Sermon aged around the 13th Buddhist Century. The Department of Fine Art has excavated and found at the Stupa No.11 in Muang U-thong, and so on. It is seen that most Thai scholars agree the capital of Dvaravati is possibly located in Muang U-thong and it is the center of Dvaravati State because at Muang U-thong silver coins inscribed "Lava Pura" have been found (Boeles, J.J., 1967). The primary data first found have been assumed that Muang U-thong is the western center and as the capital of the Dvaravati State through exploring its geographical location, archeological sites including documentary evidences such as the Chinese Archives, the inscriptions in U-thong and number of Buddhist art works. Evidences showed that Muang U-thong has traded with India since the end of Lithic Age (around the 3-5th Buddhist Centuries) (Chin Yoodee, 1966 pp.43-50). In Muang U-thong itself, the Buddhist traders from the Krishnā river basin have traded and settled themselves around the age of Indo-Roman and adopted Buddhism from the Southern Buddhist Center of India under the royal patronage of Sātavāhana Dynasty and passed on to the Iksavāku Dynasty (around the 8-10th. Buddhist Centuries). It is where the center of religious arts has been located in Muang Amarāvātī and Muang Nāgārajunkoṇaḍa to buddhisize Buddhism among the archaic communities in Muang U-thong. This is witnessed with the findings of the terracotta sculptures in line design of the 3 apostles carrying their alms bowls which is the oldest evidences proven that there were monks in the Land of Suvarnabhumi. They have been found in Muang U-thong, U-thong district, Suphanburi province. Another evidence is the Buddha image loosely seating cross-legged over the coil Nāga which is the Indian art at the end of Amarāvātī style aged around the 9-11th Buddhist century and found in Muang U-thong. Another evidence was inscribing the Lord Buddha's father in Pallava language at the sculptural basement nominated "Suddhodana" aged around the 13rd Buddhist Century where the Department of Fine Art has excavated and found at the Stupa No.11 in Muang U-thong, and so on. Turkish Journal of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation; Muang U-thong is as such accounted for an ancient port with prosperity and becomes the oldest important port of the Kingdom and the oldest center of Buddhism in the Dvaravati State. Consequently, the loss of the history connected with the buddhisization in Muang U-thong has been analyzed and

acquired by scholars to rise a new knowledge which would be advantageous for further studies.

## Conclusions

From the above investigation, it is found that the arrival of Buddhism in Thailand during the Dvaravati (U-thong) period has to be mostly the Theravāda Buddhism because of various inscriptions such as the evidences of Dhamma principles so far gather in Muang U-thong are aged around 12-13th Buddhist Centuries. The first official one is the inscriptions of the incantation of Ye Dhamma inscribed in the Pallava language and Pāli and found in many layers. For examples, there are inscriptions on the Buddha votive tablets where their fronts would have been the miracles in Muang Sāvattthī whereas the back side is inscribed the incantations of Ye Dhamma which some are secure in the U-thong Museum. The full incantations are *ye dhamma hetuppabhavā yesaṅ hataṅ tathāgato āha tesaṅca yo nirodho ca evaṅ vādī mahāsamaṇo* found in the brick at Phra Pathom Cetiya. Its translation is “it is a brief of Phra Paṭiccasamupapāda, it is a brief of Phra Ariyasacca - 4 which all should learn, remember and could pray where there would be virtuously fruitful at present and in future. The second official one inscribes “*Khemākhemasaraṇadīpikagatā* and from Phra Suttantaspiṭaka Khuddkanikāya on the story of Purohitaaggidat” In summary, it is the Phra Buddha, Phra Dhamma and Phra Saṅgh, upon meeting the Saraṇa Phra Rattanatriya will meet Ariyasacca which is the real abode and can salvage from miseries. As of mountains, forests, big trees, holy monasteries, all are not real resorts. In addition, the heart of the main Buddhist doctrines including the incantations of Ye Dhamma, Ariyasacca - 4, Paṭiccasamupapāda, the belief of Phra Asīti Mahāsāvaka, the belief of the Phra Sīrī Ārayametriya all are doctrines and key principle of beliefs in the Theravāda Buddhism.



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## THE KĀLĀMASUTTA CONVICTION

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### Abstract

A study of “The Kālāmasūta Conviction” determined to explore contents and the meaning the 10 conviction principles of this Phra Sūtra on 1) the real reasons His Lord administers this sermon and the convictional contents; 2) the significant scope and meaning focused on; 3) the intention his Lord to communicate in this subject matter; and 4) the reasons for supportive elucidation. The author found that the essence His Lord expresses was “Kālāmasutta-kaṅkhāniyaṭṭāna 10” in the Tripitaka on how to deal with doubtful matters or conviction principle said in Kālāmasutta 10. His Lord concluded upon self- cognition that all these dharmas were then immoral, moral, punishable, and non-punishable but one should decide to detach or to practice accordingly. The principles of conviction witnessed in Kālāmasūta have been used as principle, evidence and criteria cohesive to thinking assertion, decisionmaking, and evaluation to believe or to accept what was true, what was false and what was credible. It was evident that His Lord wished each one exercises deliberation about matters by oneself before deciding to believe. It meant that Buddhism held evidence to prove that there were methodologies and criteria to reflect the causes of the matter.

**Keywords:** Kālāmasutta, Conviction

## Introduction

The ten conviction essences are found in a sutta entitled Kesputtasūtra when His Lord Buddha administers sermon for the Kessaputta settlers in the Kālāma settlement. The Kessaputtasūtra content attracts many issues for investigation like the Kālāma people wish His Lord Buddha to introduce methods to reflect decisionmaking on belief and non-belief in the teachings of the sectarian priests in their era but their teachings contradict each other. His Lord demonstrates the ways to treat curious matters through pre-reflecting on either usefulness or uselessness. Had they been useless; they must be disregarded but if otherwise, they must be pretested through application but never rush to conclude or to pin conviction. His Lord preaches about conviction by pinpointing to see the truth under the punishment of greed, thinking to assault, illusion, and the benefits of non-greediness, and avoidance of assaults. At the same time, His Lord teaches about Brahmavihāra 4 (mettā/ loving-kindness; karuṇā/ compassion; muditā/ sympathy; and upekkhā/equanimity) (A.III.226; Dhs.262; Vism, 320). The implications of Brahmavihāra 4 are simplified and enabled for implementations that ‘never easily believe with superstitious irrationalization’. His Lord requires us to see the scourges of Akusalamūla 3 (lobha/greed; dosa/hatred; and moha/delusion) (D.III.275; It.45) while attaching with Brahmavihāra 4. In general, this Sūtra is a doctrine depicted ways to know information heard from others while the listeners are attaching to the Brahmavihāra 4 as the information recipients. It proves that the valuable issues for investigation are the causes beckoning His Lord to preach The Kessaputtasūtra and the principle of to believe and not to believe upon hearing from others.

As such, the author desires to investigate (interpret) contents and the meaning of the 10 conviction principles of this Phra Sūtra. What are the real reasons His Lord administers this sermon and the convictional contents? What are the significant scope and meaning focused on? What does His Lord want to communicate in this subject matter? Finally, what are reasons to supportive elucidation?

### The Buddhist Conviction Criteria

His Lord Buddha has regulated criteria of conviction on how to believe or how to reflect before conviction. His Lord indoctrinates the Kālāma settlers in the



Kessaputta settlements of Kusala Kingdom, in ancient India. His rationale is in this kingdom there are many sectarian founders visiting and preaching to assert that their doctrines are correct whereas others are all false. It could be also upon attending many sermons and from many founders; the Kālāma people get perplexed. When His Lord passes by, they appeal for His sermon whether who should they believe and how should they believe? His Lord administers sermons for them on the 10 prohibitions or 10 precautions before believing upon hearing preaching from various sectarian founders. They have been scribed in the Tripitaka entitled “The Kessaputtiasūtra” but generally popularized with “Kālāmasūta” because His Lord administers the sermon for the Kālāma tribe of the King caste. And this Phra Sūtra is called “The Kessaputtisūtra” because the Kālāma people are the settlers of Kessaputti-nikama or village.

The essence His Lord expresses is “Kālāmasutta-kaṅkhāniyaṭṭāna 10” in the Tripitaka on how to deal with doubtful matters or conviction principle said in Kālāmasutta 10 pertaining (1) Mā anuṣven (be not led by report- both verbal report and written report.) (2) Mā paramparāya (be not led by tradition.) (3) Mā itikirāya (be not led by hearsay or rumour.) (4) Mā piṭakasampadanen (be not led by the authority of texts.) (5) Mā takkahetu (be not led by mere logic.) (6) Mā nayahetu (be not led by inference and philosophy.) (7) Mā ākārāparivitakken ( be not led by considering appearances and common sense.) (8) Mā ditṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā ( be not led by the agreement with a considered and approved theory.) (9) Mā bhaḅbarūpatāya (be not led by seeming possibility and because of creditability.) and (10) Mā samaṇo no garūti (be not led by the idea, ‘This is our teacher’.) (A.I.189)

Upon self-cognition that all these dharma are then immoral, moral, punishable, non-punishable; one should detach or practice accordingly Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto, 2016). Reflecting the meaning of the teaching in each item, “mā” is found in the forefront of every item. “Mā” means “not”. It could have many meanings like “never believe” or “never admittedly believe” or “never attach” or “never admit” which are found so stringent. However, there is also soft meaning such as “delaying to believe” or “never rash to believe” and so on (Phramaha Bodhivongsacārāya (Thongdee Suratejo, Pālī Dharma Level 9, Rājapaṇḍit, 2016). In summary, it is the matter of delaying, and not to believe but pre-checking before believing. The meaning of each item is as blow.

## Elucidation (Interpretation) of Kālāmasutta

**Mā anuṣven** (be not led by report- both verbal report and written report). This item means social context that during the time of His Lord, there were varieties of sectarian belief. Common people likely believed when there were words-of mouth. To this cause, His Lord said, “Never adopt things because of sequential hearing and informing-upon hearing or from reading but still deliberation should be first taken because messengers may have distorted messages or we (recipient) may ourselves receive distorted messages.

**Mā paramparāya** (be not led by tradition). This item means common people in that time difficultly searching for source of information unlike these days. They likely believed by tradition. His Lord cautioned by not being led by traditions because traditionalism would mislead to fallacies. For example, in ancient time there were parades of “Hae Nang Maew” (the process of Ms. Kitty) to beseech for rain and begot rains because people have done it since ancient time.

**Mā itikirāya** (be not led by hearsay or rumour) - This item means rumors likely disable to find it sources or even cannot find them. Rumors or hearsay should be heeded and they must be first checked for clarity.

**Mā piṭakasampadanen** (be not led by the authority of the texts). This item means common people prefer to believe in textbooks and they may wrongly write or they may wrongly copy.

**Mā takkahetu** (be not led by mere logic). This item means one has to impose deliberation on Logics. Never adopt on just being logic. Logics could be wrong when defective reasoning has been imposed such as “birds have 2 legs and it can fly. Therefore, a human has 2 legs; he could then fly.” As such, it seems logical but in fact it is incorrect.

**Mā nayahetu** (be not led by inference and philosophy). This item means never adopt philosophy as a tool for dharma principle because philosophy is just a perspective and is not a perfect science. Science is still changeable when receiving additionally new information.





**Mā ākāraparivitakken** (be not led by considering appearances and common sense). This item means people likely believe upon reflecting the movement of surrounding emotions. His Lord cautions because some affairs we cannot use our common sense or estimation or tendency because the appearance seems be it but reality may not.

**Mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā** (be not led by the agreement with a considered and approved theory). This item means people likely believe because it matches their dogma or their opinion or their conviction. His Lord cautions that never admit one's dogma because it could also be biases.

**Mā bhaḅbarūpatāya** (be not led by seeming possibility and because of creditability). This item means any speakers' trustful credibility or possibly believe because we have seen so as they speak. Cautions here are the past credible scholars may supply distorted information if they brood prejudices.

**Mā samaṇo no garūti** (be not led by the idea, 'This is our teacher'). This item means be cautious even the teaching of our gurus or teachers; if they brood prejudices (love, greed, rage and delusion). They would unintentionally supply distorted information.

Finally, His Lord concludes, "Upon self- cognition that all these dharmas are then immoral, moral, punishable, and non-punishable; but one should detach or practice accordingly.

### **Elucidation (Interpretation) of His High Ven. Somdej Phra Buddhaghosacaraya (P.A. Payutto)**

His High Venerable embraced the principle of Kālāmasūṭta to bridge with personal faith to lead to sammādiṭṭhi (right view/right understanding) as the essence found in the Buddhadharmā page 593 saying, "upon common people who learn through relying on instructions of others; the training process would first begin with any forms of conviction and Buddhism calls it "Faith". This faith may be belief because of satisfying the primary reason of the dogma and/or justified belief or the characteristics of justification and trustfulness form the instructors themselves. Later, teaching was imposed and attending training until growing with understanding while visioning with rightful reasoning by oneself. Assumably, it was called sammādiṭṭhi (right view/ right understanding). When

opinion and understanding gradually grew and elucidated through practices or for proving with experiences until turning into evident witnessing. It accounted of wisdom growth unto the level of sammāñāṇa (right knowledge/right insight). It was the level above conviction (faith) and beyond any rational understanding (diṭṭhi). This was the destination and goal arrival – the right deliverance or called sammāvimutti. (Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto), 2013, p.245).

At this point, His High Ven. Somdej Phra Buddhaghosacaraya (P.A. Payutto) interpreted the principle of Kālāmasūta as the Buddhist-verse to express the existing faith of believers or non-believers or those determining to be believers. The principle of Kālāmasūta could then be taken as a criterion to decisionmaking for to believe or not to believe. To this point, His Most Venerable Phra Dharmapitaka elucidated that the prohibition of His Lord to believe in fact it was not to rush to conclude or to be abrupt to accept thing without deliberations. As such the introduction of Kālāmasūta by His Lord was to allow listeners freedom of decisionmaking by their own. His Lord never encouraged belief but taught to reflect before justified decisionmaking as they saw it. To conclude, considering contents and explanation of His Most Venerable Phra Dharmapitaka, it could be described that the 10 principles of belief were just the criteria or the practical way guiding individuals in those days for deliberation and to decide whether to believe something or not. As such His Most Venerable did not explain any additional about the meaning found in the 10 principles of belief. His Most Venerable just presented that His Lord adopted and presented these principles for the purpose that individuals must use reasoning and beget self-intuition (Ramil Karnjanda, 2004).

### **Analysis of Kālāmasūta**

In summary, 10 principles of conviction witnessed in Kālāmasūta have been used as principle, evidence and criteria cohesive to thinking assertion, decisionmaking, and evaluation to believe or to accept what was true, what was false and what was credible. With the interpretation of His High Ven. Somdej Phra Buddhaghosacaraya (P.A. Payutto) supported the interpretation of the author that His Lord Buddha taught the Kālāma people to use self-deliberation to reflect conviction. The dogma and the simple method of teachings which the sectarian founders and His Lord Buddha themselves have done. His Lord Himself never claimed of being the enlightened where everyone must believe.



His Lord told the King of Licchavī named King Bhaddiya found in the Bhaddiya Sutta, saying, “Bhaddiya, we have persuaded Your Majesty that Lo! Bhaddiya; may Your Majesty be our disciple and we shall be your founder as such (A.Ti. 20/66/257-261).” It was evident that His Lord wished each one exercised deliberation about the matters by oneself before deciding to believe. It meant that Buddhism held evidence to prove that there were methodologies and criteria to reflect the causes of the matter.

## Conclusions

In the study of Kesputtasūtra or Kālāmasūta and by summary, it was the matter of reservation of not to believe first for inspection before conviction. The dogma was about the interested principle of belief. In general, this Phra Sutta was a doctrine determined to guide and to grasp information heard from others while the listeners abode in Brahmavihāra 4 in perceiving information. When the 10 principles of belief have been interpreted; the Kālāmasūta was enabled to be used as principle, evidence and criteria related to references, decisionmaking, and evaluation on to believe or to accept what was true, what was false and what was credible. This was through implementing self-deliberation to reflect the conviction for a course of practices that guide people in those days. It meant for reflecting and decisionmaking on what to believe and not to believe. The principle of Kālāmasūta could bridge with individual faith leading to sammāditṭhi (right view/right understanding) which began the maggapaṭipada and growth to the nirvana. The dogma in Kesputtasūtra or Kālāmasūta deserved dissemination to be the tool in checking and screening our conviction for its real accuracy. This included investigation which should be studied for systematically disseminating results in depth and more broadness about their meaning and application for real life as well as the influences or the technical reflexion stemmed from this concept. This would lead to improvement of communication which would turn to be the tools enabling to create better reciprocal understanding for further perfection.

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# **THE EIGHT PERSPECTIVES OF THE COOPERATIVE PEDAGOGY AND TEACHING INTERNSHIP TO LEVERAGE THE COMPETENCIES OF THE PEDAGOGICAL STUDENTS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION-BASED THERAVADA IN THE GLOBAL SHIFTS**

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## **Abstract**

This study was qualitative research to study current teaching practicum processes of Higher Education based Buddhism (HEB), Thailand, and to provide the integration dimensions of cooperative education (co-op) and teaching practicum to enhance student teachers of HEB in COVID-19 pandemic and global change. The study used focus group discussion to explore the current teaching practicum skills and processes of HEB. The findings presented that the strong point was the development of being a teacher every academic year before participating in the teaching practicum process according to the identity and philosophy of HEB that produce spiritual teachers based on Buddhist teachings. However, various challenging points need to be enhanced. Thus, the integration of co-op and teaching practicum should be provided actively in 8 dimensions to enhance HEB student teachers' competency: (1) Buddhist ways of global life, (2) self-awareness in health and environmental care, (3) keeping up with modern technology for global changes and pandemic such as adapting digital technology to professional works, learning to apply Artificial Technology (AI) to support their modern teaching, and using modern online teaching-learning platforms, (4) improving and assessing English skills continually from the first to the final years of study, (5) enhancing skills of learning in different or multi-cultures and

collaboration, (6) self-assessment and professional plan from the first year of study until graduation, (7) enriching academic, life and career preparation, and mental encouraging through the online counseling program, and (8) reflecting and improving on experimental learning.

**Keywords:** The eight perspectives, Cooperative pedagogy, Students in the higher education-based Theravada, Global shifts

## **Introduction**

The teaching practicum is the highlight of the teacher program. There are possible insignificant differences in teaching practicums among countries. However, the systematic and standardized teaching practicum is a key for professional development (TCT, 2019c). Therefore, the teaching practicum models, systems, and operational processes are the factor in real-world work (MOE, 2019d; OECD, 2019a; UN, 2020). Additionally, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2019, p. 13) created the new 2019 indicators' framework of education focusing on the output, outcome, and impact on jobs and the globe. The OECD (2019a, p. 13) presented the five steps of the educational process: input (financial human, physical resources, education policy, and legislation), process (participation and progression through educational systems, institutions, and classrooms), output indicators (analysis of the achievement characteristics of the educational accomplishment), outcome indicators (the direct effect of the education systems' output such as employability, earning advantages of pursuing more knowledge, and higher learning), and impact indicators (the long-term indirect effect of the consequences, such as skills of perception, knowledge, ability, life and social well-being, social cohesion, harmony, and equity, as well as growth and changes of economic) (OECD, 2019a, p. 13). OECD (2016) showed explicit evidence that the caliber of a teacher is the most remarkable aspect in school determination and the achievement of learners. Besides, the teaching profession needs top talent and high ability and skills (CCE, 2020). The teaching profession should be enhanced with high-standard training approaches. OECD (2014) stated that enhancing the teacher training system improves the teachers' quality, competency, and productivity. Delivering and transferring knowledge methodologies with technological skill, information communication technology use, and problem-solving skills should be inculcated effectively while closely



focusing on student center learning (Assunção Flores & Gago, 2020; Laksmiwati, Adams, & Sulistyawati, 2022). The UN (2020) provided the aims of the 2030 global education coalition to improve remote learning with technology and utilize limited resources. These aims create equitable universal access to education and cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. OECD (2014) stated that prospective teachers must fulfill a minimum of hours for optional and mandatory didactics and pedagogical courses to complete the teaching practicum. Most OECD countries have a teaching practicum duration of 70–120 days as a format of teaching qualification. Russia, Spain, Korea, Turkey, and Japan provide teaching practicum duration of fewer than 40 days. They focus on assessing student teachers using paper-and-pencil examinations (OECD, 2014).

Understandably, the student teacher regards practicum practicing as the most effective strategy, allowing students to meet the real-world profession (Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, & Le Cornu, 2006). In some countries such as the UK, New Zealand, Australia, and Finland, all student teachers enhance real work through their teaching practicum and professional development at schools. For example, The National Teachers' Council in New Zealand supports and approves teachers' education programs and establishes and maintains the standards for teacher registration and practicum operation (TCAN, 2020).

Teaching Practicum Method in Thailand: From the academic year 2019, the Bachelor of Education program must learn and enhance the teaching profession according to the new MOE announcement that the teaching practicum must be no fewer than 34 credits of all curriculum credits. Such credits consist of theoretical and practical learning (at least 20 credits) and teaching practicum in educational institutions for not less than one year (at least 12 credits) (MOE, 2019a). The teaching practicum method in Thailand is strictly arranged according to the new MOE announcement in 2019, which provides the details below (MOE, 2019a). Higher educational institutions should provide close systematic cooperation for online and offline teaching practicum supervision by providing supervising teachers and mentors who have professional experience standard and quality. This procedure is collaborated to integrate knowledge content with the real learning conditions in schools, communities, learning environments, and work institutions as a Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) approach (MOE, 2019a).

**Teaching Practicum Standard in Thailand:** The teaching practicum is essential to building the teaching profession in real situations (Dlamini, 2018). To produce graduate teachers, higher educational institutions must provide the training for teaching professional experience every year, from the first year to the last year of learning. This approach aims to continually improve student teachers' knowledge and teaching profession experiences, create a useful perspective of the teachers' career, and increase a concentration of professional experience training (MOE, 2019d). Higher educational institutions should arrange practical teaching experience in the role of the teacher in educational institutions throughout the semester, not only in the fourth year of practicing the teaching practicum (MOE, 2019a). Higher educational institutions must create external cooperation with educational institutions to provide real teaching skills and create readiness for the teaching profession when working in schools (MOE, 2019a, 2019b). Moreover, in 2019, the MOE announced that the the Teachers' Council of Thailand has a total duty to issue teacher licenses and control the quality of Thai teachers (MOE, 2019a). The Teachers' Council of Thailand provides the regulations on the professional standards (fourth edition) (TCT, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c): (a) Professional knowledge and experience standard means the relevant desire for learning or educational management, which emphasizes knowledge and experience in the development of professionals. Student teachers must have adequate learning or educational management knowledge and experience for their professional work (TCT, 2019c), (b) Performance standard means specifications of the performance and professional development behavior in the educational profession. Student teachers should attain the experience learning goals and continually develop the teaching skills (TCT, 2019c), and (c) The standard of personal conduct means the professional ethics outlined in the pattern of the teacher conduct. These ethics are for the student teachers who practice in the teaching practicum. They should abide by and maintain the reputation and prestige of the teaching profession for society and service recipients (TCT, 2019c).

**Cooperative Education:** Co-op was first introduced and implemented in a Thai higher education institution in 1993. Due to its effective results, it has been adopted and applied in many higher educational institutions with the MOE support. Presently, the Thai Association for Cooperative Education (TACE) supports co-op nationally (TACE, 2009, p. 5), and the World Association for Cooperative Education (WACE) enhances students' co-op nationally and internationally (WACE, 2020). Thus, co-op can provide students with real workplace experiences. It is an essential instrument to create the 21<sup>st</sup> century





competency of graduate teachers, such as adaptivity, creativity, morality, ethics, strong mind, adaptability, teacher spirit, and quality (Kim, 2019; MOE, 2019d; TACE, 2010). Therefore, co-op is an essential tool that allows students to gain knowledge and real experiences and enhance digital technology information use, information communication technology, skills, and 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies of professional life and career development (Crump & Johnsson, 2011; Muyengwa & Jita, 2021; Rook & Sloan, 2021). It is also an active means to fulfill those rapid changes (Srisa-arn, 2016) and can effectively produce the desired quality and rapidly prepare graduates (Groenewald, Drysdale, Chiupka, & Johnston, 2011; TACE, 2009, p. 5; WACE, 2020).

The achievement results of co-op are to enhance graduate production and employability. In 2002, office of higher education commission of Thailand announced a robust policy to support co-op into higher educational institutions in Thailand. Thai association for cooperative education helps function co-op in Thailand (TACE, 2009, 2010). It enhances the special skills, knowledge, and abilities in the professional area. It also improves human skills such as job skills, leadership, problem-solving, teamwork, and global competence nationally and internationally (TACE, 2009, 2010). Hence, to operate co-op around Thai higher educational institutions, office of higher education commission of Thailand creates a connection to cooperate with Thai association for cooperative education to manipulate effectively Thai higher educational institutions and their staff. Office of higher education commission of Thailand and Thai association for cooperative education arrange the workshops, training programs, and courses on cooperative education for the good perceptions of the active role and essential responsibility (TACE, 2009, 2010). Co-op operation is flexible in many forms, such as two or three periods, the third and fourth years of study (TACE, 2009, p. 5).

Teaching Practicum of HEB in Thailand: HEB in Thailand has been following the stand of teaching practicum of MOE. However, it has not yet been successful because most Buddhism teachers teach students to memorize Buddhist discourses and histories instead of applying the Buddha's profound teachings into their daily life (Pataraporn, 2011). HEB still face the challenge of pandemic, global changing as well as the reducing students' admission each year. As the results, the researcher feels that this research would provide the dimensions to enhance student teachers for HEB in COVID-19 pandemic and

global changing using the integration dimensions of co-op and teaching practicum.

## **Research objectives**

1. To study current teaching practicum processes of HEB.
2. To provide the integration dimensions of co-op and teaching practicum to enhance student teachers for HEB in COVID-19 pandemic and global changing.

## **Literature Reviews**

Teachers are the most important part of education for national development (TCT, 2020). Teacher production presently focuses on increasing the standard performance and spiritual teachers (Aiemphaya, Noymanee, Anukulwech, & Raso, 2021). They can be enhanced through learning standards, such as supportive learning networks; effective collaboration systems among higher educational institutions, schools, and communities; and digital technology (TCT, 2020; Winithasathitkul, 2020). In Thailand, the teaching practicum method is an essential approach for creating graduate teachers according to the teachers' competency (MOE, 2019d, 2020). Since the academic year 2019, the Ministry of Education, Thailand (MOE) has provided the new announcement that teacher production must rely on a competency-based rather than a content-based approach and focus on the competency of self-learning ability and potential to research for the development of innovation to improve learners (MOE, 2019d). Teachers' competency is a combined form of a relevant set of attitudes, knowledge, abilities, and skills (Rossi & Lopez, 2017) to create a distinct teaching ability that enhances and empowers learners (GOA, 2018, p. 13).

Thai teachers' competencies are based on McClelland's (a psychologist at Harvard University) concept of competency as the personal attributes relevant to the work performance results consisting of knowledge, skills, abilities, and other work attributes (OBEC, 2010). Thai teachers' competencies also include the behavioral characteristics that support the personnel in an organization to work with outstanding results more than others in various situations (Ulla & Winitkun, 2018). Consequently, Thai teacher competencies consist of two major



types: core competency and functional competency. Core competency comprises five items: work achievement ability, service mind skill, self-development skill, teamwork skill, and professional ethics and morals. Functional competency contains six items: course and program management skills, learning development ability, classroom administration and management skills, learners' improvement with research skills, teacher leadership, and building relationship with the community for teaching-learning management (MOE, 2019d; OBEC, 2010).

Presently, modern teachers' competency and teacher production methods are crucial factors to develop the country and human resources per the change in the dynamic world and the advancement of digital technology affecting human learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as well as the development of new integrated science and cross-culture (MOE, 2019d; Nguyen, 2021; Ulla & Winitkun, 2018). Therefore, the goal of the current teacher education, practicum, and development is to create a modernized teacher meeting both national development strategies and learning in the digital world (Benedek, 2020; Galaczi, Nye, Poulter, & Allen, 2018). The Teachers' Council of Thailand also provides new standard learning outcomes of six learning domains: code of conduct development; knowledge development; cognitive improvement; interpersonal relationship and responsibility skills; numerical analysis, communication, and technology implementation skills; and learning management for graduate teacher methods (TCT, 2019c).

## **Research Methodology**

Focus group discussion was an instrument to study current teaching practicum processes of HEB. The focus group discussion was beneficial for description findings, in which statistics or quantitative approach was not available, and it was an active instruction (Krueger, 1988; Morgan, 1988; Stewart & Kamins, 1993). The focus group discussion was arranged according to the six steps: (1) preparing the main objectives and essential questions, (2) developing a meeting agenda, (3) planning to record information and use technology, (4) identifying and inviting suitable focus group discussion participants, (5) discussing according to the agenda, and (6) concluding the focus group discussion meeting.

The focus group discussion instrument was open-ended questions on the following 5 main perspectives:

**Table 1** The focus group discussion instrument with the 5 main perspectives

No	Questions
1	What do you think about the current teaching practicum process results, strengths, and weaknesses?
2	How possible is it to use co-op to develop teaching practicum by keeping and following Teachers' Council regulations and requirements and the MOE announcement of teacher production?
3	Could any co-op issues, such as career preparation, be used to improve the teaching practicum process in order to enhance competency, competitive ability, and employability?
4	Would any distinguished indicators, such as being spiritual teachers, 21 <sup>st</sup> century and COVID-19, and technology use, be the essential outcomes of the model?
5	How can we apply the model to enhance student teachers during their teaching practicum?

The participants were eight representatives of co-op, teaching practicum, educational experts, and student teachers using the purposive selection. The focus group discussion was conducted by volunteers in co-op, teaching practicum, and teaching fields. The characteristics of the eight volunteers are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2** Characteristics of the eight volunteers

Volunteer no.	Gender/status	Field of expertise/study
V1	Female	Co-op
V2	Monk	Co-op and teaching practicum
V3	Nun	Teaching practicum
V4	Female	Teaching practicum
V5	Female	Co-op
V6	Female	School teaching
V7	Female	Fifth-year teaching practicum students



Volunteer no.	Gender/status	Field of expertise/study
V8	Female	Fifth-year teaching practicum students

### Data Collection and Analysis

The focus group discussion was held in December 2020 for 120 minutes with 8 volunteers. Data analysis was conducted by considering the key elements of three processes of teaching practicum (before, during, and after processes). It was performed from the open-ended question form, sound recording, and volunteers' description. Data were reviewed and analyzed per the following sequence (Berg & Lune, 2014, pp. 338-339): (1) data would be gathered and crated into the manuscript to be read; (2) code would be methodically developed for analysis; (3) manuscript would be sorted by words, patterns, grouping, similar terms, items, categories, phrases, relationships, and disparities; (4) Isolate meaningful patterns and processes would be sorted and examined; and (5) patterns would be identified and discussed and integrated with the related studies to generate the part of content analysis that could be counted and created in thematic content analysis (Berg & Lune, 2014, pp. 338-339).

## Results

**Focus Group Discussion Results:** The semi-structured focus group discussion interview format provided eight volunteers the chance to share (Table 1) their opinions and asked follow-up questions to collect richer and more compelling data (Finn & McInnis, 2014). It was conducted for 120 minutes in December 2020. The results were presented according to the five questions.

### 1. What do you think about the current teaching practicum process, such as the strengths and weaknesses of HEB' teaching practicum and the results of the current teaching practicum process?

V2: for HEB, both priest and lay students have been using the same standard criteria for co-op and the teaching practicum. However, it will be better to create unique standard criteria more appropriate for them. For example, their work and jobs in the temple, social service, and priest duty integrate with their fields of study.

V1: HEB should provide specific criteria and assessments for priest students, different from those for lay students, during their teaching practicum or co-op. It is interesting.

V3: teaching practicum students of Buddhist universities mostly have humble and polite characteristics which come from learning and practicing Buddhism in HEB. We are still weak in adaptive and life skills.

V6: HEB should enhance adaptive, life, and active skills.

V2: in the teaching practicum, preparation should encourage more technology use and English skills for students.

V7 and V8: we need English skills to prepare for teacher examination, want universities to provide future government teacher examination training, and can use the online system to continue improving our skills and be more confident in teaching and English use.

## **2.How is it possible to use co-op to develop teaching practicum by keeping and following the Teachers' Council regulations and requirements and the MOE announcement of teacher production, 2019?**

V1: It is entirely possible to apply co-op to integrate and enhance teaching practicum, especially aboard. For example, the University of Cincinnati enhances students' competency and career development with co-op and prepares them well. Students are allowed to enhance their skills through real-world work. They know the necessary skills needed for development from the first to the final year of study. However, in Thailand, we do not plan students' competency development for each year or let them explore through real-world work from the first to the final year of learning. They can accumulate knowledge and adjust and improve themselves well through co-op or the teaching practicum in the final year only. Students should know their self-assessment with career development.

V2: we can provide the indicators of Buddhist teachings with the Thai qualification framework for co-op and teaching practicum students; thus, students can practice and improve themselves effectively based on the identity of Buddhist universities.



### **3. Could any co-op issues, such as career preparation, process, and conclusion, be used to enhance the teaching practicum process in order to improve competitive ability and employability?**

V1: absolutely, we can apply career preparation, process, and development, which are co-op's essential ideas. Because co-op focuses on ready-to-work graduates and future career preparation, the curriculum and teaching practicum process and management should plan and well embed career preparation and let students perform every academic year. For example, they can teach or work in the summer. We can also create career networks with schools, workplaces, and alumni, as well as job fairs, to encourage them. Hence, they will have more skills and better prepare themselves for future work and competitions.

V6: yes, students can work with schools as volunteers.

V2–V5: it will be good if HEB can create a strong network and curriculum focusing more on career preparation, real-world competition, and employability.

### **4. Would any distinguished indicators, such as being spiritual teachers, 21<sup>st</sup> century and COVID-19, and technology use, be the essential outcomes of the model?**

V2: yes, the model should include technology skills for the COVID-19 pandemic, enhance distance learning, develop English skills.

V6: most students have good conduct, but they should increase the teacher's responsibility and enthusiasm for work.

V7–V8: during the teaching practicum, we want to improve more skills and supervise online.

### **5. How can we enhance student teachers during their teaching practicum this this pandemic?**

V3: right now, all the fifth-year student teachers are already in the second year. Thus, we can enhance and prepare the skills they most need during and after the teaching practicum, such as online technology skills for COVID-19, motivation for their life, and work skills.

V2: students had to prepare their research works and reports when completing the teaching practicum. Some students could not submit them on time, so we want to use technology and training that support them to complete their work and responsibility.

V4: in this pandemic, mental support and supervision are important for students, so we can apply the model with the topic that provides mental support and encouragement.

V5: we can apply online training and counselling to enhance their knowledge, mental support, work, and life skills; improve their teaching characters; and prepare them for graduation.

The conclusion of the focus group discussion is based on the five questions. It could be divided into three phases of co-op and teaching practicum (before, during, and after participating in the teaching practicum), as discussed below.

### **Before Participating in the Teaching Practicum**

HEB should provide specific and appropriate standard criteria for the teaching practicum and specific assessment approaches for their priest students. For example, priest duty, work, jobs, and social service in the temples and schools should be integrated into their fields of study and teaching skills. HEB should effectively enhance their student teachers' adaptive and active life skills, such as English, online and technology, and distance learning and teaching skills. They should continue to improve their competency through self-assessment and development in professional progress each year. They also enrich their skills through real-world work from the first to the final year of study. HEB can create career networks with schools, workplaces, and alumni, as well as job fairs, to encourage them. Thus, they will have more skills and be better prepared for future work and competitions. These can be embedded in teaching practicum preparation and the Thai qualification framework for teacher education.

### **During Participation in the Teaching Practicum**

During participation in the teaching practicum, continual skills improvement by effective offline and online supervision is essential. Student





teachers' responsibilities and enthusiasm for work can be supported and monitored by an online system. Particularly, during the COVID-19 pandemic, adaptation and motivation for their life and work skills are important. HEB can apply online training (about ten times) and counselling to enhance their knowledge, mental support, work, and life skills; improve their teaching characteristics; govern teachers' examination training; prepare their future work; and prepare them for graduation.

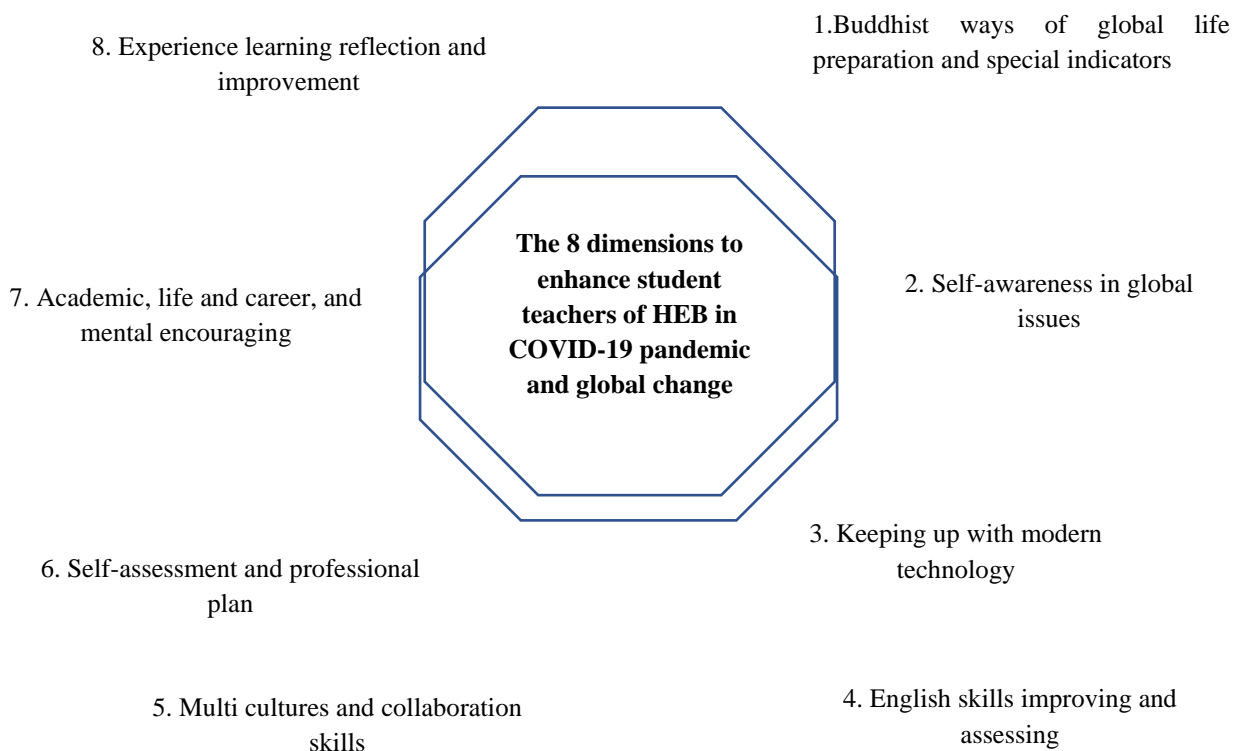
### **After Participating in the Teaching Practicum**

After participating in a teaching practicum, student teachers should assess themselves effectively for their future preparation and improvement of their profession. They should also provide feedback, as a reflection on their concrete learning and improvement, and their approaches toward enhancing the teaching practicum support and management processes for more appropriate and active learning in the future.

### **The integration dimensions of co-op and teaching practicum**

According to the focus group discussion, teaching practicum method, teacher professional standards, the concept and benefits of co-op. Thus, the integration dimensions of co-op and teaching practicum to enhance student teachers for HEB in COVID-19 pandemic and global change should consist of 8 dimensions to fulfill the needed skills as follows: (1) Buddhist ways of global life preparation and also provide special indicators to prepare and assess between monastic and householder students, (2) self-awareness in global issues such as health and environmental care in new normal (Nations, 2022), (3) keeping up with modern technology such as digital technology for global changes pandemic, adapting and enhancing digital technology and information and communication technology to teaching-learning, communicate and collaborate in their teaching profession effectively, learn to apply Artificial Technology (AI) to support their modern teaching, apply online modern teaching – learning platforms (Bamrungsin & Khampirat, 2022; Laksmiwati et al., 2022), (4) improving and assessing English skills continually from the first to the final years of study (Erarslan, 2021), (5) enhancing skills of learning in different or multi-cultures and collaboration skills (Kim, 2019), (6) Self-assessment and professional plan from the first year of study until graduation,

(7) receiving the online counseling program during the process of participating in teaching practicum to support academic skills, life and career preparation, and mental encouraging and provide the reflection on learning and experiences for improving (Bamrungsin & Khampirat, 2022; Karo & Petsangsri, 2021), and (8) Experience learning’ s reflection and improvement (Kolb, 1984). The 8 dimensions to enhance student teachers of HEB in COVID-19 pandemic and global change presents in the Figure 1:



**Figure 1:** The 8 dimensions to enhance student teachers of HEB in COVID-19 pandemic and global change

## Conclusions

After focus group discussion, the findings presented that the strength point was the development of being a teacher every academic year before participating in the teaching practicum process according to the identity and philosophy of HEB that produce spiritual teachers based on Buddhist teachings. However, there are various challenging points that HEB should provide the dimensions to enhance student teachers’ skills in this pandemic and global changing. HEB should provide actively 8 dimensions for enhancing student



teachers through before-during-after participating in teaching practicum processes: (1) Buddhist ways of life preparation, (2) self-awareness, (3) keeping up with modern technology, (4) improving and assessing English skills continually, (5) multi-cultures and collaboration skills, (6) self-assessment and professional plan, (8) mental, life and career counseling, and (8) learning experiences' reflection and improvement.

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## **MORALITY AND PURIFICATION FOR HEALING THE FUTURE WORLD**

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### **Abstract**

Today our so-called modern and advanced society is dominated by craving, greed, hatred, ignorance, suspicion, fear, anxieties, tension, stress etc. People feel loneliness (seclusion), frustration (dissatisfaction), jealousy and enmity. Everywhere there is fighting in society. Economic factors have become prominent in society. Everywhere, there is a struggle to gain economic reward, comfort and luxury. People continuously run and fight for economic, social, political superiority. Lifestyle brings anxieties, tension and stress in the mind of people. The mind is impatient (cancala trembling, impulsive) and unsteady by nature. It runs here and there in search of happiness (Dhp.33.) In this modern and competitive society. The mind has become uncontrolled. An uncontrolled mind is always indulging in unwholesome thoughts of greed, selfishness and attachment to worldly things. Desire plays a role behind all these factors. If one desire is fulfilled, the other raises its head. The one becomes dissatisfied with that for which he made great effort earlier to obtain. In order to satisfy our endless worldly desires, we suffer in different ways and never become happy or satisfied.

**Keywords:** Morality and Purification, Healing, Future World

## Introduction

Craving is not only the enemy of a person, but also of society and of mankind. Everybody desires pleasure, wealth, property, which leads them not only towards unhealthy competition but also towards crime. In this modern materialistic society people are of the opinion that happiness can only be obtained by satisfying every desire. People search sensual pleasure in material things and try to have as well as increase the quantity of luxurious things. They do not think that the sensual satisfaction will lead them towards a life of non-fulfillment. To satisfy their greed and pride, people create problems for themselves as well as for others. When they do not get satisfaction for their desires. They feel restless, anxious, tension and stress which leads to suicide and other mental problems. When one gains his long awaited and desired goal, he becomes restless in protecting that or makes efforts to keep that forever with him. Thinking about their loss he becomes fearful.

These all are suffering and they are because of the three roots- greed, hatred and delusion (ignorance). It is well known fact that Siddhattha Gotama renounced his household life in search of the remedy of the suffering of this world. He practiced different kind of penances and self-mortifications but could not find the solution. Finally, Siddhārtha Gautama obtained the truth under the Bodhi Tree, in the quest of which he had left his household life. He attained the Enlightenment and became the Buddha. He designated the newly discovered ultimate truth as Dependent-Origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*). He discovered that craving is the root cause of suffering and realized that, because of craving, all beings transmigrate in this world. This was the truth, which was observed and experienced by the Buddha (*Dhp*, 153-54; *Nidānakathā*, p. 190).

In order to remove the suffering and to attain the cessation of suffering, one has to eliminate craving. For this very purpose the Buddha has discovered a Middle path and put forward which does not adopt the either ends—addiction to attractive sense pleasures and addiction to self-mortification and which leads to the suffering-free state ‘*Nibbāna*, Liberation’. That is the Noble Eightfold Path (*Mv* (*Dhammacakkapavattana*), p. 13).

This Noble Eightfold Path destroys the craving with its roots and leads the beings towards the cessation of suffering. The search of the cause of suffering, the knowledge of the relation between action and cause, and the invention of the path leading towards the state of extinguishing the suffering,





was the unprecedented discovery of the Buddha. After this discovery, he proclaimed himself to be the Buddha (Mv, p. 11). This is the Bodhi of Siddhattha Gotama, and Buddhahood (Buddhatta) of the Buddha.

At the time of the turning of the wheel of Dhamma, the Buddha propounded not only the cause of suffering, but also proposed Liberation (Nibbāna, Renunciation) as an antidote of the suffering, and expounded the way to remove the suffering and attain the final goal emancipation. The Buddha designated it as Four Noble Truths. These Four Noble Truths is the formula for healing of all kinds of physical, mental, personal and social diseases or illness. In this formula there is the identification of the disease and its cause, and the assurance of an antidote of that disease and remedy to treat that cause of disease. The Buddha was able to diagnose the diseases and govern the people with the instruction in a spiritual dimension. That is why the Buddha is also known as the Great Physician. Basic tenets of Buddha's teachings are to heal the confused, ignorant and deluded people with loving-kindness (friendliness), Compassion, Wisdom.

For the welfare and happiness of the many people, he deputed his follower disciples also to propagate this newly discovered truth, cause of the suffering, and the way to remove it. Even in the age of least communicative options, he succeeded in his mission of making available a way to Liberation for common people, which is neither very easy nor very hard to follow.

The main aim of the teaching of the Buddha is to make the people be free from the circle of transmigration and realize the state of liberation (Nibbāna). If there is no transmigration, there will be no suffering. The state of liberation (Nibbāna) has been depicted in the Nikāyas as the absence of defilement. It is presented as happiness, an antidote of the suffering. It is the state of absolute purity (extremely pure). Buddhaghosa has explained that being free from all kinds of defilements, absolutely pure Nibbāna should be known as Purity (Vism. I. 5, p. 4). Ultimate goal of the teachings of the Buddha is to achieve that purity. It can be attained through pure conduct, proper practice and pure wisdom. The Buddha was an able, noble, excellent and true teacher. To attain that state of absolute purity and extreme calm, he has propounded the Path. He did not shower the blessings to any desirous of emancipation to make him free from the suffering, but he showed the Path only, and inspired him to follow the Path. The absolutely pure Nibbāna cannot be produced, but can be

realized through following the Path. As, the shores of the ocean cannot be brought together, but one can cross the ocean by boat or other means to go to the next shore (Milindapañha p. 251).

All the beings of this world are not of equal wisdom, and are not having equal interest and equal patience. According to the ability, interest and patience of the listener, the Buddha has propounded the Path leading towards that absolute purity in different ways.

The Buddha explains the teaching of all the Buddhas in nutshell as- “Not to do any evil, to cultivate merit, to purify one's mind.” (Dhp.14.5) of course it is a simple way, but not easy. In different instances the Buddha has taught the different means or ways like ‘insight only’, ‘the meditations and understanding’, ‘the deeds’, ‘the morality (virtue)’, ‘foundation of mindfulness’, ‘the right efforts’, and so on, through which one can approach to the absolute purity (Vism. I. 6, p. 4). All these Paths are included in the Eightfold Path proposed by the Buddha at the time of the turning the wheel of the Dhamma, which can lead to the Liberation.

In reply of a question asked by a certain deity at Sāvattḥī, the Buddha says that all the beings are entangled in this world by craving, and because of that they are suffering. The way explained by the Buddha to disentangle the tangle of craving contains three sections- morality (Sīla, precept, discipline), meditation (samādhi, effort and practice, concentration, mental culture) and wisdom (paññā, draw out the potentialities of the human mind). (Vism. I. 8, p. 5.) Through these three heads, the way to purity has been shown. It is also called the Three Teachings of the Buddha.

In the Rathavināta sutta (MN. I. 24 (1.3.4) the Buddha recommends and appreciates the performing of the seven purifications to attain that absolute purity (Liberation): i) Moral Purification (Purification of Conduct), ii) Purification of Mind, iii) Purification of Views, iv) Purification by Overcoming Doubts, v) Purification by Knowledge and Vision of What is and what is not Path, vi) Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Path, vii) Purification by Knowledge and Vision. These seven purifications are included in these three teachings. The first one is moral purification and second is included in meditation; remaining five purifications are included in wisdom.



To attain that absolute purity (Liberation, Nibbāna), the first step of the preliminary stage in the Path, is Morality. Purification of conduct is an essential condition to practice the meditation to control the mind, which leads to wisdom. Morality is a rational and practical mode in Buddhism. It is supposed to be the fundamental base for cultivation of humanistic thoughts. Without discipline one cannot make the right effort and without right effort one cannot achieve wisdom.

## **Morality Is?**

Morality is a mental state or motivation that motivates to abstain from physical, verbal and mental evil actions or misconduct and leads to practice virtuous actions and sustain it, which develops concentration. Morality is an ageless quality and fragrant at all the time. Morality shines at all the ages. Reputation of the moral person spread far and wide. Any other fragrant of sandal wood (candana), rhododendron (tagara), jaismin (mallikā) cannot go against the wind, the reputation of a moral person spreads all the directions, even against the wind. The fragrant of morality is excellent among all kinds of fragrant (Dhp.54-55).

Morality is in the sense of establishing properly (rightly putting together, samādhāna), and upholding rightly (upadhāraṇa). Since, it rightly restrains or checks, and rightly establishes the bodily and verbal actions, it is called morality (sīla, virtue). (Abhi.Vibh, 159) Since it serves as the ground (base) by rightly upholding the wholesome resolutions/ determinations, it is called morality (sīla). (Vism. I.19, p. 7) The action of rightly establishment by morality is something different from the action of rightly establishment by meditation. Meditation establishes the mind rightly on a particular object to control the mind, while morality restrains the bodily and verbal action from being beset (sprinkle). It prevents from the faulty (blameable) actions, properly establishes the blameless actions and holds the wholesome dhammas.

The sense of action and achievement, these are two functions of the morality. The action of morality is to destruct (shatter, destroy, stop) the misconduct or bad conduct, and achievement of morality is to be the quality of blamelessness. That, which has the function of stopping or destroying misconduct or bad conduct and has achievement of blamelessness is called morality.

The morality is manifested through the physical, verbal and mental purity. The proximate cause of the morality is conscience and shame. Morality

arises and persists only when conscience and shame are in existence (Vism. I. 22, p. 8; A.N., I. 12. 8-9, p. 306).

### **How many kinds of Morality?**

There are four kinds of Morality-e.g. morality as volition, morality as consciousness–concomitance, morality as restraint, and morality as non-transgression (Vism. I.17, p. 7; Paṭisammidāmagga, 1.39, p. 39). The state of abstinence from conducting the bad actions like killing, stealing etc. or fulfilling the performance of the duty is volition morality (morality as volition). (Vism. I.17, p. 7) The volition of one, who abstains from seven kinds of ways of action like killing, stealing etc., is volition morality (*cetanā sīla*).

Abstinence in one who abstains from the killing, stealing etc. is morality as consciousness–concomitance (*cetasika sīla*). Abstinence from remaining three bad ways of action consisting of covetousness (*abhijjhā*), desire to injure or to kill (*byāpāda*) and wrong view (*sammādiṭṭi*) is said morality as consciousness–concomitance (Vism. I.17, p.7). These three unwholesome mental factors control all kinds of physical and verbal misconducts. One thinks first in his mind and then he performs the action through his body or speech. Likewise, non-covetousness, absence of ill-will (i.e. free from malice) and right view, these three wholesome mental factors restrains the mind which leads one towards performing the physical and verbal wholesome actions. This restraining state is called morality as consciousness–concomitance.

Restraint in five ways, i.e. restraint by the rules of the Community (*Pātimokkha saṃvara*), restraint by mindfulness (*sati saṃvara*), restraint by knowledge (*ñāṇa saṃvara*), restraint by patience (*khanti saṃvara*) and restraint by energy (*vīriya saṃvara*), is known as morality as restraint (*saṃvara sīla*). Non-transgression, by body or speech, of precepts of morality, which have been undertaken, is called morality as non-transgression (*anulaṅghana sīla*).

### **Unwholesome and Wholesome Actions (Roots)**

Buddhist Morality is based on the universal law of cause and effect. The merit and demerit of action depends on its effect on others. In any civilized society, an action which causes physical and mental pain to another being is not considered meritorious. The action originates by the intention or motivation (*cetanā*). Thus, the quality of the action depends on the good or bad motivation. If an action is being done out of greed, hatred, and delusion, the three



unwholesome roots, that is considered to be unwholesome. On the other hand, an action is being performed out of non-greed, non-hatred, and wisdom, the three wholesome roots, is a wholesome one. The mind is the source of all our actions.

Every work is being done by the volition (cetana), so volition is called action. (A.N., II.ii, 6.6.9, p. 118; Aṭṭhasālinī, 3.116, p. 73) Action is an independent ruling agency with regard to produce its result. Without any intervention from any external power, it operates the results in its own field. There are three channels of performing the action- the body, speech and mind. The action related with the channel of body is called bodily or physical action; the action related with the channels of speech and mind is called verbal action and mental action respectively. According to the result, the action is divided into two categories- bad action and good action. The latent potential forces of both kinds of actions influence the courses of existence. Diversity of the world is created by the action.

Body, hands, legs or lips cannot move to work without any motivation from mind. Mental factors influence the mind to perform the bad or good action. Three unwholesome mental factors- greed (lobha), hatred (dosa) and ignorance (moha) are responsible for any bad action, while non-greed (alobha), non-hatred (adosa) and wisdom (amoha), these three wholesome mental factors are responsible for any good action. These six mental factors are the root causes for any action. These unwholesome and wholesome mental factors produce ten unwholesome and ten wholesome actions respectively. Among these ten unwholesome and wholesome actions, three are related with the channel of body, four are related with the channel of speech and remaining three are related with the channel of mind. Ten unwholesome actions are as follows:

1. Killing (Pāṇātipāta): killing of living beings. The term pāṇātipāta is translated into English in various forms such as harming living beings, killing living beings, etc. (Vibhaṅga, Dasa akusalakammamathā, p. 459.).

2. Stealing (Adinnādāna): Taking what is not given. It is a taking the belongings of others with the intention of having own possession.

3. Sexual misconduct (Kāmesumicchācāra): Going to women belonging to others.

4. Telling a lie (Musāvāda): Saying what is not accord with reality, deceiving other people with intention, etc.

5. Malicious talk (Pisuṇā vācā): Back-biting, destructive talk, speech intended to create enmity and division among the people or group, hearing in that place tell here or hearing in this place tell there for creating /making division between both.

6. Harsh talk (Pharusā vācā): Hurting-abusing-scolding-cursing talk; faulty, not pleasant to the ear, un-polite, un-respectful, un-affectionate talk. This kind of talk is very painful and unpleasant to the being concern.

7. Frivolous talk (Samphappalāpā): Improper time talk, unworthy to put into heart, non-sense, un-useful, meaningless talk.

8. Covetousness (Abhijjā): Desire to possess the others things, have love with someone else things.

9. Malice (Byāpāda): Violence against the beings is called malice. Having wicked mind desiring to kill and beat the beings is called malice.

10. Wrong view (Micchā diṭṭhi): Not having right or proper view, false view.

Unwholesome actions lead one towards falling not only into five existences, but also into bad or evil existences (destinies). Every person dislike those who perform these ten actions. (S.N. (Dhātu Saṃyutta), I.ii.3.5, p. 152) It is also known as unrighteous living (adhammacariyā) and disharmonious living (visamacariyā). One does not receive the respect in the society. He loses his reputation. The Buddha has taught the five disadvantages of doing such immoral actions. Path of action of killing (bodily action), harsh words (verbal action) and malice (mental action), these three are accomplished with hatred. They are produced with beings as base (substratum). Two bodily actions- taking what is not given and sexual misconduct, and one mental action, covetousness is accomplished with greed. They are produced from enjoyment. Lying, double talk and frivolity-these three verbal actions are accomplished with greed, hatred and delusion. They are produced from name (Nama) as base (substratum).

False view is accomplished with delusion. It is produced from the base of name (nama) and form (rupa). Though the accomplishment of all these ten paths of action is different, but their preparation is same. Greed, hatred and delusion these three unwholesome roots are preparation for these entire ten paths of actions. One kills the being out of greed, out of hatred and out of delusion. One steals the things of others out of greed, out of hatred and out of delusion. Sexual misconduct and other paths of actions are similarly done out of greed, hatred and delusion. All these ways of actions have three fruits: the fruit of



retribution (vipāka phala), natural (similar /equal fruits, āśraya phala) and dominant fruit (adhipati phala). It is called the fruits of the Paths of action.

These actions not only destroy the harmony, good-will, and friendliness prevailing in society, but also destruct the personal happiness and peace. A person who is endowed with bodily, verbal and mental misconduct is considered and recognized as a fool. A person who is endowed with bodily, verbal and mental good conduct is considered and recognized as a wise person (A.N., I.i, 3.1.2, p. 124).

The Buddha has taught that the existence of human being is a unique balance of happiness and sorrow, pleasure and pain. It facilitates the development of morality and wisdom to liberate oneself from the transmigration. (S.N. II, p. 341) Restraining from these ten unwholesome actions is called wholesome action. It is also called wholesome way of actions (kamma), which leads one to the Liberation. These are as follows:

1. Abstinence from killing (Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī)
2. Abstinence from taking what is not given i.e. stealing (Adinnādānā veramaṇī)
3. Abstinence from adultery (Kāmesumicchācārā veramaṇī)
4. Abstinence from telling lies (Musāvādā veramaṇī)
5. Abstinence from slandering (Pisuṇā vācā veramaṇī)
6. Abstinence from harsh talking (Pharusā vācā veramaṇī)
7. Abstinence from non-sense talking (Samphappalāpā veramaṇī)
8. Abstinence from covetousness (Abhijjā veramaṇī)
9. Abstinence from malevolence (Byāpādā veramaṇī)
10. Abstinence from wrong views (Micchā diṭṭhi veramaṇī)

These ten actions are called leading to distinction (viśeṣabhāgiya). The volition of abandoning the seven kinds of unwholesome actions i.e. restraining from three bodily and four verbal actions among the ten unwholesome actions are included in morality as volition. Abstinence from remaining three mental unwholesome actions- covetousness (abhijjā), malevolence (byāpāda) and wrong view (micchā diṭṭhi), are included in morality as consciousness-concomitance. It is very important to note that the morality i.e. the wholesome way of action or abstinence from unwholesome actions is commonly known as Dhamma. Candrakīrti, in his Prasannapadā, a commentary on Madhyamakaśāstra of Nāgārjuna, explains the meaning of the term ‘dharma’ (Dhamma), with its three characteristics as – (i) that the one which holds its own specific characteristics, (ii) prevents one from falling into bad or evil existences

(destinies) and (iii) prevents one from falling into five existences. Among these three meanings, two are related to the morality. According to Candrakīrti, the second characteristic of the dharma represents the ten good actions (kuśala karma), which prevents the beings from falling in the evil existences. Describing the third characteristic of dharma, i.e. ‘it prevents one from falling in five existences’ he says that it denotes the Nirvāṇa, which releases one from the rebirth or transmigration in five destinies (gatis). In this regard self-restraining mind (ātmasaṃyamaka citta) is dharma. Candrakīrti further says that not only self-restraining mind but also the mind benevolent to others (parānugrāhaka citta) and full of friendliness (maitrī citta) are also called dharma. It denotes the significance of morality in attaining the Visuddhi. Morality is not only self-restraining mind but also is the mind benevolent to others. If one restrains himself from the killing to others, he saves the others, which cultivates friendliness.

### **The Morality as the First Step Toward Liberation**

The Buddha wanted to make a moralistic society by reforming the mind of the individuals. If one performs the moral conduct in the society, he will not only make himself happy, but to others also in the society. The Buddha placed highest priority on inner transformation of the beings, through which one can live a peaceful moral life in the society. Through inner transformation, the moral reconstruction can be achieved and through moral conduct it can be established a humanistic society. Moral reform leads to reform in the social system as well. Thus, in all kinds of his teaching, the Buddha has placed morality first.

Generally, the teaching of the Buddha has been divided into three- Training of higher morality, Training of higher consciousness and Training of higher wisdom. Here the training of higher morality is shown by morality. It leads towards non-existence (Vism. ṭikā, p. 21).

What the Buddha has taught is virtuous in the beginning, virtuous in the middle and in the end, (DN, I. 2, p. 55; I. 3, pp. 76-77; MN, I.5.1, p. 358 and I.5.2, p. 365) because it illustrates the most perfect and very pure higher life. Since the teaching of the Buddha explains the precepts concerning morality, it is virtuous in the beginning. The Buddha has said that quite purified morality is the beginning of the wholesome things (dhamma). (S.N., III. I, 3.2.5, p. 240) Describing the Teachings of all the Buddhas, he has placed sīla (morality, virtue) first by saying ‘not doing of any evil’ (Dhp.14.5).





The morality brings about the special qualities of non-remorse (absence of regret). Thus, the goodness in the beginning of the Buddha's teachings is shown by the morality (Vism., I. 10, p. 5.). As the training of higher virtue is shown by morality, the necessary condition for the triple clear-vision (three kinds of super knowledge) is shown by morality. With the support of moral accomplishment, one achieves three kinds of super knowledge, nothing besides that. While purifying the morality, by the power of mindfulness (*sati*) and attentiveness (*sampajañña*), by the power of the knowledge of the deeds property (*kammassaka*), it becomes pure from all kinds of the impurities of defilements and reaches to the completion. (Vism. I.11, p. 6) So, while accomplishing with the practice of morality, the power of mindfulness and power of knowledge become present in the form of support. Thus, accomplishing the common cause, morality should be known as the reliance for three kinds of super knowledge. (Vism. *ṭikā*, p.22-23) With the prudence (cautiousness) of mindfulness, the knowledge of the former state of existence accomplishes. With the attentiveness in all the action to be performed, and acquaintance with the properly seen the performance, the knowledge of disappearance and reappearance (transmigration *cutupapāta nāṇa*) accomplishes. With the knowledge of the deeds property (*kammassakatā*), knowledge of the ending of defilements accomplishes. With the absence of the transgression (Wrongdoing), with the nature of abandonment of defilement, with the necessary condition (the support) of devolving cycle (devolution), the third knowledge, the purification of intention, accomplishes.

At the time of his first sermon at *Rṣipatana Mṛgadāva* expounding the middle path, the Buddha has prohibited to follow the two extremes- indulgence of sense desire and indulgence of self-mortification. In the teaching of the Buddha, through the morality, the shunning (avoidance) of indulgence of sense desire is shown. Because of the sensual desire, beings indulge with false (impure) practices of killing, stealing, lying etc.. The one who is endowed with morality, the sensual desires subside and become absent. (Vism. *ṭikā*, p.24)

Because of the morality, one emancipates (becomes free) from the four kinds of the state of suffering (misery) and enters in the realm of bliss. Abstaining from killing, stealing, deceitful talk etc. prevents one from the miseries of bad courses (bad sphere of existence). Thus, the way to escape from the state of misery (transient state of loss) is also shown through the morality.

Abandonment of those defilements by the subsequent item of meritorious action is also shown by morality. This is just like the abandonment of darkness by the light of a lamp (Vism. I.12, p. 6). Because of the defilements one transgresses the minor conduct in the channels of body and speech. The nature of morality is non-transgression of minor conduct. It prevents one from this depravity of action or conduct. (Vism. *ṭikā*, p.25) Thus, the opposition (*paṭipakkho*) of transgression (*vītikkamo*) of defilements is shown by the morality (Vism. I.13, p. 6).

Physical, verbal and mental bad conduct or the behavior (action) depraved by defilements is called misconduct. The defilements make that transition (*santāna*) impure, where they arise. They oppress (harm) and torment (harass) that transition, so they are called affliction (*saṅkilesa* defilement). The purification of affliction through morality or the abandonment of that affliction by the constituents of morality is called the opposition of transgression by morality. (Vism. *ṭikā*, p. 25) Thus, the purification of misconduct and defilements is also shown by morality (Vism. I.13, p. 6).

The one who has entered into the stream (*Sotāpanna*) and Returning Once (*Sakadāgāmi*, Once Returner) is called the ‘Perfecter in the Morality’ (AN., I.i, 3.9.6, p. 263-264). Thus, the reason for the states of Stream-entry and Once-return is also shown by morality (Vism. I.14, p. 6).

## Conclusions

The Buddha has expounded a peaceful and blissful state as the antidote of the suffering and called that state as Liberation (*Nibbāna*). The moral purification has been explained as the first step of that path, which leads towards that state of Liberation. Following this path one can remove his suffering. The aim of the teaching of the Buddha is to transform the human personality into humane one through ethical, practical and intellectual perfection. The Buddha repeatedly instructed his follower disciple monks and laity to have rational, self-restrained and compassionate action. Of course, the attitude of the Buddha is very much humanistic, which leads one to a socialistic view, not to escapist. Deep-rooted rationality in Buddha’s teachings was not only effective in his time but also for today and forever.



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# **A RELATIONSHIP INVESTIGATION BETWEEN THE LIFE QUALITY VIEWPOINTS AND THE EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN THE WORKLIFE WITH THE ROUTINE –LIFE AMONG THE SUPPORT PERSONNEL: XYZ OUTLETS**

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## **Abstract**

The research was about relationship between the aspects of life quality and the allocation balance between work and life of Back Office employees, XYZ Duty Free & Outlet Shop Business. The purposes of this study were 1) to study the level of aspects of life quality that employees concerned and 2) to examine relationship between aspects of life that employees concerned and the allocation balance between work and life. This study used quantitative research. A sample in this study was 84 employees in back-office segment of XYZ Duty Free & Outlet Shop Business. The research instrument was questionnaire. Data was analyzed with statistics including average, percentage, standard deviation and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. The results showed that the majority of participants was female, age more than 35 years old and graduated with Bachelor's degree. The aspects of-life quality that the staff concerned in the overall revealed at a high level with an average of 4.20 and the allocation balance between work and life revealed at a high level with an average of 4.17. The result of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient showed that relationship between overall aspects of life's quality and the allocation balance between work and life was high with 0.751. Time; the aspect of life's quality, was the most correlated with work-life balance's level for 0.816 with statistically significant at 0.01.



**Keywords:** Aspects of life quality, Work-life balance, Back Office staff

## Introduction

XYZ Duty-Free & Outlet Shop Business is a company that has many businesses within the group. With a reputation for being a leader of duty-free and outlet shop business with many shops in both the cities and the airports. Many branches open from 10.00 to 21.00 and some of them are 24 hours services. In the Backoffice work area, although, the working hours are set as usual from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., but due to the ongoing plan and coordination of activities. Plus, the Covid-19 situation where many employees were schedule to rotate work onsite and from home. The voluntary time spent was more than regular basis. It's forcing employees to share time of their personal lives and family. This may cause employees to be stressful from working hard and balance between their work and life. Allocating time for work and life is therefore important to employees to have time for work, personal life, and spending time with family, free time for continuing education, earning extra income, etc.

The balance between life and work is also defined by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Spark, 2013), which gave the definition of work-life balance as the equilibrium point between of a person's work and life. Personally, working too little can cause people stress as it causes people to have insufficient income to live under the standard of living. On the one hand, overwork can have a negative effect on a person either affecting health or life. As can be seen in Japan, there is a phenomenon that people working hard until death which known as Karoshi disease. Balancing between work and personal life is therefore important because it is regarded as the importance of the well-being. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic where many firms affected from the income and budget, many employees were laid off and the stress regarding the afraid of infection. The working from home does not guarantee their turner in the organization. The helping for voluntary work, receiving the cellphone, meeting in non-working hour via VDO call were perceived. It leads to the research question that how the aspects of quality of life which is the spending life with freedom from stress of less income and less of health problem is related to the balance between work and life.

## **Research Objectives**

1. To study the level of the aspects of life quality that employees concerned and
2. To examine relationship between aspects of life quality and allocation balance between work and life.

## **Literature Reviews**

Roger and Rebecca (2013) stated the meaning of life's quality as spending life with freedom from stress of less income and less of health problem. The composition of life's quality can be divided into 4 aspects as follows: 1) Task means work or occupation which will help drive creativity, 2) Family aspect is the creation of personal happiness that leads to success. It also helps to drive happiness in living in society, 3 Time is important aspects related to every decision-making of life and 4) Finance is one of the tools that help people to be able to live at present and future and 5) Intellectual or self-development because our lives do not stand still. We should do is develop our intellectual skills and life balance to fulfill every aspect of life.

Work-Family Conflict Theory: Kopelman, Greenhaus and Connolly (1983) stated that work-family conflict theory played an important role in research on work and life balance. This is because the conflict between family and work arises when activities of the family interfere with work. It was found that the result of work and family conflicts affect inter-role conflicts, job satisfaction and life satisfaction. The work and life balance would help solving this issue.

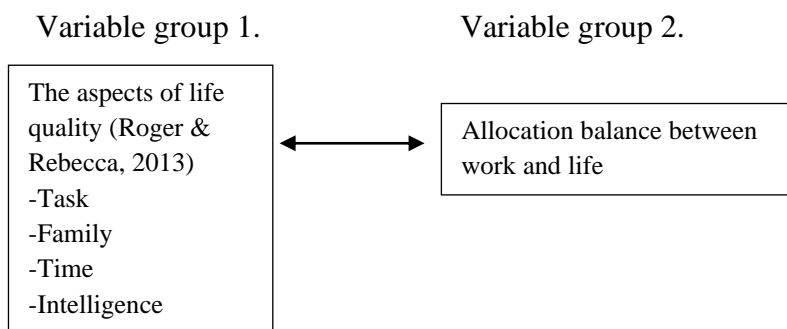
Work and life balance: from Segmentation Theory to Work Family Border Theory: There are many theories related to work and life balance. One among them is 'Segmentation Theory. It separated the domain of work life and family life as independent from each other. (Akinyele, 2009) Some studies viewed it in different way that work and life are related. Clark (2000) stated that work and life balance of each person is different based on the personal value and family background. This idea can be explained by using Work Family Border Theory. Work and family can be considered as two countries in which workers have to cross borders. In allocating work-life balance, the center of the theory is



work-life. Families have different boundaries, with each country having its own borders that influence each other. Clark (2000) further explains that everyone's work and family have different rules and values. For example, when we work, we can read and answer E-mail while in a meeting room but at home the action doing the same thing is considered bad manners at the dining room.

**Life in Balance: the application religiosity of middle way:** As Clark (2000) stated that work and life balance of each person is different based on the personal value. This value derived from the basic assumption or believe which is cornerstone of each person mindset (Schein, 2006). The believe of each person also comes from the religious believe that they adhere with. Vu (2020) stated that the religiosity; the role of religion in shaping people's philosophy and work behavior, helps individual upholds their emotional well-being and connecting communities of people and promoting cooperation and group feelings. The vast majority of the Thai population adheres to Theravada Buddhism. The Middle Way was taught since we were young. It means a balanced approach to life. The analogy of the middle way likes the worm water that attributes both hot and cold; melting and refreshing. The middle way can help us blend in for every environment. The basic indicator for the life balance is no physical and mental harm. If we maintain the middle way, we will happy at both workplace and family life as it seeks to reconcile opposing viewpoints and maintain balance.

**Research Framework:** The literature reviews above can be used as a variable in the study as follows; 1) the aspects of quality of life, which this research used for only 4 areas: task, family, time and intelligence (excluding the financials' aspect as the company requested) and 2) the allocation between work and life.



**Figure 1:** Research Framework

## Research Methodology

**Population and sample:** Population of this research was 806 back-office staffs at the duty free and outlet shop business. The sample was determined by using the G\* Power program (G-Star RAW®, 2022) and (Wiratchai, 2012). The sample was 84 people from the program setting: the influence value = 0.3, Tolerance = 0.05, Testing power = 0.80.

**Research instruments:** The research tool is questionnaire via google online form. The questionnaire divided into 3 parts as follows:

Part 1. Questions relating to demographics of Back Office employees; gender, age, status by using checklist.

Part 2. Questions about the aspects of life quality; task, family, time and intelligence.

Part 3. Questions about the allocation balance between work and life.

Part 2 and 3 use Rating Scale, with the respondents rate the level of life quality that they concern and the level of work and life by using 5 levels. The lowest is 1 and the highest is 5.

Research tool testing methods: The questionnaire was constructed based on concepts theories related to the above literature reviews. Then 3 experts check for the Item-Objective Congruence. The question with lower than 0.67 would be excluded.

**Data analysis:** The statistics used in this research were descriptive statistics; percentage, frequency, mean and standard deviation and Inferential statistics: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient by determining significance at the 0.01 level.

## Results

The study of demographics information of the samples found that the majority of participants was female for 67.81 percent, age more than 35 years old for 53.20 percent and graduated with Bachelor's degree for 57.14 percent.

For the result of objective No.1, the level of the aspects of life quality that employees concerned. It was found that the aspects of life quality that





employees concerned in overall was at a high level ( $\bar{X}=4.20$ ). Considering each aspect, the employees concerned for task ( $\bar{X}=4.31$ ), intellectual (self-development) ( $\bar{X}=4.27$ ), family ( $\bar{X}=4.18$ ) and time ( $\bar{X}=4.04$ ) respectively.

It can be explained in details as follows:

1. The aspect of family concerned; it was found that the employees concerned on family was at a high level. When considering each question, the spending life with family and friends was at the highest level ( $\bar{X}= 4.46$ ), always plan for family gathering was at the highest level ( $\bar{X}=4.39$ ) and the receiving constant support from family and friends was also at the highest level ( $\bar{X}=4.20$ ).

2. The aspect of task concerned; it was found that the employees concerned on

Task was at a highest level. When considering each question, the concentration on given new assignments was at the highest level ( $\bar{X}= 4.54$ ), the completion of the tasks within the deadline was at the high level ( $\bar{X}=4.30$ ) and the apprehension on the people at work was high ( $\bar{X}=4.26$ ).

3. The aspect of intellectual (self-development) concerned; it was found that the employees concerned on self-development was at a highest level ( $\bar{X}=4.27$ ). When considering each question, the behaving on rational decision-making more than emotional one was at the highest level ( $\bar{X}=4.42$ ), the learning to cope with problems effectively was at the highest level ( $\bar{X}=4.33$ ) and the developing themselves to be confidence in their own decisions that no affect to other was at the highest level ( $\bar{X}=4.25$ ).

4. The aspect of time concerned; it was found that the employees concerned on time was at a high level ( $\bar{X}=4.04$ ). When considering each question, it was found that the question asked about time orientation was at the highest level ( $\bar{X}=4.35$ ), followed by when they have free time, they will do the favorite hobbies at the highest level ( $\bar{X}=4.21$ ) and the questions they had time to take care of themselves consistently was at a high level ( $\bar{X}=3.98$ ).

For the level of allocation balance between work and life, it was found that in overall was at a high level ( $\bar{X}=4.17$ ). When considering each aspect, it was found that the questions you can manage problems from work and life so that they are not affect to each other was at a high level ( $\bar{X}=4.21$ ), you can manage the problem of work and life so that they are not affect to each other was at a highest level ( $\bar{X}=4.21$ ), you can manage time work and personal life ( $\bar{X}=4.16$ ), you can manage your free time was at a high level ( $\bar{X}=4.15$ ) and you can handle stress was at a high level ( $\bar{X}=4.11$ ) respectively.

For the result of objective No.2, the relationship between aspects of life quality and allocation balance between work and life, it was found the results of the analysis, by using Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient Statistical Test, that the overall aspects of life quality were related to the allocation balance between work and life with a correlation coefficient (r) of .751 (statistically significant at .01), it was indicating that both variables had a high degree of correlation. That is, the overall aspects of life quality were highly related to the allocation balance between work and life.

For each aspect of life quality, the family aspect and allocation balance between work and life were moderate correlated with a correlation coefficient (r) of .520 (statistically significant at .01).

The task aspect and allocation balance between work and life were found to have a low degree of relationship with a correlation coefficient (r) of .420 (statistically significant at .01).

The intellectual (self-development) aspect and allocation balance between work and life were found to have a low degree of relationship with a correlation coefficient (r) of .484 (statistically significant at .01).

The time aspect and allocation balance between work and life were found to have a high relationship with a correlation coefficient (r) of .816 (statistically significant at .01).



## Discussions

The results of the research can be discussed as follows: the results of family as aspect of life quality had a moderate relationship with the allocation balance between work and life. It went along well with the research's result of Lewsagyankulthorn (2012) studied the factors affecting work-life balance: a case study of the Deposit Protection Agency. The results showed that family composition also affects to the balance between life and work. Also, it aligned with Horpibulsuk (2022a.) that the close-knitted social network in ethnic minority enterprises network helped them had less stress when performing business as they felt that doing business is just only some parts of their life.

Fort the results of the study on the task as aspect of life quality had a low relationship with the allocation balance between work and life. The study result was different from the research of Akakulanan (2011) conducted a study on a causal model of work-life balance affecting the employees' effective work behavior of the automotive parts manufacturers in the Eastern Thailand. The study found that factors directly influencing work-life balance in the organizational was the work itself which the influence level was at a moderate level.

For the intellectual; the aspects of life quality also had a low relationship with the allocation balance between work and life. It correlated to Horpibulsuk (2022b.) that studied about the online psychometrics test to understand the English writing style. It was found that the person with analytical thinking sometime thinking too much with less flexibility and communication skills can affect to the result of their writing score. On the other hand, the study results contradicted to the research of Akakulanan (2019) conducted a study on factors influencing work-life balance of female operator, information and communication technology. The results of her study found that factor of emotional intelligence influences work-life balance. Those with high emotional intelligence will make the job and life has a high balance.

For the time; the aspects of life quality had a high relationship with the allocation balance between work and life. The study result was consistent with the research of Kaewtawee and Oumtanee (2014) conducted a study on Relationships Between Work-life Balance, Safety Climate and Organizational

Commitment of Professional Nurses, Private Hospitals, Southern Region found that the allocating time appropriately in life helped relieving burden from work.

## **Conclusions**

The results showed the aspects of life quality that the staff concerned in the overall revealed at a high level with an average of 4.20 and the allocation balance between Work and Life revealed at a high level with an average of 4.17. The result of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient showed that relationship between overall aspects of life's quality and the allocation between work and life was high with 0.751. Time; the aspect of life's quality, was the most correlated with the allocation balance between work and life for 0.816 with statistically significant at 0.01. The family aspect was moderate for .520 with statistically significant at 0.01. While intellectual and task aspects of life quality had low relationship with the allocation balance between work and life for .484 and .420 with statistically significant at 0.01 respectively.



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