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☞ Objective

Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation (AJHSI) is a journal in the humanities and social sciences. It aims to promote research and publish research articles, academic articles, review articles, and book reviews for scholars, researchers, lecturers, students at all levels, and interested persons in the dimensions of Sociologies, Anthropologies, Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, Business Administration, Politics, Public Administration, Development, Tourism, and other areas in Social Sciences. Articles that are considered for publication must be reviewed by at least 2 out of 3 qualified persons (Peer Review). Only English articles are considered for publication. Submitted works must not have been published or are under consideration by qualified persons for publication in other journals. Authors must strictly comply with the criteria for submitting academic or research articles for publication in the journal, and the referencing system must be in accordance with the criteria of the journal.

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Editorial

Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation (AJHSI) is the third issue of the year 2024 with a total of 5 articles, 2 research articles and 3 academic articles. The journal is currently developing and improving its format and main issues to meet the journal quality assessment criteria in the TCI database to support the assessment from the Thai Journal Citation Index (TCI). In order to ensure that the quality of the articles meets international conditions and rules, it provides opportunities for scholars, researchers, and students at all levels to publish academic articles, research articles, review articles, and book reviews. The editorial team has followed the principled process of publishing articles according to the criteria of the Office of the Higher Education Commission in all respects.

The editors of Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation (AJHSI) would like to thank the authors, members and readers for their interest and trust in our journal. We sincerely hope that the selected articles will be of benefit to all readers. The editors would like to thank all the experts who have kindly read and suggested improvements to the research articles to improve their academic quality.

Finally, the editors sincerely hope that the contents of this journal will be of some use to readers. If readers have any suggestions for improving this journal to make it more complete, the editors will gladly accept them.

Editor-In-Chief

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Research Article

Enhancing Ethical Leadership in Basic Education Administration Based on the Four Brahmavihāras: A Case Study of the Khon Kaen Primary Educational Service Area Office 1*

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Abstract

This research aims to 1. Study the administration of educational institutions 2. Compare the administration of educational institutions. Data were collected from a sample of 413 people, by specifying the sample size according to the Crazy and Morgan table and using a simple random sampling method. The research instrument was a rating scale questionnaire with a reliability of .94. The statistics used to analyze the data were frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Hypotheses were tested by using the t-test (Independent Sample) and the one-way analysis of variance (F-test (One-Way ANOVA)). When differences were found, pairwise comparisons were made with the least significant difference (LSD).

The research results found that:

1. The administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic education institutions found that overall, the average value was at a high level. When classified by each aspect, it was found that the aspect with the highest average value was the aspect of general administration according to the principles of the four divine states, followed by the aspect of personnel administration according to the principles of the four divine states and the aspect of academic administration according to the principles of the four divine states, respectively. The aspect with the lowest average value was the aspect of budget administration according to the principles of the four divine states.

2. The results of the comparison of the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states classified by educational

Citation

* Phrapattaphong Thittayano (Closed Tarapho), Teerasak Buengmum and Sangwan Piyura. (2024). Enhancing Ethical Leadership in Basic Education Administration Based on the Four Brahmavihāras: A Case Study of the Khon Kaen Primary Educational Service Area Office 1. Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation, 1(3), 1-11.;

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status and work experience of the sample groups, overall and by aspect, showed no differences in practice.

Keywords: Education School Administration According to Four Brahmaviharas, Basic Education School

Introduction

The National Education Act (No. 3) B.E. 2553, Section 37, stipulates that the administration and management of basic education by adhering to the educational area, taking into account the level of basic education, the number of educational institutions, the population, culture, and appropriateness in other aspects, including the management of basic education for persons with physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social, communication, and learning disabilities, or those with physical disabilities or disabilities, by organizing basic education in the form of non-formal education or informal education, and for those with special abilities, including organizing distance education and organizing education that provides services in many educational areas (Royal Gazette, National Education Act (No. 3) B.E. 2553)

The study that can develop learning and use it as a tool to change the foundation of knowledge in educational development to be both efficient and effective, decentralizing the administration and management of education in terms of academics, budget, personnel administration and general administration to the committee and the area education office and educational institutions in the educational area directly (Prawet Wasi, 2001). The administration of educational institutions is carried out by the school administrators with support from representatives of parents, teachers, community organizations, local government organizations, alumni of the educational institution, representatives of monks or representatives of other religions in the area (Khaemmani, 2006).

Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic educational institutions, Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen Area 1, to be used as information and guidelines for considering improvements or developments in educational institution administration, which can be integrated with Buddhist principles, especially the principles of the four divine states, to create further efficiency.

Objective

1. To study the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic educational institutions under the Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen Area 1.

2. To compare the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic educational institutions under the Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen Area 1, classified by job position, educational qualifications, and work experience.

Literature review

The concept of ethical leadership in educational administration is pivotal to cultivating integrity, compassion, and equity in schools. Ethical leadership, as defined by Brown and Treviño (2006), involves the demonstration and promotion of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships. In the context of Thai educational administration, the integration of Buddhist moral principles, especially the **Four Brahmavihāras**—loving-kindness (mettā), compassion (karuṇā), empathetic joy (muditā), and equanimity (upekkhā)—offers a culturally grounded framework to guide leaders' ethical behavior (Phra Dhammapitaka, 2007).

Scholars such as Hallinger and Heck (2010) emphasize that school leadership must be value-driven and community-sensitive, especially in basic education settings where ethical dilemmas are frequent. The Brahmavihāras provide a spiritual-ethical compass that complements administrative rationality. For example, mettā fosters inclusive policies and non-discrimination, while karuṇā supports responsive care for students with special needs or socio-economic hardships (Sujato, 2015).

Research conducted by Srisura and Phukamchanoad (2021) revealed that school administrators who practiced ethical principles inspired greater trust and cooperation among teachers, which led to improvements in both teaching effectiveness and student behavior. Similarly, Uthayophas (2019) studied the application of Buddhist principles in educational leadership and found that administrators who embody the Brahmavihāras gained higher moral authority and were more effective in conflict resolution and team-building.

Furthermore, Thai scholars such as Chantarasombat (2013) advocate for the institutionalization of Buddhist ethics in educational leadership development programs. He argues that incorporating these moral dimensions not only enhances individual leadership practice but also nurtures a holistic school culture rooted in compassion and justice. The relevance of this approach is particularly significant in northeastern Thailand (Isan), where Buddhist values deeply influence social and institutional norms (Nimnuan, 2018).

In sum, the integration of the Four Brahmavihāras into school leadership in the Thai context aligns with both international ethical leadership theories and indigenous moral frameworks. This literature suggests that ethical leadership guided by Brahmavihāra principles may lead to more inclusive, empathetic, and morally resilient educational environments, particularly within basic education institutions.

Methodology

1. Research Design This research used quantitative research methodology with survey methodology using statistical methods to analyze data and present descriptive analysis.

2. Population and sample The population consisted of 1,694 school administrators and teachers in basic education institutions, Office of the Primary Education Service Area 1, Khon Kaen (Information System for Educational Administration, 2017). The sample consisted of 413 school administrators and teachers in basic education institutions, Office of the Primary Education Service Area 1, Khon Kaen (Information System for Educational Administration, 2017).

3. Research instruments In this research, the researcher used a questionnaire to collect data on school administration according to the principles of the Four Divine Abodes in basic education institutions. The research was conducted under the Office of the Primary Education Area, Khon Kaen Area 1. It was a survey research with a checklist format, a 5-level rating scale questionnaire, and an open-ended questionnaire, consisting of 3 sections as follows: Section 1: General information of the respondents regarding their status, educational qualifications, and work experience, in the form of a checklist. Section 2: A questionnaire on the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the Four Divine Abodes in basic education institutions under the Office of the Primary Education Area, Khon Kaen Area 1, in the form of a 5-level rating scale based on the Likert scale (Bunchom Srisat, 2011). Section 3: A questionnaire on guidelines for promoting the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the Four Divine Abodes in basic education institutions under the Office of the Primary Education Area, Khon Kaen Area 1, in the form of an open-ended questionnaire consisting of 4 aspects: the principle of loving-kindness, the principle of compassion, the principle of sympathetic joy, and the principle of equanimity.

4. Data collection The researcher proceeded with data collection according to the following steps:

4.1 Request a letter to collect data from the Graduate School Center, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, regarding the appointment of experts, request permission from relevant agencies and send it to the sample group.

4.2 The researcher sent the questionnaires to each sample group, 1 set, with a stamped envelope, correctly, so that the questionnaires could be returned to the researcher by mail and the researcher delivered some of the questionnaires himself and went to collect them himself.

4.3 Returned the 413 questionnaires to process the data by checking the accuracy and completeness of each questionnaire set.

4.4 Analyzed the 413 complete questionnaires according to the research objectives using a ready-made data analysis program.

5. Data analysis The researcher analyzed the data in the following order:

5.1 Analyze the general data of the respondents regarding their status and work experience by analyzing the number and percentage.

5.2 Analyze the level of school administration according to the principles of the four divine states in basic education institutions under the Office of the Primary Education Area, Khon Kaen, Area 1 by analyzing the mean ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviation (S.D.) both overall and in each aspect using the Likert method. Then compare with the criteria, average of 5 levels and interpret the results (Bunchom Srisat, 2011)

5.3 Analyze and compare the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic educational institutions under the Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen, Area 1, classified by status by testing (t-test, independent samples)

5.4 Analyze and compare the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic educational institutions under the Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen, Area 1, classified by educational qualifications by testing (t-test, independent samples)

5.5 Analyze and compare the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic educational institutions under the Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen, Area 1, classified by work experience by using a one-way analysis of variance (F-test, one way ANOVA). When differences are found, find the differences in pairs using the Scheffe' method.

5.6 Analyze the guidelines for administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic educational institutions Under the jurisdiction of the Khon Kaen Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 1, 4 areas, by analyzing the number, finding the frequency value and analyzing the descriptive data.

Results

From the research results, there are issues that should be discussed as follows:

1. The administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic education institutions found that overall, the average value was at a high level ($\bar{x}$= 4.30, S.D.= .51). This may be because the administrators of basic education institutions have applied the principles of the four divine states, namely loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity, to the administration of basic education schools in terms of academic administration, budget administration, personnel administration, and general administration, which is consistent with the research of Buppa Pikulkaew (2010) who conducted research on "The application of the principles of the four divine states in the administration of academic affairs of administrators in private higher education institutions in Bangkok." The research results found that the application of the principles of the four divine states in the administration of academic affairs of administrators in terms of curriculum and teaching, measurement and evaluation, academic promotion, and academic planning was at a high level. Males and females with different work experiences had overall opinions in all aspects that were not different, while those with different ages and educational levels had overall opinions. There was a statistically significant difference at the .05 level. The analysis of important components found that the administrators mostly applied the principle of compassion, followed by loving-kindness, equanimity, and mudita, especially using the principle of compassion with measurement and evaluation, using the principle of compassion with academic planning, using the principle of mudita with academic promotion, and using the principle of equanimity with curriculum and teaching. This is consistent with Wichian Boonkla (2007) who conducted a research study on "A Study of the Use of the Four Divine Abodes by School Administrators in Basic Education Institutions Under the Office of the Surin Educational Service Area 3." The research results found that school administrators as a whole used the four divine abodes in their work to a high degree, and this was consistent with Nattaporn Phuthongngen (2012) who conducted a research study on the personnel management of school administrators according to the four divine abodes in the groups of schools under the Office of the Primary Educational Service Area 1 to 4 under the Office of the Primary Educational Service Area 1, Khon Kaen. It was found that overall, there were opinions at a high level.

2. The administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic educational institutions classified by job positions were as follows:

2.1 Different job positions had different opinions on the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic educational institutions under the Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen, Area 1, which was not in accordance with the hypothesis. This may be because the administration of basic educational institutions is participatory administration with diverse duties or mutual assistance, so the opinions on the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in the administration of basic educational institutions under the Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen, Area 1 were not different. This is consistent with the research of Thippaya Phatkhlangsaeng (2013) who studied the research on "Administration according to the principles of the four divine states of education of school directors in schools under the jurisdiction of Nakhon Sawan Municipality" and found that municipal teachers of different genders had different opinions on the administration of school administrators according to the principles of the four divine states of education in schools under the jurisdiction of the municipality. Nakhon Sawan Nakhon Sawan Province is not different but is not consistent with Mukda Anukanon (2012) who researched on the study of behavior according to the principles of the four divine states of mind of school administrators according to the perception of teachers in secondary schools under the Office of the Secondary Education Area 17. The research results found that 1. The morality of school administrators according to the principles of the four divine states of mind according to the perception of teachers is at a high level overall. The average ranking from highest to lowest are Mudita, Metta, Upekkha, and Karuna. 2. The results of comparing the morality of school administrators according to the principles of the four divine states of mind according to the perception of teachers classified by gender, work experience, and school size, both overall and in each aspect, found that they are different.

2.2 Educational qualifications are different. School administration according to the principles of the four divine states of mind in basic education institutions is different, which is in line with the hypothesis set. This is because even though they have different educational qualifications, they have different opinions on school administration according to the principles of the four divine states of mind in basic education institutions under the Office of the Primary Education Area, Khon Kaen, Area 1, which is consistent with the research of Nam Oi Anusonthi (2011) who studied the research on "A study of the use of the four divine states of mind by school administrators under local administrative organizations in Kamphaeng Phet Province" The research results found that the overall use of the four divine states of mind by school administrators in all aspects of school administration was at a high level. The results of the comparison of opinions of teachers on the use of the four divine states of mind by school administrators under local administrative organizations in Kamphaeng Phet Province classified by gender and work experience found that teachers in schools under local administrative organizations in Kamphaeng Phet Province had different opinions on the use of the four divine states of mind by school administrators. The research of Wichian Boonkla (2007) studied the topic of "A study of the use of the four divine states of mind by school administrators in basic educational institutions under

the Office of the Surin Educational Service Area 3". The research results found that school administrators as a whole used the four divine states of mind in their work to a high level. When considering each aspect, it was found that all aspects were at a high level, ranked from highest to lowest as follows: mudita, loving-kindness, equanimity, and compassion. The results of the comparison of the use of the four divine states of mind by school administrators found that school administrators and teachers had a perception of The overall use of the four divine abodes by school administrators is different. When considering each aspect, it was found that the use of the four divine abodes in every aspect is different.

2.3 Different working experiences have different opinions on the administration of educational institutions according to the principles of the four divine states in basic education institutions, which is not in accordance with the hypothesis. This may be because the school administrators and teachers have similar working experiences, which is consistent with the research of Thippaya Phasaklangsaeng (2013) who studied the topic of "Administration according to the principles of the four divine states of education of school directors in schools under the jurisdiction of Nakhon Sawan Municipality". It was found that the municipal teachers of different genders had different opinions on the administration of school administrators according to the principles of the four divine states of education in schools under the jurisdiction of Nakhon Sawan Municipality, Nakhon Sawan Province. This is not consistent with the research of Wichian Boonkla (2007) who studied the topic of "A study on the use of the four divine states of education by school administrators in basic education institutions under the jurisdiction of Surin Educational Service Area Office 3". The research results found that school administrators as a whole used the four divine states of education in their work to a high degree. When considering each aspect, it was found that all aspects were at a high level, ranked from highest to lowest as follows: Mudita, Metta, Upekkha and compassion: The comparative results of the use of the four divine abodes by basic education administrators found that school administrators and teachers had different perceptions of the use of the four divine abodes by school administrators overall. When considering each aspect, it was found that the use of the four divine abodes in every aspect was different.

Discussion

The findings revealed that the overall administration of basic education institutions in accordance with the Four Brahmavihāras—**Metta** (loving-kindness), **Karuna** (compassion), **Mudita** (sympathetic joy), and **Upekkha** (equanimity)—was at a **high level** ($\bar{x}$ = 4.30, S.D. = .51). This suggests that school administrators in the Khon Kaen Primary Educational Service Area Office 1 have successfully integrated Buddhist ethical principles into various domains of school management, including academic, budgetary, personnel, and general administration. These results are consistent with the study by **Buppa Pikulkaew (2010)**, who found that academic administration in private higher education institutions in Bangkok—particularly in curriculum development, assessment, and planning—reflected a strong implementation of Brahmavihāra-based ethics.

The data also indicate that **Karuna (compassion)** is the most frequently applied principle in school administration, especially in academic planning and student evaluation. This aligns with **Wichian Boonkla's (2007)** findings in the Surin Educational Service Area, which emphasized the high-level application of all four Brahmavihāras, with compassion being prominent. The application of **Mudita** (especially in academic promotion) and **Upekkha** (notably in curriculum and instruction) further highlights a nuanced, context-specific application of each divine abode based on the function of leadership roles.

Regarding **demographic factors**, the study showed **no significant differences in perceptions across job positions**, indicating a likely **collaborative or participatory leadership style** in schools, where both administrators and staff share ethical practices and mutual responsibilities. This is in line with **Thippaya Phatkhlangsaeng (2013)**, who found no significant differences among municipal teachers regarding the ethical behaviors of their administrators. However, this finding contrasts with **Mukda Anukanon (2012)**, whose research on secondary schools under the Office of Secondary Education Area 17 revealed that perceptions of administrators' ethical behavior varied significantly depending on gender, experience, and school size.

In terms of **educational qualifications**, the study found that individuals with different qualifications had **significantly different views** on Brahmavihāra-based administration. This supports the hypothesis and aligns with **Nam Oi Anusonthi's (2011)** study in Kamphaeng Phet, which reported similar differences based on educational background and gender. These variations might be attributed to differences in professional training or ethical sensitivity shaped by educational experiences.

Interestingly, **work experience did not significantly influence perceptions**, suggesting a possible **uniformity in administrative culture** within the area. This contradicts Boonkla (2007), who reported variations in perception based on experience, with differences in emphasis on Metta, Mudita, and Upekkha across experience levels.
The findings highlight an essential characteristic of ethical leadership in Thai education: while rooted in Buddhist virtues, the effectiveness of Brahmavihāra-based administration depends on **how contextually and equitably these values are interpreted and applied**. This underscores the need for further leadership training programs that are sensitive to demographic diversity and capable of translating spiritual ethics into practical educational outcomes.

New knowledge

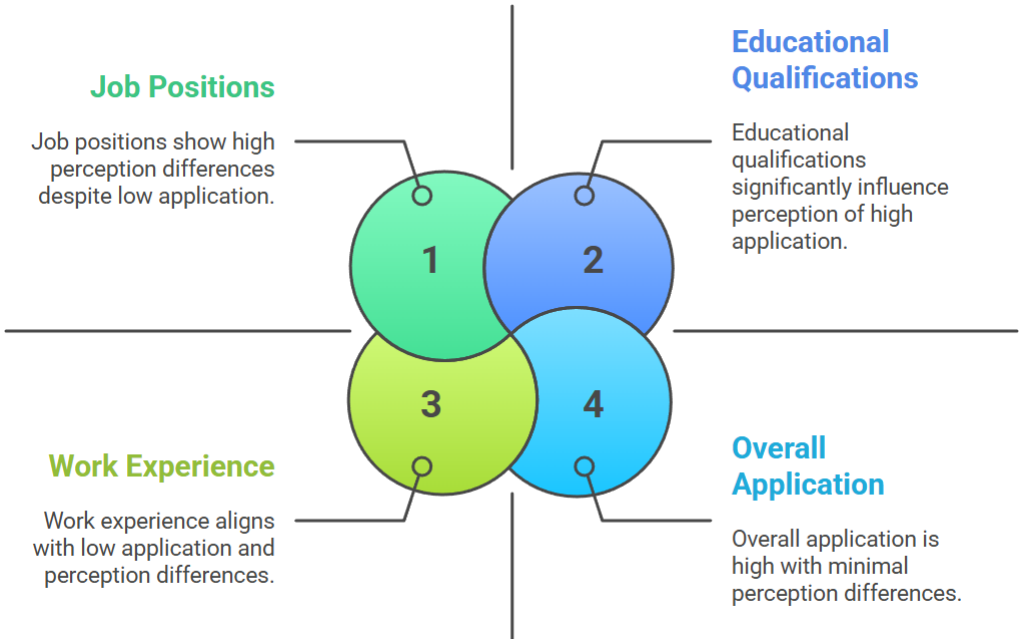

Figure 1 New knowledge, 2024

Quadrant 1: Job Positions (Top Left - Green)

Content: "Job positions show high perception differences despite low application."

Interpretation: Even though divine-state practices are not heavily applied across different roles, perceptions vary widely, possibly due to role-based responsibilities or authority levels.

Quadrant 2: Educational Qualifications (Top Right - Blue)

Content: "Educational qualifications significantly influence perception of high application."

Interpretation: Those with different levels of education perceive the use of divine-state principles differently, with higher qualifications likely correlating with greater recognition of their use.

Quadrant 3: Work Experience (Bottom Left - Yellow-Green)

Content: "Work experience aligns with low application and perception differences."

Interpretation: Administrators and teachers with similar experience levels tend to perceive application similarly, suggesting a more uniform leadership environment over time.

Quadrant 4: Overall Application (Bottom Right - Light Blue)

Content:

"Overall application is high with minimal perception differences."

Interpretation: The general use of the Four Divine States is consistently high, and most stakeholders perceive it similarly—indicating a shared ethical culture across the educational institutions studied.

Purpose and Use

This visual serves as a concise analytical tool to:

-Summarize demographic factors influencing ethical leadership.

-Compare perceived vs. actual application of Buddhist principles.

-Highlight areas of alignment and discrepancy in leadership practice.

Recommendation

From the research results, the researchers have the following recommendations:

1. Policy recommendations

1.1 Relevant agencies should campaign for the application of the 4 Iddhipada principles in their agencies/departments/divisions to create a shared mind, create shared responsibility, and recognize the importance of using resources to achieve the greatest value.

1.2 The Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen Area 1 should organize training for administrators to promote and develop methods of school administration according to the principles of the 4 Brahmaviharas.

1.3 The Office of the Primary Educational Service Area, Khon Kaen Area 1 should have continuous activities to promote administrative leadership for educational personnel.

2. Recommendations for implementation

2.1 The results of this study should be used as information for planning the administration of basic educational institutions to be of higher quality and efficiency.

2.2 The problematic approaches obtained from the study should be used to improve and solve the problematic areas. More clarity

3. Suggestions for future research

3.1 Should study the application of other Buddhist principles such as the Four Bases of Power, Kindness, Compassion, Mudita and Upekkha, etc., to the administration of basic education institutions.

3.2 Should study the sample groups from educational institutions with different structural characteristics to find differences.

3.3 Should study by increasing the number of independent variables to be more diverse.

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Research Article

Improving the quality of work performance of child care teachers using the four divine states of mind: A case study of Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province*

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Abstract

The research article has the following research objectives: 1) to study the application of the four divine states of mind, 2) to compare the application of the four divine states of mind, and 3) to study the recommendations for the application of the four divine states of mind. The sample group consisted of 127 child care teachers working in child development centers. The research instrument was a questionnaire. Data were analyzed using ready-made computer programs.

The research results found that: 1. The application of the four divine states found that the average value of the application level of the four divine states was at a high level. When considering each aspect, it was found that the aspect with the highest average value was loving-kindness, followed by equanimity and compassion, and the aspect with the lowest average value was mudita. 2. The application of the four divine states with different ages and working experiences did not differ in the aspects of loving-kindness, compassion, mudita, equanimity, and overall. The average values of the application of the four divine states with different positions in loving-kindness, compassion, equanimity, and overall did not differ. As for mudita, the differences were statistically significant at the .05 level. The sample group of civil servants had a higher average value than the mission employees at a statistically significant level at the .05 level. 3. The results of the study on the recommendations for the application of the four divine states found that: 1) In terms of loving-kindness, teachers who take care of children should be kind to students at all levels. 2) Kindness: Teachers who take care of children should help all students. 3) Mudita: Teachers who take care of children should praise and congratulate. 4) Upekkha: Teachers who take care of children should govern students in the classroom with fairness.

Keywords: Buddhism's Four Sublime States of Mind, Child Development Center

Citation

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Introduction

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 stipulates that education is an important tool for human development. Therefore, education must be organized in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution, focusing on reforming the administration and educational management system to be efficient and effective, which is stipulated in Chapter 5, Duties of the State, according to Article 54. In summary, the state must ensure that all children receive quality education for twelve years, from pre-school to the end of compulsory education, free of charge, and must provide care and development for young children before entering education in order to develop their bodies, minds, disciplines, emotions, society, and intelligence appropriate for their age by promoting and supporting local administrative organizations and the private sector to participate in the operation. The state has a duty to supervise, promote, and support the organization of such education to be of quality and meet international standards. All education must aim to develop learners to be good people, disciplined, proud of the nation, capable of specializing in their own abilities, and responsible towards their families, communities, society, and country. Chapter 16, Reform of the Country, according to Article 258, on education, stipulates that there must be a mechanism and system for producing, screening, and developing teachers and lecturers to have the spirit of being a teacher, truly knowledgeable and capable, and receive fair compensation. Appropriate to the ability and efficiency in teaching, including having a mechanism to create a moral system in personnel management of teachers (Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, 2017)

At present, the government or government agencies have given great importance to the management of pre-school education or early childhood education. They have studied the promotion and development guidelines for education management, including studying and analyzing the problems of teachers who take care of children. It was found that most of the problems are about personnel, lack of readiness, personnel entering positions through patronage, cronyism, connections, relying on money, and lack of standard management systems. Problems with the performance of early childhood education teachers who lack morality, ethics, determination to work, and love for the profession because they did not graduate directly from early childhood education courses, including teachers' excessive workloads, resulting in no time to prepare for teaching and insufficient budget for media development, resulting in a lack of quality teaching equipment and a lack of training and development for teachers to understand new sciences, resulting in teachers lacking skills in career development and self-development. Problems with teachers' inappropriate behavior, not being a role model for children, not having love and patience in the profession, resulting in lack of care and attention for children, not being enthusiastic about self-improvement, resulting in a lack of knowledge, understanding and experience. Teachers do not give importance to and do not understand the nature of children, and lack good human relations with parents and the community. And problems with professional ethics, not adhering to the ethics of the teaching profession, thinking only of personal benefits. One important problem is the lack of morality for good behavior towards colleagues.

From the above principles and necessities, it reflects the phenomenon of problems in the work of early childhood caregivers, some of whom lack morality and ethics. Some caregivers lack responsibility, have little discipline in performing their

duties, and rarely participate in working with others in the organization, etc., which causes problems in the work of the organization and colleagues. The researcher, as someone involved in the child development center, namely as a caregiver of the child development center, believes that caregivers should apply the principles of the four divine states of mind, namely loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity, which are principles that should be adhered to in working together, to apply, which will result in good standard work practices to be applied in working together and further development of the work. From the reasons mentioned above, the researcher is interested in studying the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of caregivers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, as well as studying the problems, obstacles, and guidelines for applying the four divine states of mind for the work of caregivers in Kaset Wisai District. Roi Et Province. The results from the research can be used as information to encourage teachers who take care of children to plan, set policies, improve or apply them to work together more effectively, resulting in effective results in the development of child development centers, providing maximum benefits to children and the public, as well as being a good example for teachers and other child caregivers.

Objective

1. To study the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province.
2. To compare the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, classified by age, work experience, and position.
3. To study the recommendations for the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province.

Literature review

The role of child care teachers in early childhood development is critically important as they lay the foundation for children's learning, socialization, and emotional development. In recent years, the integration of Buddhist principles, particularly the **Four Divine States of Mind** (Brahmavihāra 4), has been explored as a means to enhance the quality of work performance among educators, including child care teachers.

The **Four Divine States of Mind**, consisting of **loving-kindness (metta), compassion (karuna), sympathetic joy (mudita), and equanimity (upekkha)**, are ethical and emotional guidelines derived from Buddhist philosophy, emphasizing benevolence and emotional resilience in interpersonal interactions (Harvey, 2013). These principles are not only central to personal moral development but also serve as a foundation for professional ethics, especially in educational contexts.

Studies have found that when these principles are applied in educational settings, they foster a nurturing and emotionally intelligent environment. For example, **Pikulkaew (2010)** observed that administrators in private higher education institutions in Bangkok who applied Brahmavihāra principles in their academic management created more compassionate and equitable workplaces, which in turn positively influenced staff morale and performance.

In the context of child care, the application of **metta (loving-kindness)** by teachers can foster a secure and affectionate environment for young learners. When teachers display **karuna (compassion)**, they are more attentive to the diverse needs of children, particularly those with emotional or developmental challenges (Siriporn, 2019). **Mudita (sympathetic joy)** supports a positive and collaborative learning culture, allowing teachers to take joy in the success and development of their students and colleagues, reducing workplace jealousy and competition (Niyom, 2021). Lastly, **upekkha (equanimity)** aids in maintaining emotional balance, enabling teachers to stay composed in stressful situations, such as dealing with difficult behaviors or administrative burdens (Chantavanich, 2016).

Additionally, a study by **Suksawang (2017)** showed that teachers who practiced mindfulness and applied Buddhist ethics in their daily routines reported lower burnout rates and improved job satisfaction. These findings align with **Wongprom's (2018)** research, which demonstrated that the integration of Buddhist moral teachings in professional development programs for early childhood educators enhanced interpersonal relationships and overall educational quality.

However, some scholars have noted that the successful application of Brahmavihāra requires institutional support. **Kamolthip and Prapaisit (2020)** emphasized the importance of organizational culture and leadership in fostering environments where ethical and spiritual principles can flourish. Without support, the burden of moral practice falls solely on individual teachers, which may limit long-term sustainability and impact.

In conclusion, existing literature suggests that the integration of the Four Divine States of Mind can significantly contribute to the improvement of work performance among child care teachers. It promotes emotional stability, enhances interpersonal relationships, and encourages compassionate professional practices. However, to fully realize its benefits, these principles should be incorporated into teacher training programs and supported by school leadership and policy.

Methodology

Population and sample

1. The research population consisted of 186 child care teachers working in child development centers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province.

2. The research sample consisted of 127 child care teachers working in child development centers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, which were derived from the sample size calculation using the Yamane formula (Yamane, 1967, cited in Paisarn Worakham, 2012).

Then, the sample size in each unit was determined. The researcher calculated the proportion of the sample in each unit using the following formula (Yutthana Siriphan, 2004, cited in Panni Prabhawicha, 2011).

The research instrument used in this research was a questionnaire created by the researcher from studying documents and related research, which was divided into 3 parts: Part 1 was a questionnaire on characteristics The checklist of the personal factors of the respondents consisted of age, work experience, and position. Part 2 asked about the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in the child development center in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province. It

was a rating scale questionnaire using the Likert scale method. The measurement level was divided into 5 levels by setting the level value (Bunchom Srisat, 2002).

To find the quality of the instruments used in this research, it was a questionnaire. The researcher had the following steps in creating the questionnaire:

1. Study and research information, academic textbooks, concepts, theories, and related research works, both documentary research and information from the internet.

2. Determine various issues according to the objectives, conceptual framework, and definitions of specific terms to be used in creating questions in the questionnaire.

3. Create a questionnaire that covers the objectives, conceptual framework, and definitions of specific terms of the research by using a rating scale questionnaire.

4. Present the completed questionnaire to the thesis advisor for revision and improvement. As suggested by the thesis advisor

5. Present the developed questionnaire to the experts for content validity examination by the three experts.

6. Take the questionnaire that has been assessed for content validity by the three experts, revise it, and test it (Try–out) with a population that is not the sample group but has similar characteristics to the sample group in this research, totaling 40 people. Then, the obtained data was used to find the reliability value using the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha formula, which resulted in a reliability value of 0.94, which is higher than the criteria of 0.60 - 1.00, and can be used for data collection.

7. Print the book for further research.

Data collection The researcher collected data as follows:

1. The researcher requested a letter from the Graduate School, Mahamakut Buddhist University, Roi Et Campus, to the mayor of the local administrative organization in Kaset Wisai District, asking for assistance in collecting data.

2. The researcher contacted to introduce the clarifier and explain the purpose of the research. Question details, answers in the questionnaire must be understood correctly and consistent.

3. The researcher collects the data by himself.

4. Collects the questionnaires, checks the number of questionnaires until 127 sets are complete, and checks the completeness of the questionnaires and arranges the data.

5. Take the obtained data to analyze and process the data further.

Data analysis

1. The researcher checks the data, which is a review of the collected data, to be complete, complete, and correct, and prepares the data from the questionnaires to make it easy to analyze the data and not confusing.

2. Take the data from the questionnaire, Part 1, which is personal factors, including age, work experience, and position, and analyze it by distributing the frequency (Frequency) and finding the percentage (Percentage).

3. Take the data from the questionnaire, Part 2, to analyze the level of application of the 4 Brahmavihārās, analyzed using the mean (Mean) and standard deviation (Standard Deviation) of the scores from the questionnaire responses of the child care teachers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province.

4. Analyze and compare the application of the 4 Brahmavihārās to the work of child care teachers. Child Development Center in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, classified by age, work experience, and different positions, using One Way ANOVA

with statistical significance set at .0 5 to analyze the differences of variables in each group. If there is a statistically significant difference at the .05 level, the researcher will compare the differences in each group by pair or post hoc procedures to identify which pairs have different means using the Bonferroni method.

5 . The data obtained from the questionnaire, Part 3 , Suggestions for the application of the 4 Brahmaviharas for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, were analyzed for content, categorized into contents with similar meanings, summarized into common issues, and distributed by frequency, and presented with a description of the

Statistics used in the research

1. Statistics used to check the quality of the instrument

1.1 Content validity (IOC) calculated from the formula (Paisarn Worakham, 2012)

1 . 2 Reliability of the entire questionnaire Statistics used to examine the quality of the instrument were used to find the reliability or reliability of the questionnaire, each aspect and the entire version, using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Method.

Results

1. Results of the Data Analysis on the Application Level of the Four Divine States of Mind in the Work Performance of Child Care Teachers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province. The analysis of data regarding the level of application of the Four Divine States of Mind (Brahmavihāra 4) in the work performance of child care teachers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province revealed that the overall average was at a high level. When considered by individual aspects, it was found that the aspect with the highest average was loving-kindness (metta), followed by equanimity (upekkha), compassion (karuna), and the lowest average was found in sympathetic joy (mudita).

These results may stem from the fact that child care teachers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province are individuals with strong faith in Buddhism and hold the responsibility of nurturing, guiding, and providing experiences that promote the holistic development of young children. This includes fostering appropriate growth in physical, emotional, social, and cognitive domains according to each child’s age and potential.

As such, the organization of learning activities and developmental approaches in child development centers must be conducted continuously and appropriately to ensure that young children receive education and development that align with their age group, local socio-cultural context, indigenous wisdom, and the early childhood education curriculum. This prepares them to enter higher levels of education. It is the duty of child care teachers to provide necessary support and organize readiness activities in various areas. Such practices demonstrate the application of the Four Divine States of Mind in their professional responsibilities.

2. Results of the Comparative Analysis on the Application of the Four Divine States of Mind in the Work Performance of Child Care Teachers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province. The comparison of the application of the Four Divine States of Mind (Brahmavihāra 4) in the work performance of child care teachers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in the mean scores across the four aspects—loving-kindness (metta),

compassion (karuna), sympathetic joy (mudita), and equanimity (upekkha)—as well as the overall application level, among teachers of different ages and years of work experience.

Similarly, when comparing the application of the Four Divine States of Mind based on different job positions, no statistically significant differences were found in the aspects of metta, karuna, upekkha, or the overall score. However, there was a statistically significant difference at the .05 level in the aspect of mudita (sympathetic joy), with government officers scoring significantly higher than contract-based (mission-based) employees.

These findings may be explained by the nature of the responsibilities assigned to child care teachers in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province. According to the Department of Local Administration (2016), these teachers are responsible for developing and implementing annual educational action plans, three-year development plans, fiscal year operational plans, curriculum development or revision, instructional planning, preparation of teaching materials and innovations, provision of learning equipment, organizing both internal and external environments of child development centers, and conducting activities to enhance learner development.

Such responsibilities require a high level of dedication and professional engagement. The ability to carry out these duties effectively often necessitates the integration of the Four Divine States of Mind into daily work practices. These principles help foster empathy, emotional balance, and a positive outlook, all of which are critical in fulfilling the diverse and demanding roles of child care teachers.

3. The results of the study on the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, found that 1) in terms of loving-kindness, teachers taking care of children should be kind to students of all levels, all students, and all parents of students. 2) in terms of compassion, teachers taking care of children should help all students, especially students who are still unable to help themselves. 3) in terms of mudita, teachers taking care of children should praise, congratulate, or give awards to students who have done good deeds when appropriate. 4) in terms of equanimity, teachers taking care of children should govern students in the classroom with fairness, justice, and equality for all students. The results of the study may be due to teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province wanting preschool development centers, early childhood development centers, or child development centers to have standards and quality according to academic principles. In addition, students must also be taken care of and given special attention so that students can learn and develop appropriately according to their age.

Discussion

1. The results of the data analysis on the application level of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, found that the average value of the application level of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, as a whole, was at a high level. When considering each aspect, it was found that the aspect with the highest average value was loving-kindness, followed by equanimity and compassion, and the aspect with the lowest average value was mudita. The results of the research may be due to the fact that teachers taking care of children in

Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province are people who have faith in Buddhism and are personnel who must provide training, provide experiences, and promote development, learning, and learning for young children to develop in terms of physical, emotional, mental, social, and intellectual aspects appropriate for their age and potential. Therefore, the learning management period and learning management guidelines of the child development center must be continuous and appropriate so that young children receive education and development according to each age group, in line with the society, culture, local wisdom, and early childhood education curriculum, so that young children are ready to enter higher education. This is the duty of teachers taking care of children to provide assistance and organize activities to prepare them in various aspects. Such practice is the application of the four divine states of mind to the practice as Nongyao Phunamyoi (2015: 16-18) stated that the application of the four divine states of mind is a noble virtue for adults, leaders or personnel, teachers, in the administration of members under their responsibility who are important persons in society in order to create benefits for the public and create unity, love for each other, and be fair and impartial to individuals. Therefore, the four divine states of mind are very important principles that can be applied to benefit daily life, especially in the practice of teachers, in accordance with the principles of mind and guidelines for practice that are tangible so that everyone is happy and progresses. This is consistent with the research of Natthawan Thitakom (2013: 90-100) who conducted research on the application of the four divine states of mind in the administration of The administrators of educational institutions in the Office of the Secondary Education Area 42, the research results found that the directors of educational institutions and teaching personnel in educational institutions in the Office of the Secondary Education Area 42, overall, were at a high level. When considering each aspect, it was found that the directors of educational institutions and teaching personnel in educational institutions in the Office of the Secondary Education Area 42 were at a high level in all aspects, classified by aspect as follows: the aspect of loving-kindness, overall, was at a high level, the aspect of compassion, overall, was at a high level, and the aspect of equanimity, overall, was at a high level, respectively.

2. The results of the comparison of the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, found that the average value of the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, with different ages and working experiences, in terms of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, equanimity, and overall, were not different. The average value of the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, with different positions, in terms of loving-kindness, compassion, equanimity, and overall, were not different. As for sympathetic joy, it was significantly different at the .05 level. The sample group who were civil servants had a higher average value than the mission staff at the .05 level. The results of the research may be due to teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province having to prepare an annual action plan for education, a three-year development plan, an annual action plan for the fiscal year, creating or improving the curriculum, educational institutions, plans for organizing experiences, and preparing innovative teaching media. Materials and equipment, external and internal environment of the child development center, or student development activities,

the above operations are the responsibility (Department of Local Administration, 2016). Such operations are the application of the four divine abodes in operations, therefore, the research results are as follows. Consistent with the research of Mayuwan Mattabattha (2 0 1 6) who studied the use of the four divine abodes in personnel management of child development centers under local administrative organizations, Yang Talat District, Kalasin Province, overall at a high level. When considering each aspect, it was found that it was at a high level in all aspects, ranked from highest to lowest average as follows: loving-kindness, sympathetic joy, equanimity, and compassion, respectively. Personnel operating child development centers of different genders have different opinions on the use of the four divine abodes in personnel management of child development centers under local administrative organizations, Yang Talat District, Kalasin Province. Overall, when considering each aspect, it was found that male and female personnel operating child development centers There were opinions on the use of the four divine abodes in personnel management. In terms of mudita, there were significant differences at the .05 level. In terms of loving-kindness, compassion, and equanimity, there were no differences.

3. The results of the study on the application of the four divine states of mind for the work of teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province, found that 1) in terms of loving-kindness, teachers taking care of children should be kind to students of all levels, all students, and all parents of students. 2) in terms of compassion, teachers taking care of children should help all students, especially students who are still unable to take care of themselves. 3) in terms of mudita, teachers taking care of children should praise, congratulate, or give awards to students who have done good deeds when appropriate. 4) in terms of equanimity, teachers taking care of children should govern students in the classroom with fairness, justice, and equality for all students. The results of the study may be due to teachers taking care of children in Kaset Wisai District, Roi Et Province wanting preschool development centers, early childhood development centers, or child development centers to have standards and quality according to academic principles. In addition, students must also be taken care of and given special attention so that students can learn and develop appropriately according to their age, in line with the Department of Local Administration (2 0 1 6), which states that child development centers are educational institutions that provide training and care. Organize experiences and promote learning development so that young children develop in physical, emotional, mental, social and intellectual aspects appropriate for their age and potential. Therefore, the learning management period and learning management guidelines of the Child Development Center must be carried out continuously and appropriately so that young children receive education and development in accordance with each age group, in line with society, culture, local wisdom and early childhood education curriculum so that young children are ready to enter higher education. Therefore, the recommendations for development are: Emphasis should be placed on encouraging people to practice the principles of Dhamma, making people in the community love and wish each other well. Emphasis should be placed on encouraging people to see the importance and be generous to others and the community, listen to and accept the opinions of others with reason, and importance should be placed on encouraging people to behave neutrally and indifferently to matters that are not beneficial to themselves and others, etc.

New knowledge

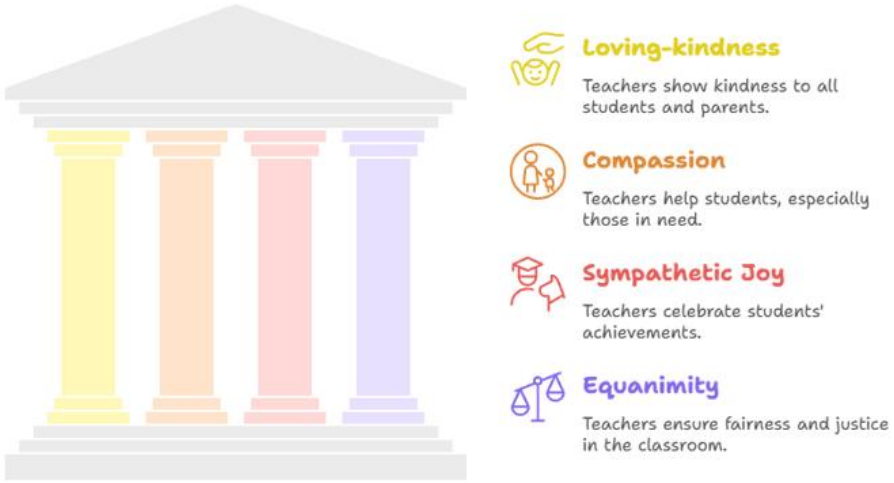

Figure 1 New knowledge, 2024

The image is a visual representation of the Four Divine States of Mind (Brahmavihāra 4), illustrated as four colored pillars supporting a classical-style building structure. Each pillar corresponds to one of the four virtues, with matching color and an icon:

1. Loving-kindness (Yellow Pillar)
   - Icon: Smiling face with a graduation cap
   - Description: "Teachers show kindness to all students and parents."
2. Compassion (Orange Pillar)
   - Icon: Person with child
   - Description: "Teachers help students, especially those in need."
3. Sympathetic Joy (Pink Pillar)
   - Icon: Graduating student throwing a cap
   - Description: "Teachers celebrate students' achievements."
4. Equanimity (Purple Pillar)
   - Icon: Scales of justice
   - Description: "Teachers ensure fairness and justice in the classroom."

The structure metaphorically conveys that these four principles form the ethical and emotional foundation of a teacher's professional practice, especially in early childhood education. The visual layout is clean and child-friendly, with soft pastel colors and simple illustrations, making the concept accessible and appealing.

Recommendation

From the research results, the researcher has the following recommendations:

1. Recommendations for implementation

1) In terms of kindness, teachers who take care of children should be kind to students, colleagues, and parents of all students.

2) In terms of compassion, teachers who take care of children should help all students, give advice to colleagues, and parents of students willingly.

3) In terms of mudita, teachers who take care of children should be happy and willing to provide services to all colleagues and parents.

4) In terms of equanimity, teachers who take care of children should behave as good examples for students, parents, and colleagues.

2. Recommendations for research

1) Research should be conducted on the relationship between the application of the four divine states of mind for work and the effectiveness of the management of child development centers.

2) Research should be conducted on the application of the four divine states of mind for work that affects the success of the management of child development centers.

3) Participatory action research should be conducted on the application of the four divine states of mind in the management of child development centers.

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Academic Article

Identity Politics and Social Conflict in Contemporary Thai Society*

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Abstract

This article examines the dynamics of identity politics in contemporary Thai society by analyzing how historical narratives, structural inequalities, and legal frameworks shape ethnic, regional, religious, and gender-based conflicts. Drawing on case studies from Isaan, the Deep South, LGBTQ+ communities, and Cold War-era discourses, the article highlights how state-driven nationalism has marginalized diverse identities through cultural assimilation and centralized governance. It argues that effective conflict resolution requires structural reforms, inclusive representation, and a shift toward pluralistic democratic practices. The discussion further situates Thailand within broader global debates on identity and nationalism, emphasizing the growing impact of digital media and generational change on political mobilization.

Keywords: Identity politics, Ethnicity, Nationalism, Conflict, Thailand

Introduction

Identity politics refers to a political approach wherein people of a particular religion, race, social background, class, or other identifying factors develop political agendas that are based upon these identities. It emphasizes the group's specific interests and perspectives and often challenges the dominant power structures that marginalize or ignore these identities (Heyes, 2020). Rather than assuming a neutral or universal perspective in politics, identity politics prioritizes recognition, representation, and justice for marginalized or underrepresented groups.

In the context of **contemporary Thai society**, identity politics has become increasingly salient, particularly as tensions surrounding ethnicity, region, religion, and gender have come to the fore. The roots of these identity-based struggles can be traced to Thailand's historical project of **nation-building**, particularly during the 20th century, when a process commonly referred to as **"Thaification"** was instituted. Thaification was a state-driven attempt to forge a unified national identity based on Central Thai culture, language, and loyalty to the monarchy. This policy promoted the dominance of

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the Central Thai ethnic group and marginalized other ethnic and regional communities such as the **Isaan** (Northeastern Thais), the **Malay-Muslims** in the deep South, and various **hill tribes** in the North (Thongchai, 1994; Winichakul, 2000).

Under Thaification, the Thai language became the official and dominant medium of education and administration, while other languages and dialects were excluded from formal institutions. Religious policy also promoted **Theravāda Buddhism** as an integral part of Thai identity, contributing to the exclusion of **Muslim** and **animist** communities (McCargo, 2008). This form of cultural assimilation suppressed pluralism and reinforced a narrow conception of "Thai-ness" that excluded ethnic, religious, and regional others. Over time, these exclusions generated tensions and contributed to **social conflicts**, particularly as marginalized groups began to assert their identities and demand recognition, autonomy, and rights.

Thus, in Thailand, identity politics is not merely a recent phenomenon, but rather a structural feature of the country's political and cultural history. The interplay between centralized nationalism and local/regional identities continues to define much of the political and social landscape of contemporary Thai society.

Theoretical and Historical Background

1. Nation-building and Assimilation (Thaification)

The modern Thai state's approach to nation-building was significantly shaped by its attempt to centralize power and create a unified national identity under the ideology of "Thaification." Following the 1932 revolution and particularly after 1933, successive Thai governments—especially under Prime Minister Field Marshal Phibun Songkhram—implemented assimilationist policies that elevated Central Thai language, dress, customs, and Theravāda Buddhism as the cultural norms of the nation (Thongchai, 1994). Ethnic minorities such as the Isaan people, Malay-Muslims, Karen, Hmong, and hill tribes were often portrayed as peripheral or "un-Thai" and were subjected to educational, linguistic, and religious policies aimed at their assimilation (Wikipedia, 2024).

The state's centralization efforts included the standardization of the Thai language as the official medium of instruction in all schools, erasure of local dialects and histories from the national curriculum, and suppression of regional autonomy. This not only marginalized regional and ethnic identities but also entrenched the dominance of the Bangkok-centric elite (McCargo, 2005). As a result, many non-Central Thai groups developed a counter-consciousness and began asserting their ethnic and regional identities, setting the stage for identity-based grievances and resistance.

2. Bourdieu's Habitus and Social Structures

To understand how identity politics takes root in Thailand, Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus provides a useful lens. Bourdieu defines habitus as a system of dispositions shaped by historical and structural forces, which in turn shape an individual's behavior and worldview (Bourdieu, 1977). In the Thai context, society exhibits intersecting habitus of pre-capitalist patron-client relationships and capitalist bureaucratic systems. These overlapping structures influence not only political behavior but also how identity and social status are reproduced and contested (Naruemon & McCargo, 2011; Cambridge University Press, 2020).

Bourdieu's framework is particularly applicable to Thai society where social capital, symbolic power, and cultural capital determine who is perceived as

authentically “Thai.” For example, the habitus cultivated among urban elites in Bangkok often clashes with that of rural populations in Isaan and the South, deepening political divisions and contributing to recurring conflict. This divergence in habitus is further exacerbated by the education system, media representation, and state narratives that favor elite, Central Thai norms (Unisalento, 2021).

3. Identity Formation and Narrative Contestation

The process of identity formation in Thailand has been shaped by narrative contestation between competing visions of the Thai nation. During the Cold War period, the Thai state promoted a discourse of the "Thai Self" in opposition to a "foreign Other," including communists, ethnic Chinese, American imperialists, and Northeastern “uncivilized” people (Yensabai, 2019). This discursive construction played a central role in nation-building, reinforcing state legitimacy while marginalizing dissenters and minorities.

In particular, the state narrative portrayed communists and leftists—many of whom came from marginalized ethnic or regional backgrounds—as threats to Thai sovereignty and culture. This allowed the government to justify surveillance, censorship, and military violence in the name of national security (Yensabai, 2019). These discourses continue to shape how difference is treated in Thai society and how marginalized groups are framed within national debates, influencing contemporary identity politics.

Manifestations of Identity Politics in Thailand

1. Ethnic and Regional Identity

Thailand’s cultural and political landscape reveals deep-seated tensions along ethnic and regional lines. Among the most prominent is the case of Isaan, the Northeastern region, home to approximately one-third of Thailand’s population. Isaan people speak a Lao dialect, practice distinct cultural traditions, and have historically experienced economic and political marginalization. The Red Shirt movement (United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship—UDD), which emerged after the 2006 coup, drew significant support from Isaan provinces, reflecting discontent with the Bangkok-centric elite and a call for greater political inclusion (Beech, 2014).

The Isaan identity is thus political as well as cultural: it expresses pride in regional language and heritage while also signaling dissatisfaction with the state's long-standing economic neglect and cultural suppression. This sense of injustice contributes to a strong regional consciousness, reinforcing identity-based mobilization.

In the deep South, the identity of Malay Muslims—numbering over 1.8 million—is anchored in the Patani-Malay language, Islam, and a historical memory of an autonomous Patani kingdom. Since the early 2000s, the southern border provinces (Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat) have seen a resurgence of insurgency movements rooted in long-standing grievances over assimilation policies, police violence, and the erasure of Malay-Muslim identity from the national narrative (McCargo, 2008). The conflict is not merely about political autonomy but about cultural survival and religious self-determination.

2. Religious Identity

While Thailand is often portrayed as religiously tolerant, in practice, Buddhist nationalism has played a central role in shaping the state's identity. Theravāda Buddhism is implicitly tied to “Thai-ness,” and institutional structures—such as state

support for the Sangha (Buddhist monastic order)—reinforce this link. Minority religions, especially Islam, are frequently treated as external to the Thai identity, particularly in the southern provinces where religious identity is inseparable from ethnic identity (McCargo, 2008).

This religious hegemony has fostered discrimination and alienation. For instance, state policies have promoted Buddhist education, celebrations, and moral values in schools, often sidelining the religious practices of Muslims and Christians. During national crises, religious themes are often deployed to reaffirm loyalty to the monarchy and national unity—sometimes at the expense of inclusivity (Yensabai, 2019). Such merging of religious symbolism with national ideology contributes to identity-based exclusion and fuels resistance among minority faith communities.

3. Identity-based Movements and Social Norms

Thailand has also seen increasing activism around gender and sexual identity, particularly from the LGBTQ+ community. Despite cultural visibility, especially of kathoey (trans women), discrimination in employment, access to health care, and legal recognition persists. Kathoey are not recognized under Thai law in terms of their gender identity, and many are forced to use documents that misrepresent their identity (Winter, 2006). Legal battles for recognition, anti-discrimination protection, and gender equality have become central to LGBTQ+ identity politics.

In response to both domestic advocacy and international pressure, Thailand has proposed Anti-Discrimination and Ethnic Protection Bills, which aim to prohibit discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, religion, and sexuality. These legislative efforts, though not yet comprehensive in enforcement, represent a growing acknowledgment of identity-based inequality and a move toward inclusive governance (Wikipedia, 2024).

Mechanisms of Conflict

The emergence and intensification of identity politics in Thailand cannot be understood without analyzing the mechanisms through which identity-based conflict is reproduced. These mechanisms include narrative contestation, structural inequalities, and legal struggles over representation. Together, they create the conditions for both overt political mobilization and underlying social tension.

1. Narrative Contestation

One of the most enduring mechanisms of conflict in Thai society is discursive construction—the use of narrative to define who belongs and who does not. During the Cold War era, the Thai state actively deployed narratives that framed various groups as "Others" to consolidate political legitimacy. This discursive battle pitted government-backed nationalism against leftist and regional counter-narratives (Yensabai, 2019).

For example, Isaan people, whose geographic location near Laos and Vietnam made them suspect during the Cold War, were often viewed as potential communist sympathizers. Likewise, the ethnic Chinese population was targeted as an alien economic elite with conflicting loyalties, and Americans—though military allies—were also presented ambivalently in local critiques of imperialism and cultural domination. This construction of in-groups and out-groups reinforced a binary view of “authentic Thainess” versus external subversion (Yensabai, 2019). These narrative divisions laid the foundation for continued marginalization of minority groups in post-Cold War Thailand.

2. Structural Inequalities

Beneath the narrative level, structural inequalities serve as a powerful mechanism that sustains identity-based conflict. The most visible example is the regional underdevelopment of Isaan, Thailand's Northeast region. Despite being the most populous region, Isaan consistently receives less infrastructure investment, has lower education and healthcare indicators, and remains largely dependent on agriculture and labor migration (Chambers & Waitoolkiat, 2016; Beech, 2014).

These economic disparities have fueled resentment and political mobilization, particularly among young voters and Red Shirt supporters who view Bangkok elites as indifferent or exploitative. Studies show that unequal resource distribution, combined with a sense of cultural suppression, has intensified demands for decentralization, greater fiscal autonomy, and equitable representation (ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2020). As a result, the conflict is not simply economic but deeply symbolic and identity-laden, where inequality reinforces the feeling of exclusion from national belonging.

3. Legal Struggle and Representation

The struggle over legal recognition and representation is another crucial mechanism by which identity-based conflict is both expressed and potentially addressed. In recent years, efforts such as the Ethnic Protection Bill and Anti-Discrimination legislation have been proposed to protect marginalized communities from identity-based exclusion. These legislative measures aim to address systemic inequalities based on race, gender, religion, and regional identity (Wikipedia, 2024).

However, such legal initiatives are double-edged: while they signal progress, they also reveal contentious political fault lines. Debates around these bills often trigger resistance from conservative groups who fear that acknowledging minority rights may undermine national unity or traditional values. Thus, the legal system becomes a battleground for identity recognition, where courts, lawmakers, and civil society actors contest the meaning of equality and inclusion.

This dynamic reveals that identity conflict in Thailand is not just a matter of informal prejudice but is institutionally embedded—in education, law, media, and governance structures. Therefore, resolving such conflict requires more than legal reform; it demands a cultural and institutional rethinking of what it means to be "Thai."

Case Studies

To illustrate the dynamics of identity politics in Thailand, four case studies highlight how historical narratives, regional and ethnic identity, religious autonomy, and gender identity converge with political conflict, resistance, and reform efforts.

1. Cold War-era Identity Narratives

During the Cold War period, the Thai state engaged in a powerful campaign to define "Thai-ness" by juxtaposing it against constructed external and internal "Others." This process was not only ideological but strategic, aiming to unify the nation under the monarchy and Central Thai elite, while delegitimizing dissent and alternative worldviews (Yensabai, 2019).

The government portrayed groups such as Isaan villagers, ethnic Chinese, and even American forces (despite being military allies) as either culturally inferior or morally corrupting. Leftist intellectuals, especially those involved with rural development or Marxist critique, were framed as subversive threats aligned with

communism (Yensabai, 2019). These discourses became central to state propaganda, which advanced monarchical nationalism, Buddhist moralism, and obedience to the military.

The outcome was the entrenchment of Central Thai hegemony, reinforced by education, media, and bureaucracy. The Cold War narrative solidified the monarchy's symbolic dominance and framed loyalty to the king as synonymous with national unity (Wikipedia, 2024). This historical framework continues to influence how dissent and regional assertion are perceived today.

2. Isaan's Regional Assertion and the Red Shirt Movement

The Isaan region, long marginalized economically and culturally, emerged as a political force in the 2000s. The rise of Thaksin Shinawatra, a populist leader who introduced pro-poor policies such as universal healthcare and village development funds, gained massive support in Isaan and reframed regional identity into political capital (Beech, 2014).

After the 2006 military coup, Isaan became the heartland of the Red Shirt movement, whose supporters protested against the Bangkok elite, calling for electoral democracy, redistributive justice, and political inclusion. The Red Shirts politicized Isaan's historical neglect, asserting their identity not only as a regional community but also as equal stakeholders in the nation (Chambers & Waitoolkiat, 2016).

While the majority seek reform and decentralization, some fringe voices have spoken of autonomy or separatist aspirations, though this is often overstated in state narratives as a justification for repression (SIBA-ESE, 2021). The political agency of Isaan illustrates how regional identity can evolve into organized democratic activism or be painted as a national threat.

3. Southern Insurgency in the Phuket–Patani Region

The southern border provinces of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat are home to Thailand's Malay-Muslim population, who possess a distinct ethno-religious identity rooted in Islam, the Malay language, and historical memory of the Patani Sultanate. Since the early 2000s, the region has experienced a violent insurgency demanding recognition, autonomy, and an end to state repression (McCargo, 2008).

Insurgents reject the assimilationist policies of the Thai state, particularly the imposition of Thai language in schools and bureaucracy. The movement blends separatist aspirations with Islamic identity politics, though not all Muslims support violence. Some factions also engage in criminal activities, blurring lines between ideology and local economic interest (Lowy Institute, 2020).

Despite peace-building efforts, the conflict remains unresolved due to deep mistrust, militarization, and limited concessions from Bangkok. The Patani case exemplifies how identity politics can escalate into violent conflict when cultural autonomy and political representation are denied.

4. LGBTQ+, Kathoey, and Legal Reform

Thailand enjoys global visibility for its gender diversity, particularly the presence of kathoey (transgender women), yet legal recognition and protections for LGBTQ+ individuals remain insufficient. Discrimination in employment, access to healthcare, and inability to change legal documents are persistent problems (Winter, 2006).

LGBTQ+ identity politics in Thailand has moved beyond cultural tolerance toward legal activism. Organizations have campaigned for the Gender Equality Act and

Civil Partnership Bill, but legislative reforms face resistance from conservative institutions and are often delayed or watered down (Wikipedia, 2024). The struggle illustrates how symbolic recognition does not guarantee structural inclusion.

While kathoey are highly visible in media and tourism, their rights remain precarious. This contradiction between cultural acceptance and legal invisibility underscores the ongoing battle for dignity, equality, and self-determination within the Thai legal system.

Policy Responses & Social Intervention

Addressing identity-based conflict in Thailand requires both structural reform and discursive transformation. In recent years, the state, civil society, and international actors have proposed a range of legal, institutional, and community-based strategies to mitigate inequality and promote inclusion. However, the effectiveness of these efforts remains uneven due to political resistance, limited decentralization, and entrenched centralism.

1. Legal Frameworks

One of the most visible responses to identity-based exclusion in Thailand has been the proposal and partial implementation of legal protections. The Ethnic Protection Bill and the Gender Equality Act are among the most notable legislative developments aiming to safeguard the rights of marginalized communities, including ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and religious groups (Wikipedia, 2024).

The Ethnic Protection Bill seeks to recognize and preserve the cultural practices, languages, and identities of Thailand's diverse ethnic groups, granting them more visibility in education, administration, and public discourse. Likewise, the Gender Equality Act B.E. 2558 (2015) prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, including sexual orientation and gender identity.

Despite these promising legal developments, implementation remains highly contested. Critics point to the vague language of the laws, the lack of robust enforcement mechanisms, and resistance from conservative factions within the government and religious institutions. As a result, many marginalized groups remain legally recognized but socially and economically excluded.

2. Decentralization and Inclusion

Another critical policy response is the call for decentralization—particularly in the context of Isaan and the southern border provinces. Decentralization is seen as a strategy to redistribute power, promote local governance, and reflect regional cultural identities in policy and education (Chambers & Waitoolkiat, 2016).

Demands from regional activists include the devolution of budget authority, curriculum flexibility to include local history and language, and greater political representation at both local and national levels. In the Deep South, decentralization also means allowing Islamic education, respecting Malay-Muslim culture, and promoting participatory peacebuilding.

While some reforms have been implemented—such as local administrative organizations (TAOs) and village development councils—true decentralization is constrained by central ministries and military-appointed governors. As long as

Bangkok-centric governance dominates, the promise of inclusive development will remain limited.

3. Civil Society and Multi-Stakeholder Engagement

Beyond state mechanisms, civil society plays a critical role in fostering inclusive discourse and challenging hegemonic narratives of "Thai-ness." NGOs, academic networks, human rights organizations, and grassroots movements have created platforms for marginalized voices, mobilizing around issues such as ethnic language rights, gender justice, and interfaith dialogue (UNDP, 2019).

Multi-stakeholder engagement—involving the state, civil society, religious leaders, youth groups, and international donors—is essential for long-term conflict resolution. These actors facilitate trust-building, dialogue mechanisms, and policy advocacy aimed at reducing polarization. In some cases, transnational support has helped strengthen LGBTQ+ rights advocacy and interethnic reconciliation in the South (UN Women, 2020).

Nevertheless, civil society is constrained by laws such as the NGO Control Bill and surveillance of activists, particularly those working on minority rights. Without legal and political space, civil society efforts risk co-optation or repression.

Discussion & Implications

Thailand's experiences with identity politics illustrate the complex interplay between national unity and social diversity, exposing the underlying tensions in state-building, cultural dominance, and democratic aspirations. As the country grapples with demands from ethnic, regional, religious, and gendered communities, key challenges and opportunities emerge for both domestic governance and comparative global scholarship.

1. Balancing Unity and Representation

At the heart of Thailand's identity conflict lies the state's ongoing attempt to uphold a unified national identity—rooted in Central Thai culture, Theravāda Buddhism, and monarchical symbolism—while the country becomes increasingly pluralistic in practice. This pluralism is not only cultural but also political: regional movements, religious minorities, and gender rights activists all challenge the state's exclusive conception of "Thainess."

The state's insistence on cultural homogeneity undermines the democratic promise of equal recognition and representative governance. As noted by Winichakul (1994), the Thai nation was historically imagined through centralized mapping and symbolic unification, which continues to shape its political structure. However, this top-down vision is increasingly out of step with local experiences and identities, especially in Isaan and the deep South (McCargo, 2008). True national integration requires mechanisms for inclusive pluralism, where diverse identities are not merely tolerated but institutionalized in law, education, and governance.

2. Potential Futures: Democratization or Fracture

The future trajectory of identity politics in Thailand depends significantly on policy choices made in the coming years. Progressive developments—such as the Ethnic Protection Bill and decentralization reforms—could pave the way for a more inclusive democracy that respects cultural rights and enables political participation across regions and identities (Chambers & Waitoolkiat, 2016).

Conversely, failure to address identity-based grievances risks deepening social fragmentation. In particular, the southern insurgency may escalate if demands for autonomy continue to be repressed, while the marginalization of Isaan communities could catalyze further polarization between rural and urban electorates. The continued erosion of legal protections for LGBTQ+ individuals, indigenous groups, and religious minorities may also foster civil unrest or international scrutiny.

Ultimately, Thailand stands at a crossroads between consolidating a multi-ethnic democracy and reinforcing hierarchical nationalism. The strength of civil society, the independence of the judiciary, and the flexibility of political institutions will be critical factors in shaping this outcome.

3. Broader Relevance

Thailand's identity politics are not isolated but resonate with global debates on ethnicity, nationalism, and resilience. Similar tensions are observed in Myanmar, Malaysia, and Indonesia, where post-colonial states attempt to integrate diverse populations under centralized systems. In each case, the balance between national cohesion and local autonomy defines both the quality of democracy and the risks of conflict.

Moreover, Thailand's experience provides insights into how discursive control—through education, media, and state narratives—shapes the boundaries of belonging. The Thai case also demonstrates the importance of subnational political movements and intersectional activism (e.g., Red Shirts, LGBTQ+ organizations, Malay-Muslim networks) in challenging monolithic state narratives and demanding justice.

As such, Thailand is a critical case study for scholars and policymakers interested in the nexus between identity, development, and governance in transitional democracies.

Conclusion

The landscape of identity politics in contemporary Thai society is the result of deep historical processes, structural inequalities, and discursive constructions that have evolved over decades. Identity in Thailand is not monolithic but stratified across multiple intersecting axes—including ethnicity, region, religion, and gender. These identities are not only culturally significant but have become political instruments in struggles for recognition, autonomy, and justice.

This article has shown that identity-based conflict in Thailand is driven by both state-led nationalism—rooted in the Cold War's ideological framing and continued through policies of Thaification—and the resistance of marginalized communities, such as Isaan villagers, Malay-Muslims, and LGBTQ+ activists, who challenge the dominant definitions of "Thai-ness." Such resistance reflects the unresolved tensions between national unity and cultural plurality.

Effective conflict resolution in Thailand must move beyond symbolic gestures. It requires addressing structural grievances—such as economic exclusion, cultural erasure, and legal invisibility—while creating inclusive mechanisms for representation and participation. This includes strengthening protective legislation, implementing decentralization reforms, and ensuring meaningful engagement from civil society actors.

Looking ahead, future research should explore the evolving role of digital media, which has amplified marginalized voices and enabled new forms of identity-based mobilization. The influence of globalization and intergenerational change—especially as Thai youth reimagine national narratives, challenge historical myths, and engage with global discourses on rights and democracy—presents fertile ground for understanding the future trajectory of identity politics in Thailand and beyond.

Thailand's experience underscores a broader truth: democracy cannot flourish without dignity, visibility, and empowerment for all identities within the nation.

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Academic Article

Gender Identity and Social Acceptance in Contemporary Thai Society *

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Abstract

This article examines the complex relationship between gender identity and social acceptance in contemporary Thai society. While Thailand is internationally recognized for its LGBTQ+ visibility and cultural tolerance, legal and social structures often fail to support the lived realities of gender-diverse individuals. Through a review of local identity terms, historical and cultural contexts, media representation, legal frameworks, and everyday discrimination, the article highlights contradictions between symbolic acceptance and institutional exclusion. Recent developments such as the 2025 Marriage Equality Act offer progress but fall short without comprehensive legal gender recognition. The findings underscore the need for inclusive reforms, intersectional analysis, and the amplification of marginalized voices to achieve genuine social justice.

Keywords: Gender identity, Thailand, LGBTQ+, Discrimination, Legal recognition

Introduction

Thailand is often portrayed as one of the most LGBTQ-friendly countries in Asia, known for its visible and vibrant queer culture, particularly in urban centers and the tourism industry. This image is reinforced by the prominent presence of gender-diverse individuals, such as *kathoey* (often translated as "ladyboys"), in Thai media, entertainment, and service sectors (Winter, 2011). International observers, including travel publications and global media, have highlighted Thailand as a relatively tolerant society in terms of gender and sexual diversity (TIME, 2014; International Labour Organization [ILO], 2014). However, beneath this surface-level image of acceptance lies a complex web of social, legal, and institutional challenges that gender-diverse individuals continue to face.

Despite the public visibility of LGBTQ+ individuals, particularly transgender women (*kathoey*) and masculine-presenting lesbians (*toms*), discrimination remains embedded in daily life. Many experience barriers in education, healthcare, employment, and legal recognition (ILO, 2014; UNDP, 2019). For instance, Thailand still lacks a legal framework for gender recognition, leaving transgender individuals unable to change their legal documents to match their gender identity (Human Rights Watch,

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2018). Additionally, negative stereotypes in media and social discourse often reduce gender-diverse individuals to caricatures, further perpetuating stigma (Jackson, 2009).

Given this backdrop, the objective of this research is to explore the lived realities of gender-diverse individuals in contemporary Thai society and examine the extent to which social acceptance is experienced in daily interactions—across families, communities, workplaces, and institutions. By doing so, this study seeks to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of gender identity, policy limitations, and evolving social attitudes in Thailand's rapidly changing sociocultural landscape.

Literature Review

1. Local Terminology & Identity

Gender identity in Thailand cannot be fully understood without engaging with local terminologies that reflect culturally specific understandings of gender diversity. Two prominent identity categories are *kathoey* and *toms*. The term *kathoey* is often loosely translated into English as "ladyboy," but its meaning is multifaceted: it can refer to transgender women, effeminate gay men, or even intersex individuals in colloquial usage (Boellstorff, 2007; Winter, 2010). Meanwhile, *toms* are women who adopt masculine appearances and behaviors, often engaging in romantic relationships with feminine-presenting women known as *dees* (Jackson & Sullivan, 1999). These categories represent gender diversity as it is experienced and socially navigated in Thailand, which differs significantly from Western frameworks of LGBTQ+ identity (UNDP, 2019).

2. Historical & Cultural Context

Thailand's relatively visible gender-diverse communities—especially *kathoey*—have long been embedded in cultural and media landscapes. Transgender women are commonly featured in beauty pageants, variety shows, and as entertainers in tourist hubs such as Pattaya and Phuket (Jackson, 2003; ASEAS, 2021). However, such visibility often coexists with limited structural rights and legal protections. While the image of the *kathoey* may be glamorized or exoticized in pop culture and tourism, this attention does not always translate into social inclusion or economic stability (UNDP, 2019).

The emergence of queer identities in modern Thailand is closely tied to processes of urbanization, commodification, and globalization. Consumer capitalism and media markets have allowed gender-diverse individuals to express their identities through fashion, plastic surgery, and social media—but within the limits of market-driven visibility (Sinnott, 2004). This neoliberal framework privileges certain forms of queerness that align with consumer values, often marginalizing poor, rural, or non-conforming queer individuals (Ford, 2003; Puar, 2007).

3. Legal Frameworks

In recent years, Thailand has taken significant legislative steps toward improving the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. The Gender Equality Act B.E. 2558 (2015) prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender, including gender identity and

sexual orientation. However, it lacks provisions for legal gender recognition, meaning transgender individuals cannot change the gender marker on official documents (Human Rights Watch, 2018; UNDP, 2019). This results in systemic barriers, particularly in healthcare, education, and employment, where mismatched identification leads to exclusion or ridicule.

A major milestone came in January 2025, when the Thai Parliament passed the Marriage Equality Act, making Thailand the first country in Southeast Asia to legalize same-sex marriage (Them, 2025). Despite this progress, the absence of a Gender Recognition Law continues to limit full citizenship for many transgender individuals. Proposed legislation on gender recognition remains pending and is yet to guarantee the right to self-identify one's gender in legal terms (Wikipedia, 2025).

In parallel, an Anti-Discrimination Bill was introduced in 2025, aimed at expanding protections for marginalized communities, including gender-diverse groups. While its passage would mark a significant shift toward comprehensive human rights protections, the bill has sparked debates around conservative backlash, religious opposition, and bureaucratic enforcement (ASEAN SOGIE Caucus, 2025; Wikipedia, 2025).

Media & Social Exposure

Media and popular culture play a pivotal role in shaping public attitudes toward gender and sexual diversity in Thailand. Over the past two decades, increased representation of LGBTQ+ individuals in Thai films, television, advertisements, and online platforms has contributed to greater visibility and, in many cases, more favorable social attitudes—especially among younger generations (UNDP, 2019). Research indicates that media exposure to LGBTQ characters can significantly reduce stigma and prejudice, particularly when portrayals are multidimensional and empathetic (Thianthai, 2021; ScienceDirect, 2022). A UNDP study surveying Thai youth found that adolescents who regularly consumed media featuring LGBTQ+ individuals tended to express more accepting views of gender diversity compared to those with limited exposure (UNDP, 2019).

The rise of *Boys' Love* (BL) dramas—a genre of romantic television series featuring male-male couples—has gained mass popularity in Thailand and across Asia. These productions, often consumed by young female audiences, have helped to normalize same-sex relationships in mainstream entertainment (Baudinette, 2021). Moreover, social media platforms such as TikTok and YouTube have enabled LGBTQ+ influencers and everyday individuals to share their stories and challenge traditional gender norms, broadening the discursive space for public understanding of gender identity (UNDP, 2019).

However, this visibility is not without its limitations. While positive representation has increased, many depictions in Thai media continue to rely on reductive stereotypes. *Kathoey* characters, for instance, are often portrayed as

flamboyant, comical, or hypersexualized sidekicks—roles that perpetuate the idea of gender-diverse individuals as objects of humor rather than subjects of dignity (Jackson, 2009; TIME, 2014). Such portrayals can reinforce negative biases and contribute to the marginalization of LGBTQ+ people in broader society, especially when these images dominate public perceptions in the absence of deeper, more authentic narratives.

The contradiction between increased media visibility and continued reliance on harmful tropes underscores the need for more inclusive and responsible storytelling in Thai media. Cultural production that moves beyond caricature and embraces the complexity of LGBTQ+ lives has the potential to foster genuine empathy and drive long-term social acceptance.

Everyday Discrimination

Despite Thailand's international reputation for LGBTQ+ tolerance, many gender-diverse individuals continue to experience discrimination in everyday life, particularly in the realms of education, employment, healthcare, and family settings. These lived experiences of exclusion reveal a significant gap between public visibility and genuine social inclusion.

1. Bullying and Institutional Barriers

Empirical studies have shown that toms, or masculine-presenting women, are frequently subjected to bullying and verbal harassment in educational institutions, especially during adolescence. Many report being marginalized by peers and, in some cases, disciplined by teachers for failing to conform to gender norms (UNDP, 2019; ScienceDirect, 2022). Such negative experiences can impact educational outcomes and lead to mental health issues, reinforcing cycles of exclusion.

Transgender individuals, particularly kathoey and trans men, often face discrimination in the job market and when seeking access to health services. Because Thailand lacks a gender recognition law, trans individuals are unable to update their identification documents to reflect their gender identity. As a result, job applicants whose gender expression does not match their legal documents are frequently rejected by employers or subject to inappropriate questioning during the recruitment process (Human Rights Watch, 2018). In healthcare settings, transgender patients may encounter misgendering, refusal of services, or lack of provider sensitivity to their specific needs—leading many to avoid care altogether (UNDP, 2019; Wikipedia, 2024).

2. Family-Level Tensions and Social Stigma

Discrimination is also prevalent in the private sphere, particularly within families. Ethnographic interviews and sociological studies indicate that many kathoey are "tolerated" by family members as long as they provide financial support or fulfill caretaking roles. However, they are not always fully accepted as their authentic selves. Some families view having a *kathoey* child as a source of shame or karmic punishment, referring to them as a "curse" (Wikipedia, 2024; Jackson, 2009). These tensions can

lead to strained relationships, forced concealment of identity, and psychological distress.

The interplay of societal norms, cultural expectations, and institutional constraints continues to shape the lived experiences of gender-diverse people in Thailand. While legal reforms and increased visibility have opened spaces for dialogue, they have not yet eradicated the everyday forms of prejudice and marginalization that persist beneath the surface of apparent tolerance.

Legal Gaps & Impact

Despite recent legislative progress in Thailand's recognition of LGBTQ+ rights, significant legal gaps continue to restrict the full inclusion of gender-diverse individuals. These gaps particularly affect the transgender community, who face institutional barriers stemming from the state's failure to legally recognize gender identity beyond the binary assigned at birth.

1. Lack of Legal Gender Recognition

As of mid-2025, **Thailand still does not allow legal gender change** on official documents such as national ID cards, academic certificates, or passports. This absence of legal recognition creates substantial challenges in daily life for transgender individuals, whose appearance or name may not match their official identification. This mismatch has serious ramifications in employment, banking, voting, healthcare, and interactions with law enforcement (Human Rights Watch, 2018; UNDP, 2019). For example, transgender women have been denied job interviews or publicly outed during administrative procedures when their ID cards reflect a male name and gender marker. Such experiences contribute to systematic exclusion from both economic opportunity and state protections.

Although the **Gender Equality Act B.E. 2558 (2015)** prohibits discrimination based on gender expression, it does not establish any mechanism for individuals to legally change their gender. As a result, the law is limited in practical enforcement when transgender people attempt to assert their rights without identity documents that reflect their lived gender (UNDP, 2019; Wikipedia, 2024).

2. Marriage Equality and Its Limitations

In January 2025, Thailand made history by becoming the first country in Southeast Asia to pass the **Marriage Equality Act**, granting same-sex couples the right to marry with equal civil rights, including inheritance, taxation, and healthcare access (Them, 2025; Wikipedia, 2025). While this marks a watershed moment for LGBTQ+ rights, the law **does not address transgender-specific issues**, such as allowing individuals to change their gender designation on legal documents or access gender-neutral titles (e.g., Mx. or a neutral Thai equivalent).

Consequently, transgender people—despite being potentially covered under the umbrella of same-sex or different-sex marriages—remain locked out of full legal recognition. The failure to pass a **Gender Recognition Law** alongside marriage

equality reinforces a hierarchy within LGBTQ+ rights, where gender identity continues to be regulated by bureaucratic and binary state logic (ASEAS, 2021).

The enduring lack of gender recognition underscores a disjunction between Thailand's international reputation for LGBTQ+ tolerance and the lived legal experiences of its gender-diverse population. Without systemic reforms that allow for self-determined legal identities, social equality remains incomplete and conditional.

Conclusion

Thailand's contemporary landscape of gender identity and social acceptance presents a complex juxtaposition of cultural visibility, partial legal progress, and persistent everyday discrimination. The country is often hailed as a regional leader in LGBTQ+ representation, owing to its highly visible *kathoey* performers, popular *Boys' Love* dramas, and vibrant queer nightlife. However, the appearance of acceptance does not always equate to meaningful inclusion.

The study reveals that media exposure has indeed fostered greater awareness, especially among younger generations. Yet, representations remain saturated with stereotypes, reducing gender-diverse individuals to comedic or hypersexualized caricatures. These portrayals coexist with widespread structural discrimination, particularly in education, employment, and healthcare—fields where mismatched gender markers on legal documents and institutional prejudice continue to marginalize transgender individuals and *toms*.

Although the Marriage Equality Act (2025) marked a significant milestone by legalizing same-sex unions, it fell short of addressing deeper issues of legal gender recognition, identity documentation, and bureaucratic erasure. Without the ability to legally change gender markers, many transgender individuals remain vulnerable to exclusion, even within progressive legislative frameworks.

The contradictions between public visibility and private vulnerability demonstrate that tolerance in Thailand is often conditional—contingent upon economic utility, performative roles, or social compliance. True inclusion requires more than symbolic legal reform; it demands comprehensive anti-discrimination protections, legal gender recognition, culturally competent healthcare, and transformative education that challenges deeply embedded gender norms.

In moving forward, Thailand must reckon with the lived realities of its gender-diverse citizens, bridging the gap between its global image and the everyday experiences of those on the margins. Future research should explore intersectional dimensions—rural versus urban experiences, class, religion, and generational shifts—to offer a fuller picture of how gender identity is navigated across Thai society. Moreover, policy development must be informed by direct participation of LGBTQ+ communities to ensure reforms are not only legalistic but lived and liberatory.

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Academic Article

Academic Leadership of Educational Administrators in the 21st Century*

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Abstract

In the 21st century, educational institutions face complex transformations driven by globalization, technological advancement, and evolving societal expectations. This paper explores the concept of academic leadership among educational administrators, emphasizing the skills, roles, and challenges necessary for effective school leadership in contemporary contexts. Drawing on prominent leadership theories—transformational, instructional, and distributed leadership—this study presents an integrated framework of academic leadership tailored for modern educational demands. It also offers recommendations for developing leadership capacity to meet future challenges in education systems.

Keywords: Academic leadership, Educational administrators, 21st-century skills, Transformational leadership, Instructional leadership

Introduction

The landscape of education in the 21st century has undergone dramatic shifts due to rapid globalization, technological advancement, and evolving societal needs. Schools today are no longer isolated institutions focused solely on delivering content; they are dynamic, interconnected organizations required to prepare learners for complex, information-rich environments. As a result, educational leadership has taken on new dimensions that go beyond traditional administrative management.

In this new era, **academic leadership**—defined as the ability of school leaders to guide, inspire, and support pedagogical excellence—has emerged as a crucial factor in shaping educational success. Academic leadership is not merely concerned with overseeing instructional programs; it involves fostering a vision for learning, supporting teacher development, promoting innovative teaching practices, and ensuring that educational environments are equitable and inclusive (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

Michael Fullan (2001), a leading scholar in educational reform, argues that leadership must now be understood within the context of deep learning and systems change. Educational administrators are expected to engage with the moral and

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intellectual purposes of schooling, cultivating learning cultures that embrace change, collaboration, and accountability. This perspective repositions school leaders not just as managers of operations, but as **transformative agents** driving the academic mission of their institutions.

Moreover, the challenges of the 21st century—such as digital transformation, climate change, rising inequality, and multicultural integration—require leaders who can navigate uncertainty with strategic foresight and pedagogical integrity. Academic leadership thus becomes essential not only for improving student achievement but also for addressing broader educational challenges through systemic thinking and evidence-based practices (Sergiovanni, 1996; Spillane, 2006).

This article aims to examine the evolving concept of academic leadership in education. It explores the theoretical foundations of the concept, identifies key leadership competencies relevant to 21st-century schooling, and discusses practical strategies for enhancing leadership capacity in education systems worldwide.

Conceptualizing Academic Leadership

Academic leadership is increasingly recognized as a pivotal component of effective school governance in the 21st century. It refers to the capacity of educational leaders to promote academic excellence by shaping instructional priorities, guiding teacher development, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. While traditional models of educational administration often emphasize logistical and operational management—such as budgeting, facility oversight, and regulatory compliance—academic leadership shifts the focus toward pedagogical vision and student-centered learning (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

Academic leaders, particularly school principals and district-level administrators, are expected to articulate a clear instructional vision, oversee curriculum implementation, and support teaching staff in adopting evidence-based strategies. Their leadership is visible not only in policy but also in the daily practices that influence classroom learning environments, assessment systems, and student engagement. As Hallinger (2005) suggests, such leaders play a key role in aligning organizational goals with instructional strategies, ensuring that every element of the school supports learning outcomes.

Furthermore, academic leadership emphasizes distributed responsibility, whereby leadership is shared across various actors, including teachers, coordinators, and department heads. This perspective resonates with Spillane's (2006) theory of distributed leadership, which argues that academic leadership is not the sole responsibility of top administrators but a collaborative endeavor that involves mobilizing expertise across the institution.

Academic leadership also incorporates a moral and ethical dimension, as described by Sergiovanni (1996), who posits that true leadership in education is grounded in values such as trust, respect, and a commitment to the well-being of students and teachers alike. In this sense, academic leadership transcends technical competencies and becomes a form of *moral stewardship*—dedicated to advancing equity, inclusion, and lifelong learning.

In summary, conceptualizing academic leadership in modern education requires an understanding of its multifaceted role in driving school effectiveness. It is not

limited to managing structures, but deeply embedded in shaping the intellectual and ethical character of educational communities.

Theoretical Framework

The conceptual underpinnings of academic leadership in the 21st century draw from a synthesis of several established leadership theories that have shaped the field of educational leadership. These theoretical models offer critical insights into how educational administrators can effectively influence teaching, learning, and school culture. Among the most influential are **transformational leadership**, **instructional leadership**, and **distributed leadership**.

1. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership, as articulated by Bass and Avolio (1994), emphasizes the role of leaders in inspiring and motivating followers to exceed their own self-interest for the greater good of the organization. The model is anchored in four core components: **idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation**, and **individualized consideration**. Educational administrators who embrace transformational leadership serve as **visionary change agents**, fostering professional development, encouraging innovation, and building trust-based relationships within their institutions. In the context of academic leadership, this model supports a **culture of continuous improvement**, where educators feel empowered to adopt new practices and pursue shared goals (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

2. Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership, proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985), centers on the direct involvement of school leaders in the core business of schooling: **teaching and learning**. This model identifies three primary dimensions of effective leadership: (1) defining the school's mission, (2) managing the instructional program, and (3) promoting a positive school climate. Unlike transformational leadership, which is more relational and motivational, instructional leadership is **pedagogically focused**, emphasizing curriculum coherence, teacher supervision, and student performance outcomes. Academic leaders operating within this framework are expected to be knowledgeable about teaching practices and act as **instructional guides**, ensuring alignment between goals, methods, and outcomes (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008).

3. Distributed Leadership

The theory of distributed leadership, extensively developed by Spillane (2006), reconceptualizes leadership as a **shared and collective practice**. It moves away from hierarchical models and highlights the interplay between leaders, followers, and their organizational context. In academic settings, distributed leadership encourages collaboration among principals, department heads, teacher leaders, and other stakeholders. It recognizes that **expertise and decision-making** are not confined to one individual but are spread across multiple actors within a school. This approach is particularly relevant in managing the complexity of modern educational systems, where adaptability, shared vision, and inclusive governance are essential (Harris, 2014).

Together, these three frameworks provide a **complementary and comprehensive foundation** for understanding academic leadership. While transformational leadership fosters visionary change, instructional leadership ensures pedagogical rigor, and distributed leadership promotes collective responsibility.

Integrating these models can help educational leaders respond effectively to the diverse and evolving demands of 21st-century schooling.

Characteristics of Effective Academic Leaders

Effective academic leadership in the 21st century is multifaceted, requiring school administrators to demonstrate a complex blend of **personal values, pedagogical competence, strategic insight**, and **collaborative disposition**. As the demands of modern education systems continue to evolve, leaders must transcend traditional management roles to become visionaries, facilitators of learning, and agents of equity. Key characteristics that define successful academic leaders in contemporary educational contexts include the following:

1. Visionary Thinking

Academic leaders must possess the ability to articulate a **clear and compelling academic vision** that aligns with both institutional goals and the broader demands of 21st-century education. This vision should not only respond to current challenges but also anticipate future trends in pedagogy, technology, and student needs (Fullan, 2001). Visionary leadership helps establish a shared sense of purpose and direction, fostering innovation and resilience across the school community (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005).

2. Instructional Expertise

At the core of academic leadership lies a **deep understanding of curriculum design, instructional strategies, and student assessment**. Effective academic leaders must be knowledgeable in evidence-based pedagogical practices and capable of guiding teachers in curriculum implementation, instructional improvement, and learning outcome evaluation. According to Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008), leadership focused on **instructional quality** has the strongest measurable impact on student achievement.

3. Technological Fluency

In an era of digital transformation, academic leaders are expected to demonstrate **technological literacy**—not just in using digital tools for administration, but in integrating them meaningfully into teaching and learning processes. This includes familiarity with learning management systems, data analytics for student performance, online pedagogies, and digital citizenship (Anderson & Dexter, 2005). Technological fluency enables leaders to promote **digitally enriched learning environments** and prepare both staff and students for future-ready education.

4. Collaborative Skills

Leadership in academic settings is increasingly recognized as a **collaborative endeavor**. Effective academic leaders must be able to engage diverse stakeholders—including teachers, parents, students, and policymakers—in inclusive decision-making processes. By fostering a **participatory culture**, leaders encourage ownership, distribute responsibilities, and sustain organizational learning (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Such collaboration enhances trust, builds community, and strengthens institutional capacity.

5. Moral and Ethical Leadership

Academic leadership must also be grounded in **ethical principles**, including fairness, empathy, respect for diversity, and social justice. Sergiovanni (1996) asserts that moral leadership is essential for cultivating trust and integrity within educational institutions. Leaders who exemplify moral conduct can address issues of equity,

challenge discriminatory practices, and ensure that all students—regardless of background—have access to high-quality education.

These five characteristics together reflect a **holistic leadership profile** that meets the academic, technological, cultural, and ethical demands of 21st-century schools. Leaders who develop these competencies are more likely to foster high-performing, inclusive, and forward-thinking educational environments.

Challenges in Academic Leadership

While academic leadership has become a cornerstone of school effectiveness and student success, its implementation is frequently hindered by a range of structural, professional, and cultural barriers. These challenges can severely constrain the ability of educational leaders to focus on academic priorities and sustain transformative change.

1. Bureaucratic Structures

One of the most significant obstacles to effective academic leadership is the **rigidity of bureaucratic systems** within educational institutions. Centralized governance, hierarchical decision-making, and policy mandates can restrict the autonomy of school leaders, leaving little room for innovation or contextual responsiveness. According to Bush (2008), such bureaucratic control often leads to a compliance-oriented leadership culture that prioritizes rule-following over instructional improvement. As a result, academic leaders may find themselves constrained by inflexible regulations, standardized assessments, and top-down reforms that limit creative pedagogical approaches.

2. Role Overload

School administrators are often tasked with an overwhelming array of responsibilities—ranging from budgeting, facility management, and student discipline to community engagement and policy implementation. This **role overload** diminishes the time and energy that can be devoted to academic leadership functions, such as instructional coaching, curriculum design, and professional development. Studies have shown that the **fragmentation of leadership duties** can lead to burnout and a reactive rather than proactive leadership style (Whitaker, 2003; Grissom, Loeb, & Master, 2013). As a result, leaders may struggle to prioritize academic matters amid competing operational demands.

3. Lack of Preparation

Another major challenge is the **insufficient training and preparation** many school leaders receive in academic leadership. While principals and administrators may possess extensive teaching experience, they often ascend to leadership roles without targeted training in instructional supervision, curriculum leadership, or change management (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). Traditional leadership development programs may emphasize administrative competencies over pedagogical insight, leading to gaps in leaders' ability to support instructional quality and innovation. This disconnect underscores the need for **systematic professional development** grounded in educational theory and practice.

4. Resistance to Change

Academic leadership frequently involves introducing new instructional models, assessment practices, or school improvement strategies. However, such changes may provoke **resistance from teachers, parents, or community members**, particularly when initiatives challenge long-standing norms or require shifts in beliefs and

behaviors. Fullan (2007) notes that resistance is a natural response to educational change, especially when stakeholders feel excluded from the decision-making process or uncertain about the reform's outcomes. Academic leaders must therefore possess not only technical expertise but also the **emotional intelligence and political acumen** to navigate resistance and build shared ownership of change.

These challenges collectively highlight the **complex terrain** in which academic leadership operates. Addressing them requires not only strong individual competencies but also supportive policy frameworks, collaborative school cultures, and sustained investment in leadership capacity.

Strategies for Enhancing Academic Leadership

Given the growing complexity and significance of academic leadership in 21st-century education, it is essential to establish robust strategies that empower school leaders to succeed in their pedagogical and transformative roles. The following approaches are central to cultivating leadership capacity and fostering sustainable instructional improvement in schools.

1. Professional Development

One of the most effective strategies for strengthening academic leadership is the provision of **targeted professional development programs**. These programs should go beyond generic administrative training and focus specifically on **curriculum leadership, instructional supervision, assessment literacy, and digital pedagogy**. Research indicates that effective professional learning is **ongoing, job-embedded, and collaborative**, enabling leaders to contextualize new knowledge and apply it meaningfully in their schools (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Investment in evidence-based leadership development—aligned with school improvement goals—can equip educational administrators with the tools necessary to drive academic excellence and innovation.

2. Mentorship and Coaching

The establishment of **mentorship and coaching systems** is another critical avenue for enhancing academic leadership. Pairing novice leaders with experienced mentors helps bridge the gap between theory and practice, fosters reflective dialogue, and promotes confidence in handling instructional and organizational challenges (Barnett & O'Mahony, 2008). Unlike traditional supervisory models, instructional coaching provides **non-evaluative, personalized support** that enables leaders to develop their own leadership styles while aligning with school goals. Structured mentoring also builds professional networks and fosters a culture of trust and collegiality within the educational system.

3. Collaborative Leadership Models

Contemporary educational leadership increasingly recognizes the value of **collaborative and distributed models**, where decision-making and instructional leadership are shared among multiple stakeholders. Encouraging team-based leadership structures—such as instructional leadership teams, department chairs, or teacher leaders—enhances **organizational learning and shared accountability** (Harris, 2014). Collaborative leadership not only taps into diverse expertise but also increases ownership, fosters innovation, and reduces the pressure on individual administrators. Such models align well with the complexity of modern schooling, where no single leader can effectively manage every aspect of teaching and learning.

4. Policy Support

System-level **policy and governance frameworks** play a decisive role in enabling academic leadership. Leaders require not only competencies but also **structural support, autonomy, and access to resources** to perform their roles effectively. Policymakers must therefore design educational governance systems that delegate decision-making authority to school leaders while ensuring accountability and equity (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008). This includes adequate funding, reduced bureaucratic burdens, clear instructional expectations, and flexibility to innovate in response to local needs. Without such support, even well-prepared leaders may find their efforts limited by institutional constraints.

In summary, enhancing academic leadership requires a **multi-pronged approach** that addresses individual capacity, school culture, and systemic infrastructure. Strategic investments in professional learning, mentorship, collaborative structures, and enabling policy environments are critical for fostering high-impact leadership capable of navigating the demands of 21st-century education.

Implications for Future Educational Leadership

As education systems continue to evolve in response to global, technological, and socio-political changes, **academic leadership is poised to play a central role in determining the success or failure of educational reform initiatives**. The increasing complexity of schooling—shaped by digital disruption, demographic shifts, accountability pressures, and socio-emotional learning needs—demands a new generation of educational leaders who are **adaptive, visionary, and learning-oriented**. Future academic leaders must embody the characteristics of **lifelong learners** who are not only open to change but capable of translating educational policy into coherent pedagogical strategies. According to Fullan (2001), effective leaders must act as **bridge-builders** across the often-disconnected realms of policy, practice, and research. They need the capacity to understand and respond to systemic challenges while ensuring that the **core mission of student learning** remains uncompromised.

A key implication is the urgent need for **policy frameworks that intentionally develop and sustain academic leadership capacity**. This includes investing in leadership preparation programs that emphasize instructional expertise, change management, cultural competency, and digital fluency (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008). Such programs should move beyond traditional management training to cultivate what Darling-Hammond et al. (2007) refer to as "**instructional visionaries**"—leaders who can redesign learning environments, integrate technology effectively, and foster equity in diverse school contexts.

Additionally, the **integration of global competencies** into leadership frameworks will become increasingly essential. In multicultural and interconnected societies, academic leaders must navigate issues of identity, inclusion, and intercultural understanding. As Zhao (2012) notes, future-ready education requires leaders who are capable of cultivating global perspectives while maintaining sensitivity to local contexts.

Moreover, **digitally competent leadership** is no longer optional. With the expansion of online and hybrid learning models, academic leaders must be fluent in educational technologies, data analytics, and digital safety. They must also be prepared to lead schools through **disruptive innovations**, ensuring continuity of learning and

support for staff and students in both physical and virtual environments (Anderson & Dexter, 2005).

Ultimately, the success of future educational systems hinges on **transformative academic leadership**—a kind of leadership that is strategic, humanistic, and forward-looking. Leaders who can balance accountability with compassion, and innovation with inclusion, will be best positioned to shape resilient, equitable, and high-performing schools in the decades ahead.

Conclusion

Academic leadership represents a transformative evolution in the role of educational administrators, reflecting the growing emphasis on teaching and learning as the central purposes of schooling. In contrast to conventional administrative leadership—often characterized by logistical oversight and regulatory compliance—academic leadership prioritizes **instructional quality, curricular coherence, and the professional growth of teachers**. This shift acknowledges that **effective learning environments are cultivated not through management alone but through inspired, pedagogically grounded leadership**.

In the 21st century, academic leaders must serve as **strategic instructional leaders**, capable of navigating complex educational ecosystems shaped by digital transformation, globalization, and demands for equity. Their influence extends beyond the school walls to shaping policy, empowering communities, and fostering inclusive, future-ready learning cultures. To succeed in this expanded role, leaders require **a strong foundation in leadership theory**, continuous professional development, access to mentorship, and the freedom to innovate within supportive policy frameworks.

As this article has outlined, the integration of **transformational, instructional, and distributed leadership models** provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and developing academic leadership. Strategies such as **targeted leadership preparation**, **collaborative structures**, and **policy reform** are essential to empower leaders to fulfill their academic mandates. Ultimately, investing in academic leadership is an investment in the quality and equity of education systems, ensuring that schools not only respond to contemporary challenges but actively shape a more just and informed society.

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Author Guidelines

Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation (AJHSI)

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1. Publication Policy in Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation

Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation (AJHSI) is a journal in the humanities and social sciences. It aims to promote research and publish research articles, academic articles, review articles, and book reviews for scholars, researchers, lecturers, students at all levels, and interested persons in the dimensions of Sociologies, Anthropologies, Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, Business Administration, Politics, Public Administration, Development, Tourism, and other areas in Social Sciences. Articles that are considered for publication must be reviewed by at least 2 out of 3 qualified persons (Peer Review). Only English articles are considered for publication. Submitted works must not have been published or are under consideration by qualified persons for publication in other journals. Authors must strictly comply with the criteria for submitting academic or research articles for publication in the journal, and the referencing system must be in accordance with the criteria of the journal.

The views and opinions expressed in journal articles are the responsibility of the authors of the articles and are not the opinions of the editorial team. The editorial team does not reserve the right to copy but requires references to show the source.

Publication Frequency

Release scheduled of four issues per year (Biweekly 3 months per time):

Issue 1 January – March

Issue 2 April – June

Issue 3 July - September

Issue 4 October – December

2 . Types of works published in the Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation

1. Research Article is a report of the results of a systematic study, research, or development.

2. An Academic Article is a work of writing an interesting topic in which the author presents new knowledge by using theories, concepts, and related research results as information sources.

3. Review Article is an article that combines theories, concepts, and research results on many subjects, the author will synthesize the literature to compile it into a conclusion or argument on a particular matter, which is a review of the academic progress of that matter.

3. Guidelines for Manuscript Preparation and Submission

Research Articles

Title
The title should be precise, concise, and accurately reflect the article's content and focus. Clearly specify the title: AJAJ - Writing Article Titles with Initial Capital Letters. (Times New Roman, 14 pt, Bold)

Author's name and surname
Full names of all authors, without including any titles, ranks, or honorifics. For multiple authors, separate the names with commas, and for the last author, use "and." (Times New Roman, 12 pt, Bold)

Full Address
Affair and country
E-mail:
Received xx/xx/20xx Revised xx/xx/20xx Accepted xx/xx/20xx
(Times New Roman, 11 pt, Italic)

Abstract

The abstract should succinctly summarize the article, including its objectives, methodology, key findings, and discussion, all within 300-400 words. The abstract must be written as a single, coherent paragraph. Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Keywords: Keyword, keyword, keyword
Authors should provide a minimum of three keywords and a maximum of five, reflecting the core themes of the study. (Times New Roman, 11 pt; 5 keywords/phrases

Introduction
The introduction of a research paper is a crucial component, as it is the first section that readers encounter to understand the topic under investigation. A well-written introduction should begin by presenting the general background of the issue or topic, gradually narrowing down to the specific problem that the researcher intends to explore. It should also highlight the significance and necessity of conducting the research.

Furthermore, the introduction should point out the gap in existing knowledge that the research aims to fill. It must clearly state the objectives of the study to ensure that readers can comprehend the rationale, importance, and direction of the research. A well-structured and thoughtful introduction not only enhances the credibility of the

study but also engages the reader's interest to continue exploring the entire research paper. Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Objectives

1.
2.
3.

Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Literature review

The literature review is a crucial component of the research process. Its primary purpose is to explore relevant information, concepts, theories, and previous studies related to the research topic. A thorough literature review helps researchers understand the current state of knowledge, identify academic trends, and recognize gaps that need further investigation.

A high-quality literature review involves the careful selection of credible, up-to-date, and directly relevant sources. Researchers should analyze, synthesize, and compare information from various references to establish a clear conceptual framework or research hypothesis. Moreover, the literature review enhances the credibility of the study and demonstrates that the researcher has a deep and comprehensive understanding of the topic being studied. Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Methodology

The methodology section is a critical part of a research study that outlines the systematic process for data collection, analysis, and presentation of research findings. A well-written methodology clearly specifies the type of research—whether it is quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods—and explains the sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection steps, and data analysis techniques.

An appropriately designed methodology ensures that the research questions can be accurately addressed and enhances the **credibility** and **reliability** of the study. Furthermore, a clear methodology provides a framework that allows other researchers to replicate the study if they wish to explore the same topic in future research. Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Results

The results section presents the findings derived from the analysis of collected data based on the established research methodology. At this stage, no interpretations or personal opinions from the researcher should be included. The presentation of results must be clear, organized, and aligned with the research objectives.

Results can be conveyed through narrative descriptions, tables, charts, or figures to make the information easier to understand and compare. The language used should be neutral and objective, avoiding any exaggeration or interpretation beyond what the data reveals.

A well-structured results section enables readers to connect the findings directly with the research questions and objectives. It also lays the foundation for the discussion and interpretation that follows in the next section of the research paper. Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Discussion

The discussion section is a vital component that demonstrates the researcher's ability to interpret and critically analyze the findings in relation to the research objectives, hypotheses, and relevant literature or theories. The researcher should connect the results to theoretical frameworks and explain whether the findings support or contradict previous studies.

This section should include logical reasoning, possible explanations, and factors that may have influenced the results. It is also important to address any limitations of the study that could affect the accuracy or applicability of the findings.

A well-written discussion reflects academic depth and shows that the researcher understands the broader context of the research. It bridges the gap between raw findings and the implications they may have for theory, practice, or future studies. Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Conclusion

The conclusion of a research paper provides a concise, clear, and complete summary of the key findings in alignment with the study's objectives. It should not introduce any new information or data, but rather synthesize what has already been discussed to highlight whether the research questions were effectively answered or the research goals were achieved.

A strong conclusion also includes practical implications or recommendations based on the findings, and often suggests directions for future research to expand upon areas that remain unexplored or insufficiently studied. A well-crafted conclusion helps readers quickly grasp the core contributions of the study and appreciate its academic value. Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Recommendation

The **recommendation** section is an important component of a research paper, demonstrating how the findings can be applied in practice or used to inform future research. Recommendations should be based on the results and conclusions of the study, focusing on areas that can be developed, improved, or addressed more effectively.

Recommendations are typically divided into two categories:

1. **Practical or policy-related recommendations** – for implementation by organizations, institutions, or stakeholders.

2. **Recommendations for future research** – for exploring unresolved issues or expanding on the current study's findings.

Effective recommendations should be **clear, feasible, and relevant** to the context of the research problem, offering meaningful guidance for both practitioners and future scholars. Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

References
References must adhere to the *APA 7th Edition* guidelines. All cited works should follow the *American Psychological Association* referencing style, particularly for articles in foreign languages.
Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Academic Articles:

Title
The title should be precise, concise, and accurately reflect the article's content and focus. Clearly specify the title: AJAJ - Writing Article Titles with Initial Capital Letters. (Times New Roman, 14 pt, Bold)

Author's name and surname
Full names of all authors, without including any titles, ranks, or honorifics. For multiple authors, separate the names with commas, and for the last author, use "and." (Times New Roman, 12 pt, Bold)

Full Address
Affair and country
E-mail:
Received xx/xx/20xx Revised xx/xx/20xx Accepted xx/xx/20xx
(Times New Roman, 11 pt, Italic)

Abstract
The abstract should succinctly summarize the article, including its objectives, methodology, key findings, and discussion, all within 300-400 words. The abstract must be written as a single, coherent paragraph. Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Keywords: Keyword, keyword, keyword
Authors should provide a minimum of three keywords and a maximum of five, reflecting the core themes of the study. (Times New Roman, 11 pt; 5 keywords/phrases

Main Text
The manuscript should be structured into an introduction, followed by the main body, with clear subheadings or sections to enhance readability. Authors' identities must not

be discernible from the text; any self-references should use the term "author(s)" instead of personal names.
Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Conclusion
Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Acknowledgments
This section should acknowledge sources of research funding, institutional or personal support, and any contributions from generative AI tools, if applicable**.**
Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

References
References must adhere to the *APA 7th Edition* guidelines. All cited works should follow the *American Psychological Association* referencing style, particularly for articles in foreign languages.
Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Appendix
If applicable, supplementary materials or data may be included as appendices.
Text (Times New Roman, 11 pt, Tab 0.5 cm)

Highlight
Authors are requested to provide a concise summary that encapsulates the key arguments and significance of their article. This summary should not exceed 50 words and should effectively convey the central themes and contributions of the study, enabling readers to quickly understand the article's primary focus and relevance.

Graphical Abstracts
A graphical abstract is a single, concise, and pictorial summary of the article's main findings. It may be the concluding figure from the article or a specially designed image.

1. **Image Size:** Provide an image with a minimum resolution of **531 × 1328 pixels** (height × width) at **300 dpi**. For larger images, maintain the same aspect ratio (e.g., **200 × 500**).
2. **File Type:** Preferred formats include **TIFF, PNG, and JPEG**.
3. **Content:** Do not include additional text, outlines, or synopses outside the image. Any text or labels must be integrated within the image itself.

*** (Attached as a separate file) Name the file **Graphical Abstracts)**.

Figure X Text (Source: XXXXX) (Times New Roman, 10 pt, Align Text Left)



Figure 1 Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation (AJHSI), 2024



Figure 1 Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation (AJHSI), 2020

Table 1 Table Title

No.	Name	Mean
1	A	0.00
2	B	0.00

Table 1 Experts specializing in the Nora performance

No.	Name	Expertise
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2		

References

Cite references in APA 7th edition in the manuscript
Standard references and referencing methods in APA - American Psychological Association for Foreign Language

Reference example APA (American Psychological Association) 7th
Include the complete citation at the end of your paper in a **references** section. References are organized by the author's last name in alphabetic (A-Z) order. Use an hanging indent to separate each list item.

Basic Format:
Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date). Title of the work. *Source where you can retrieve the work*. URL or DOI if available

Journal Article

Author(s). Note: List each author's last name and initial as Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. Use an ampersand (&) before the final author's name. Read more from the APA Style website if there are 21 or more authors.

1. **(Year).**
2. **Title of the article.** Note: For works that are part of a greater whole (e.g. articles, chapter), use sentence case. Only the first word of the title and subtitle and proper nouns are capitalized.
3. ***Title of the Journal*,** Note: Italicize and capitalize each word in the journal.
4. ***Volume*** Note: Italicize the journal volume. If there is no issue, include a comma before the page range.
5. **(Issue),** Note: If there is a issue number in addition to a volume number, include it in parentheses.
6. **Page range.** Note: If there is no page range within the journal volume/issue, this can be excluded.

7. **DOI (Digital Object Identifier)** Read more about DOIs from the APA Style wesbite.

Phathong, K., & Kenaphoom, S. (2024). Changes in Family Structure and Social Roles in Thai Rural Communities. *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation*, *1*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.

Online News/Magazine Article

1. **Author(s).** Note: List each author's last name and initials as Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. Use an ampersand (&) before the final author's name.
2. **(Year, Month Date).** Note: You do not need to abbreviate the month.
3. **Title of the article.** Note: For works that are part of a greater whole (e.g. articles, chapter), use sentence case. Only the first word of the title and subtitle and proper nouns are capitalized.
4. ***Title of the online newspaper or publication*.** Note: Capitalize each word in the publication and italicize. If the publication has an associated newly newspaper in print, use the newspaper article reference example .
5. **URL**

Phathong, K. (2021, December 30). Educational Inequality Between Urban and Rural Communities: A Case Study in Northeastern Thailand. https://so14.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/AJHSI

Book

1. **Author(s).** Note: List each author's last name and initials as Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. Use an ampersand (&) before the final author's name.
2. **(Year).**
3. ***Title of the book.*** Note: For works that stand alone (e.g. books, reports), italicize the title. Only capitalize the first word of the title and subtitle and any proper nouns.
4. **(Edition).** Note: If there is an edition or volume, include it in parentheses and use abbreviations of ed. or vol.
5. **Publisher.** Note: You do not need to include the publisher location or databases where you retrieved it.

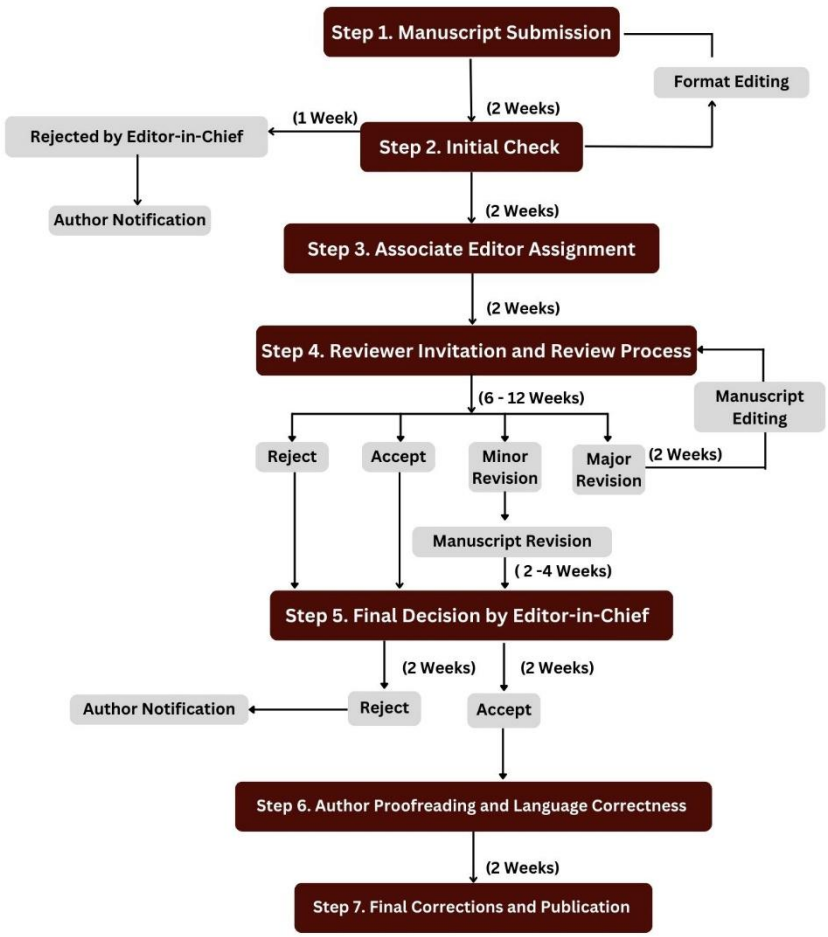
Phathong, K. (2021). *Analyzing Income Disparities and Social Mobility in Developing Economies.* Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation Publishing.

Book Chapter with Editor(s)

1. **Author(s).** Note: List each chapter author's last name and initials as Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. Use an ampersand (&) before the final author's name.
2. **(Year).**
3. **Title of the chapter.** Note: For works that are part of a greater whole (e.g. articles, chapter), use sentence case. Only the first word of the title and subtitle and proper nouns are capitalized.
4. **In Editor(s),** Note: List each editor's last name and initials as A. A. Editor, B. B. Editor, & C. C. Editors, include (Ed.) or (Eds.) in parentheses, and end with a comma.
5. ***Title of the book*** Note: For works that stand alone (e.g. books, reports), italicize the title. Only capitalize the first word of the title and subtitle and any proper nouns.
6. **(pp.xx-xx).**
7. **Publisher.** Note: You do not need to include the publisher location or databases where you retrieved it.

Hattha, K.(2012). Three southern border provinces, Thai history before the Sukhothai period to the present. In Thepthai,K. (Eds.), Dimensions of culture, history, and visions of the future: Restoring peace to the southern border provinces. (pp. 1-19). Ministry of Culture.

The process of reviewing articles in the Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation



Peer Review Process

Step 1. Manuscript Submission

Authors begin by preparing their manuscripts according to the ACAJ format and submitting them through the user-friendly ThaiJO online system. This system ensures the smooth receipt, processing, and review of manuscripts by the AJAC editorial team. The streamlined process maintains order and consistency, enabling efficient review and publication.

Step 2. Initial Check (2 Weeks)

Upon receipt of the manuscript, the editorial team conducts an initial assessment to ensure that the submission aligns with the journal's scope and complies with publication

requirements. Manuscripts that fail to meet these criteria are rejected without further review. Submissions with a similarity index exceeding 30% are also rejected at this stage. Additionally, the editorial team also checks the article's formatting and citation style according to the specified author guidelines. Manuscripts that do not meet these requirements are returned to authors for reformatting and resubmission. If approved, the manuscript proceeds to the review stage.

Step 3. Associate Editor Assignment (2 Weeks)
Following the initial review, the Editor-in-Chief assigns an Associate Editor with relevant expertise to oversee the review process. The Associate Editor identifies and invites three qualified reviewers with expertise in fields related to the manuscript's scope. If the initial invitations are not accepted, additional reviewers are invited. This process typically takes 2 weeks**.**

Step 4. Reviewer Invitation and Review Process (6-12 Weeks)
ACAJ employs a double-blinded review system with a minimum of 3 expert reviewers. Authors' names, affiliations, email addresses, and acknowledgments are anonymized by the editor before inviting reviewers. Invited reviewers should be affiliated with institutions distinct from the corresponding author. This step generally takes 6-12 weeks.

Step 5. Final Decision by Editor-in-Chief (2-4 Weeks)
The Editor-in-Chief, along with the Associate Editors, reviews the evaluation reports, comments, and recommendations provided by the reviewers. A final decision is made, which may be one of the following: Accept Submission, Revisions Required, Resubmit for Review, or Decline Submission. The final decision is communicated to the author via the ThaiJO system. If the decision is "Revisions Required" or "Resubmit for Review," the author has 2-4 weeks to submit the revised manuscript.

Step 6. Author Proofreading and English Editing (2 Weeks)
The author(s) engage in proofreading and ensure language accuracy through a professional editor. They must respond to queries from the language editor and improve any low-quality figures. The corresponding author signs the copyright transfer form on behalf of all co-authors to ensure completion within approximately 2 weeks.

Step 7. Final Corrections and Publication (2 Weeks)
After the final manuscript is submitted, it is sent to the Assistant Editor for formatting and article design in accordance with the journal's guidelines. A CrossRef DOI is assigned, and the article is published on the journal's website. This final stage typically takes 2 weeks.