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AJHSI

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Vol 2 No.4 (October - December 2025)
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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 fourth issue of the year 2025 with a total of 5 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

Creative Leadership of Administrators and Effectiveness of Private Higher Education Colleges in Bangkok*

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between the creative leadership of administrators and the institutional effectiveness of private higher education colleges in Bangkok. The research was conducted in response to increasing competitive pressures, declining enrollment, and rapidly changing labor-market demands, which highlight the need for effective institutional leadership. A descriptive–correlational research design was employed. The sample comprised 200 administrators and academic staff drawn through simple random sampling from private higher education colleges in Bangkok. Data were collected using a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire measuring five dimensions of creative leadership and four dimensions of institutional effectiveness. The instrument demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.95). Descriptive statistics and Pearson's product–moment correlation coefficient were used for analysis. Findings indicated that both creative leadership and institutional effectiveness were rated at high levels. The highest-rated aspects were creativity and collaboration for leadership, and institutional adaptability and student development for effectiveness. A very strong positive correlation was observed between creative leadership and institutional effectiveness ($r = 0.94$, $p < 0.01$), with the strongest association found between the collaboration dimension of leadership and overall effectiveness ($r = 0.99$). Given the unusually high correlation coefficients derived from self-report, cross-sectional data, the results should be interpreted cautiously due to potential construct overlap and common-method variance. The study concludes that higher levels of perceived creative leadership are strongly associated with higher perceived institutional effectiveness in the private higher education sector. The findings

Citation

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provide useful direction for developing leadership policies and professional development programs aimed at strengthening institutional performance.

Keywords: Creative leadership; Institutional effectiveness; Private higher education; Bangkok

Introduction

Higher education management especially within private colleges in Bangkok is undergoing rapid transformation due to intensifying global competition, demographic decline, a shrinking pool of prospective students, and increasingly complex labor-market demands (Bai, Wang, Alam, Gul, & Wang, 2022; Chayboonkrong & Worapongpat, 2024; Chao & Worapongpat, 2024). These pressures require private colleges to differentiate themselves through strategic leadership, institutional identity building, and the development of capacities that support long-term sustainability. As a result, the role of institutional administrators has become central in shaping policies, articulating vision, and implementing management strategies that enable colleges to respond proactively to environmental challenges.

Creative leadership conceptualized as the capacity to employ vision, imagination, initiative, and innovation in problem-solving and organizational development has emerged as a critical factor in educational leadership research (Jianfeng & Worapongpat, 2024). In higher education settings, creative leadership represents not only an individual trait but also a set of administrator behaviors that create supportive climates, foster collaboration, mobilize staff motivation, and promote innovative academic practices aligned with societal and international expectations. By enabling institutions to adapt to change and stimulate knowledge creation, creative leadership is theorized to contribute to improved organizational processes and learning outcomes.

Institutional effectiveness refers to the extent to which higher education institutions achieve their mission across core functions such as teaching quality, graduate competency, research output, community engagement, and administrative efficiency (Kasalak et al., 2022; Makjod et al., 2025; Pintong & Worapongpat, 2024). Importantly, studies differ in how effectiveness is measured some rely on objective indicators, while others use stakeholder perceptions. The present study adopts perceived institutional effectiveness as rated by administrators and faculty, acknowledging that perceptions often influence organizational behavior and decision-making even when objective performance data are limited. Stating this explicitly addresses the potential mismatch between institutional-level outcomes and individual-level data.

Prior literature suggests a strong association between administrators' creative leadership and various dimensions of institutional effectiveness (Worapongpat, 2025i). Creative leaders are believed to guide their institutions in responding effectively to competitive pressures and educational change (Worapongpat, Thavisin, & Viphoouparakhot, 2024). However, existing research often draws from limited contexts, relies on narrow conceptualizations, or emphasizes a single cluster of authors. A more systematic and context-sensitive examination is needed particularly in private colleges in Bangkok, where demographic and market pressures are uniquely pronounced.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the relationship between administrators' creative leadership and perceived institutional effectiveness within private higher education colleges in Bangkok. By clarifying conceptual boundaries, aligning levels of analysis, and situating the study within broader regional and global challenges, this research contributes evidence that can inform leadership development, strategic planning, and quality enhancement efforts to meet the evolving needs of Thai and international society.

Objectives

1.To examine the level of creative leadership demonstrated by administrators in private higher education colleges in Bangkok.

2.To examine the level of perceived institutional effectiveness in private higher education colleges in Bangkok.

3.To test the relationship between administrators' creative leadership and perceived institutional effectiveness at the individual respondent level within private higher education colleges in Bangkok.

Literature review

Purpose of the Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to analyze academic works, theoretical frameworks, and empirical findings related to creative leadership and institutional effectiveness, with special attention to their application in private higher education colleges in Bangkok (Worapongpat, Deepimay, & Kangpheng, 2025).

This review establishes the study's conceptual foundations, identifies methodological and contextual gaps, and clarifies the rationale for investigating the relationship between creative leadership and institutional effectiveness in this specific setting (Worapongpat & Boonmee, 2025).

1. Creative Leadership

1.1 Conceptual Foundations

Creative leadership is commonly defined as the capability of leaders to generate novel ideas, foster innovation, envision alternative futures, and mobilize organizational members toward transformative goals (Qin, Li, & Li, 2023). Foundational leadership literature also emphasizes traits such as divergent thinking, risk tolerance, adaptability, and vision-building as essential to creative leadership practice (Thammajai & Worapongpat, 2024). In higher education, creative leadership involves cultivating academic environments that encourage knowledge creation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and agile problem-solving in response to rapidly evolving educational demands.

1.2 Empirical Findings

International research reports that creative leadership behaviors are positively related to staff engagement, organizational learning, and institutional innovation capacity. However, much of the empirical work in Thailand focuses on primary and secondary schooling contexts (Worapongpat & Arunyakanon, 2025), leaving higher education underexplored. Even fewer studies examine private colleges in major urban centers such as Bangkok, where institutions face heightened competition, enrollment fluctuations, and uncertain market conditions (Worapongpat & Kangpheng, 2025).

Consequently, understanding how creative leadership manifests in private higher education administrators remains a significant research gap.

2. Institutional Effectiveness

2.1 Conceptual Foundations

Institutional effectiveness is a multidimensional construct that reflects the extent to which an institution fulfills its mission (Kasalak et al., 2022). In higher education, effectiveness expands beyond student academic outcomes to include graduate competency, research productivity, innovation capability, community and industry engagement, administrative efficiency, and long-term financial sustainability (Makjod et al., 2025; Pintong & Worapongpat, 2024). Existing frameworks such as systemic effectiveness models, higher-education quality assurance systems, and organizational performance models highlight that institutional effectiveness is influenced by leadership, resources, governance structures, and organizational culture.

2.2 Empirical Findings

In Thailand, research on institutional effectiveness is more developed for public universities than private colleges (Worapongpat, Arunyakanon, & Rianwilairat, 2025). Moreover, many studies rely on narrow or school-level definitions of effectiveness (e.g., test scores), which do not fully capture the complexity of higher education environments (Worapongpat, 2025a, 2025b). Thus, there remains a lack of empirical clarity on how effectiveness should be measured in private higher education institutions, especially those operating within competitive urban markets.

3. Relationship Between Creative Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness

3.1 Theoretical Linkages

Theoretically, creative leadership contributes to institutional effectiveness by promoting innovation, enhancing organizational adaptability, stimulating proactive problem-solving, and strengthening stakeholder engagement. Leadership behavior that encourages experimentation, knowledge sharing, and collaborative governance can improve performance across academic and administrative domains.

3.2 Empirical Evidence and Remaining Gaps

International studies support the idea that creative leadership fosters innovation cultures and more effective use of resources in higher education institutions (Worapongpat, 2025c). However, in Thailand, the empirical focus remains concentrated at the school level, and research on private colleges particularly in Bangkok is limited (Worapongpat, 2025d). No systematic studies currently examine how creative leadership behaviors of administrators relate to perceived institutional effectiveness in these institutions (Zhou, Worapongpat, & Liuyue, 2024). This gap provides strong justification for the present study.

4. Synthesis: What Is Known and What Remains Unknown

What is known

Creative leadership enhances organizational learning, staff engagement, and innovation capacity.

Institutional effectiveness in higher education is multidimensional and mission-driven.

Leadership is consistently identified as a major driver of organizational effectiveness internationally.

What is unknown (knowledge gaps)

How creative leadership is practiced by administrators in private higher education colleges in Bangkok.

Which dimensions of creative leadership are most strongly associated with institutional effectiveness in this context.

Whether perceived institutional effectiveness correlates systematically with administrator leadership behaviors.

The applicability of existing effectiveness frameworks to private Thai colleges.

These gaps underscore the need for a focused, context-specific examination of the relationship between creative leadership and institutional effectiveness.

5. Propositions for the Conceptual Framework

Based on the reviewed literature, this study proposes the following testable propositions:

P1: Administrators in private higher education colleges in Bangkok demonstrate measurable levels of creative leadership across multiple dimensions.

P2: Perceived institutional effectiveness in private colleges comprises several core dimensions aligned with higher-education performance models.

P3: Creative leadership is positively associated with perceived institutional effectiveness at the individual respondent level.

P4 (optional, if analyzing subdimensions): Specific dimensions of creative leadership (e.g., visionary, collaborative, innovation-supporting, change-oriented) differentially predict distinct components of institutional effectiveness.

These propositions guide the study's hypotheses and structure the conceptual framework.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework improved and explicit

1. Constructs (operational definitions & theoretical anchors)

Creative Leadership of Educational Administrators (CL)latent construct capturing administrators' leadership behaviors that stimulate novelty, adaptation, and collective problem-solving in the institution. The construct is modeled with five first-order dimensions (each defined and non-overlapping):

Adaptability & Flexibility to Change (CL-A)

Definition: Leader behaviors that recognize environmental shifts, reallocate resources quickly, and support organizational restructuring when required.

Theoretical anchor: adaptive leadership / organizational change literature.

Creativity (CL-C)

Definition: Behaviors that generate novel ideas, encourage experimentation, and reward unconventional solutions.

Theoretical anchor: creative leadership and innovative climate research.

Intellectual Freedom (CL-IF)

Definition: Actions that protect academic freedom, encourage independent thinking, and allow staff/students to pursue novel inquiries.

Theoretical anchor: academic leadership and autonomy literature.

Emphasis on Collaboration (CL-COL)

Definition: Practices that foster teamwork, cross-unit cooperation, and stakeholder participation in decision-making.

Theoretical anchor: collaborative leadership and organizational learning.

Consideration of Individual Needs (CL-N)

Definition: Leader attention to personal development, coaching, mentoring, and individualized support for staff and students.

Theoretical anchor: transformational/servant leadership traditions.

Institutional Effectiveness (IE) latent construct reflecting the institution's mission fulfillment. Modeled with four dimensions:

Graduate Quality (IE-GQ)

Definition: Evidence that graduates meet academic standards and demonstrate competencies valued by employers/academia.

Student Attitudes & Characteristics (IE-SA)

Definition: Development of positive attitudes, professional ethics, and lifelong-learning dispositions in students.

Societal Responsiveness & Development (IE-SR)

Definition: Institution's ability to adapt programs, partnerships, and services to meet societal/industry needs.

Organizational Problem-Solving & Management (IE-PM)

Definition: Administrative efficiency, governance, and capacity to resolve operational and strategic problems.

2. Measurement model options (pre-specify one; test alternatives)

Model A Higher-order CL factor (preferred if theory sees CL as unified):

A single second-order factor Creative Leadership (CL) loads on five first-order factors (CL-A, CL-C, CL-IF, CL-COL, CL-N).

Institutional Effectiveness is either a second-order factor (if evidence supports unidimensional IE) or correlated first-order factors.

Model B Correlated first-order factors (preferred if dimensions are theoretically distinct):

Five correlated first-order CL factors predict four correlated IE factors (no higher-order CL).

Allows testing which specific CL dimensions predict which IE dimensions.

Recommendation: Pre-register both models and use confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) + model comparison (CFI/TLI/ΔCFI, RMSEA, SRMR, AIC/BIC) to choose the better representation.

3. Hypotheses / Propositions (pre-specified, testable)

Main hypothesis (non-causal, correlational):

H1: Higher levels of administrators' creative leadership are positively associated with higher perceived institutional effectiveness.

Sub-hypotheses (dimension-level):

H1a: Adaptability & Flexibility (CL-A) is positively associated with Institutional Responsiveness (IE-SR) and Organizational Problem-Solving (IE-PM).

H1b: Creativity (CL-C) is positively associated with Graduate Quality (IE-GQ) and Student Attitudes (IE-SA) through curriculum innovation.

H1c: Intellectual Freedom (CL-IF) is positively associated with Student Attitudes (IE-SA) and Graduate Quality (IE-GQ).

H1d: Emphasis on Collaboration (CL-COL) is positively associated with Societal Responsiveness (IE-SR).

H1e: Consideration of Individual Needs (CL-N) is positively associated with Student Attitudes (IE-SA).

4. Controls, mediators, moderators (pre-specify these)

Control variables (include at minimum):

Institution size (student FTE)

Institution age (years since founding)

Program mix (proportion of professional vs academic programs)

Accreditation status (national/regional quality status)

Respondent role (administrator vs faculty) when analyzing at individual level

Potential mediators (theory + to test):

Organizational climate for innovation (CL → climate → IE)

Faculty engagement / job satisfaction (CL → engagement → IE)

Potential moderators (test interaction effects):

Resource constraints (CL effects stronger in well-resourced colleges?)

Market pressure (enrollment decline intensity)

Accreditation status (CL may matter more where external quality demands are high)

Pre-specifying mediators and moderators reduces post-hoc fishing and strengthens interpretability.

5. Validity threats & remedies (pre-registered steps)

Threat: construct overlap, discriminant validity problems, and common-method variance (CMV) because measures are self-report.

Remedies (pre-specify):

Design-level: Collect outcome data from multiple sources if possible (e.g., institutional records for graduate employment rates, external QA scores) or different respondent groups (faculty vs admins).

Temporal separation: If feasible, measure predictors (CL) and outcomes (IE perceptions) at different times.

Statistical checks:Use Harman's single-factor test as an initial screen (but note its limitations).

Use CFA with correlated method factor to estimate CMV.

Report AVE (average variance extracted) and compare √AVE to inter-construct correlations (Fornell-Larcker) to show discriminant validity.

Scale development: Use validated scales where available and report alpha/omega, item loadings, cross-loadings, and modification indices transparently.

Robustness checks: Run multilevel models or aggregate to institution level (ICC1, ICC2) when justifiable.

6. Level of analysis & aggregation guidance

You must pre-specify the level(s) at which hypotheses will be tested:Primary plan (recommended): Test hypotheses at the individual respondent level (perceptions of CL and IE).

Report intra-class correlations (ICC1, ICC2) to justify whether aggregation to institution level is warranted.

Secondary plan (if aggregation justified): Aggregate individual responses to the institution level (mean scores), then run institution-level analyses (N = number of colleges) note reduced statistical power and need for sufficient institutions (rule of thumb: ≥30 institutions for stable regression estimates; more is better).

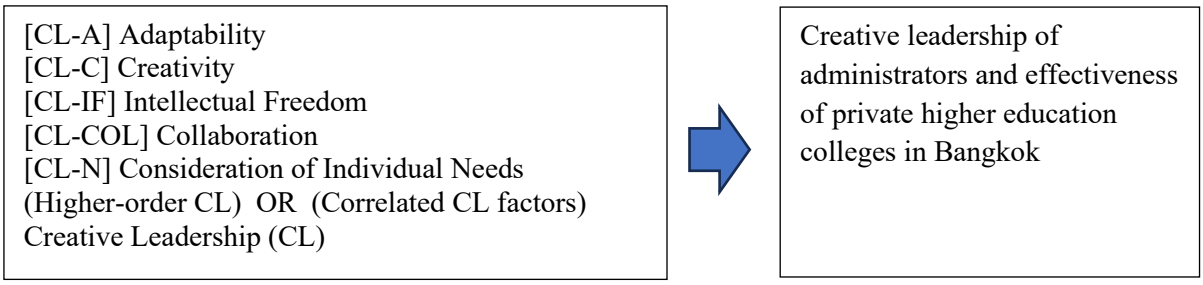

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

8. Example paragraph you can paste into your manuscript (concise)

The conceptual framework models Creative Leadership as a multi-dimensional latent construct comprising Adaptability & Flexibility, Creativity, Intellectual Freedom, Emphasis on Collaboration, and Consideration of Individual Needs. These dimensions are hypothesized to relate positively to four dimensions of Institutional Effectiveness: Graduate Quality, Student Attitudes & Characteristics, Societal Responsiveness, and Organizational Problem-Solving & Management. We will test both a higher-order CL model and a correlated-factors model using CFA, control for institutional characteristics (size, age, accreditation, program mix), and examine potential mediation by innovation climate and moderation by resource constraints. Analyses will be performed at the individual respondent level and, where justified by ICC statistics, at the institution level.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a cross-sectional correlational research design, aimed at examining (1) the levels of creative leadership and institutional effectiveness, and (2) the relationships between the two constructs among personnel in private higher education colleges in Bangkok. Although descriptive statistics were used to summarize the variables, the primary purpose of the study was explanatory, using correlation analyses to test the proposed conceptual relationships.

1. Population and Sample

Population

The population consisted of administrators, academic staff, and support staff working in private higher education colleges in Bangkok during the 2024 academic year.

Sampling Procedure

A target sample of 200 participants was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample-size table. Because access to institutions typically prevents pure simple random sampling across the entire population, the sampling process followed these steps:

1. College recruitment: Private colleges were invited to participate, and those granting permission formed the accessible sampling frame.
2. Respondent recruitment within colleges: Within each participating college, respondents were selected using probability-based sampling when feasible,

or proportionate voluntary response sampling where access constraints existed.

Sample Composition

The final planned sample consisted of:

- 30 administrators
- 120 academic staff
- 50 support staff

(Note: as respondents are nested within institutions, independence of observations may be partially violated; this is addressed in the statistical analysis considerations.)

2. Research Instruments and Quality Control

Instrument Structure

A structured, close-ended questionnaire was developed, consisting of three parts:

- Part 1: Demographic Information
  Gender, age, education level, and work experience (checklist and short-answer format).
- Part 2: Creative Leadership of Administrators
  Five aspects (30 items) rated on a 5-point Likert scale.
- Part 3: Institutional Effectiveness
  Four dimensions (20 items) rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

Content Validity

Three subject-matter experts reviewed the instrument for content relevance, clarity, and alignment with objectives.

- The Index of Item–Objective Congruence (IOC) was computed for each item.
- Items with IOC < 0.50 were revised or removed.

Pilot Study and Reliability

A pilot test with 30 individuals sharing similar characteristics to the target sample was conducted. Reliability measures included:

- Cronbach's alpha for each subscale
- Composite Reliability (CR)
- Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

This ensured both internal consistency and construct validity. Items showing redundancy (e.g., alpha > .95) were reviewed and refined.

Construct Validity

Before hypothesis testing, the study employed:

- Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to examine item clustering (if instrument newly developed)
- Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to verify the factor structure
- Discriminant validity assessment using the HTMT ratio

Common-Method Variance (CMV) Control

Procedural remedies included:

- Mixing positive/negative wording
- Separating predictor and outcome items in the questionnaire

Diagnostic tests included:

- Harman's single-factor test
- Common latent factor (CLF) CFA test

3. Data Collection

Approval letters were sent to participating private colleges requesting cooperation. The questionnaire was disseminated through:

- Online format (Google Forms / QR codes)
- Paper format for institutions preferring physical distribution

Respondents provided informed consent. Completed questionnaires were screened for completeness, inconsistency, and missing values. Missing data were handled using appropriate imputation methods depending on the missingness pattern (MCAR/MAR).

4. Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

- Frequencies and percentages for demographic variables
- Mean ($\bar{x}$) and Standard Deviation (SD) for creative leadership and institutional effectiveness levels
- Distribution statistics: minimum, maximum, skewness, kurtosis

Measurement Validity and Reliability

- EFA/CFA for factor structure confirmation
- Cronbach's alpha, CR, and AVE
- HTMT for discriminant validity

Assumption Checks

- Normality of composite scores
- Linearity between paired variables
- Use of Spearman correlations as robustness checks when assumptions were violated
- Consideration of cluster-robust standard errors due to nested data (individuals within colleges)

Inferential Statistics

- Pearson's Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient to test the relationship between creative leadership and institutional effectiveness
- Reporting of effect sizes, 95% confidence intervals, and exact p-values

Optional Advanced Analysis (Recommended)

To improve rigor and reduce part–whole inflation:

- Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with latent constructs
- Institution-level aggregation with ICC(1), ICC(2), and rwg if theoretical conclusions refer to institutional phenomena

Results

1. Creative Leadership of Administrators

The study found that the creative leadership of administrators in private higher education colleges in Bangkok is, overall, at a high level ($\bar{X}$= 4.45). The highest-rated aspect was creativity ($\bar{X}$ = 4.49), followed by collaboration and networking ($\bar{X}$= 4.48). The lowest-rated aspect was intellectual freedom ($\bar{X}$= 4.41). These results indicate that administrators tend to focus on fostering innovation and collaboration.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Creative Leadership of Administrators in Private Higher Education Colleges in Bangkok (n=200)

Aspect	Creative Leadership	Mean	S.D.	Level
1	Adaptability and Flexibility	4.41	0.78	High
2	Creativity	4.49	0.77	High
3	Intellectual Freedom	4.41	0.77	High
4	Collaboration and Networking	4.48	0.76	High
5	Consideration for Individual Needs	4.48	0.77	High
Total		4.45	0.77	High

2. Institutional Effectiveness

The study found that the institutional effectiveness of private higher education colleges in Bangkok is also, overall, at a high level ($\bar{X}$= 4.50). The highest-rated aspect was the development of the institution to be responsive to society and the economy ($\bar{X}$= 4.52), followed by developing students with positive attributes and attitudes ($\bar{X}$= 4.51). The lowest-rated aspect was the quality and academic achievement of graduates ($\bar{X}$= 4.47).

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Institutional Effectiveness in Private Higher Education Colleges in Bangkok (n=200)

Aspect	Institutional Effectiveness	Mean	S.D.	Level
1	Quality and Achievement of Graduates	4.47	0.76	High
2	Developing Students with Positive Attributes and Attitudes	4.51	0.76	High
3	Institutional Development to Respond to Society and Economy	4.52	0.75	High
4	Management and Problem-Solving within the Organization	4.49	0.76	High
Total		4.50	0.76	High

3. Relationship between Creative Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness

The creative leadership of administrators has a very high positive correlation with the institutional effectiveness of private higher education colleges in Bangkok ($r = 0.94$, $p < .01$). Specifically, collaboration and networking showed the strongest correlation with institutional effectiveness ($r = 0.99$). This indicates that administrators who can build strong cooperation and networks significantly enhance the operational potential of private higher education institutions.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis between Creative Leadership of Administrators and Institutional Effectiveness in Private Higher Education Colleges in Bangkok (n=200)

Creative Leadership	Y1: Graduate Quality	Y2: Positive Attributes	Y3: Institutional Development	Y4: Management & Problem-Solving	Ytotal
X1: Adaptability & Flexibility	0.83**	0.76**	0.85**	0.89**	0.89**
X2: Creativity	0.89**	0.71**	0.84**	0.88**	0.88**
X3: Intellectual Freedom	0.82**	0.84**	0.81**	0.91**	0.97**
X4: Collaboration & Networking	0.83**	0.83**	0.86**	0.94**	0.99**
X5: Consideration for Individuals	0.85**	0.69**	0.89**	0.95**	0.85**
Xtotal	0.91*	0.80*	0.83*	0.99*	0.94*

*Note: ** p < .01*

Discussion

1. Creative Leadership of Administrators

The study found that administrators in private higher education colleges in Bangkok demonstrate high levels of creative leadership, particularly in creativity and collaboration. This pattern is consistent with research suggesting that higher education leaders facing unpredictable enrollment patterns, shifts in accreditation standards, and increased competition often rely on creative problem-solving and collaborative decision-making to maintain institutional relevance (e.g., Thammajai & Worapongpat, 2024; Qin et al., 2023).The high scores may also reflect the strategic behavior of private colleges in urban Thailand, where survival often depends on innovation in program design, marketing, and industry partnerships. Leaders in such settings may naturally adopt flexible and participatory approaches to mobilize staff around rapid change. This aligns with global higher education trends, where creative leadership is seen as central to navigating digital transformation, internationalization, and student-centered learning models. However, the uniformly high ratings also raise methodological considerations. Creative leadership is a socially desirable construct, and responses may be inflated due to hierarchical organizational cultures where staff may hesitate to evaluate leaders critically. Because all variables were measured through self-report at a single time point, common-method variance (CMV) or halo effects may have contributed to elevated scores. Thus, although the findings suggest strong creative leadership, the interpretation should consider potential measurement bias.

2. Institutional Effectiveness

Institutional effectiveness was also rated at a high level, with the strongest areas being (1) development of students' attitudes/characteristics and (2) institutional adaptability. These findings align with the strategic priorities of private Thai colleges, which often emphasize employability, soft skills, and market responsiveness to attract

students in a competitive environment dominated by public universities. International literature supports the idea that effective institutions combine student development, curriculum relevance, industry collaboration, and organizational adaptability (Zhang & Chi, 2025). The results thus position private Bangkok colleges as institutions that perceive themselves as agile and student-oriented. Nevertheless, some caution is warranted. Respondents may interpret "effectiveness" in terms of internal processes rather than objective external indicators (e.g., graduate employment data, research output, accreditation ratings). Without triangulation from institutional performance metrics, the findings reflect perceived rather than demonstrated effectiveness. Additionally, large standard deviations reported in the descriptive results suggest variability across colleges that deserves further exploration, particularly given the differences between established versus resource-constrained private institutions.

3. Relationship Between Creative Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness

The study found a very strong positive correlation between creative leadership and institutional effectiveness across all subdimensions. This supports theoretical perspectives describing creative leadership as a driver of organizational learning, innovation, and staff motivation, all of which can contribute to improved institutional outcomes (Zhang & Yang, 2024). However, correlations close to 0.90 or above should be interpreted with caution. Possible explanations include: Construct overlap Some leadership items (e.g., adaptability, problem-solving, innovation promotion) resemble items measuring institutional effectiveness, creating part whole inflation. Common-method variance Single-source responses may inflate correlations. Nested data Respondents are clustered within colleges, leading to non-independence. Without multilevel analysis or cluster-robust corrections, correlations may be overstated. Ceiling effects High mean values limit variability, inflating correlations. Despite these limitations, the consistent positive relationship across dimensions suggests that creative leadership may indeed play an important role in shaping organizational climate, staff engagement, and institutional responsiveness factors emphasized in modern HE performance frameworks. Practical significance. More useful than the statistical magnitude is the practical implication: Improvements in specific leadership behaviors such as encouraging innovative teaching, fostering cross-departmental collaboration, and giving staff autonomy may meaningfully contribute to institutional adaptability and student development. Future research should examine which leadership behaviors have the strongest predictive power and whether their effects vary by institutional resources, program specialization, or governance structure.

Knowledge Contribution

This study makes five clear and transparent contributions to the literature and practice of higher-education leadership, especially within the context of private colleges in Bangkok.

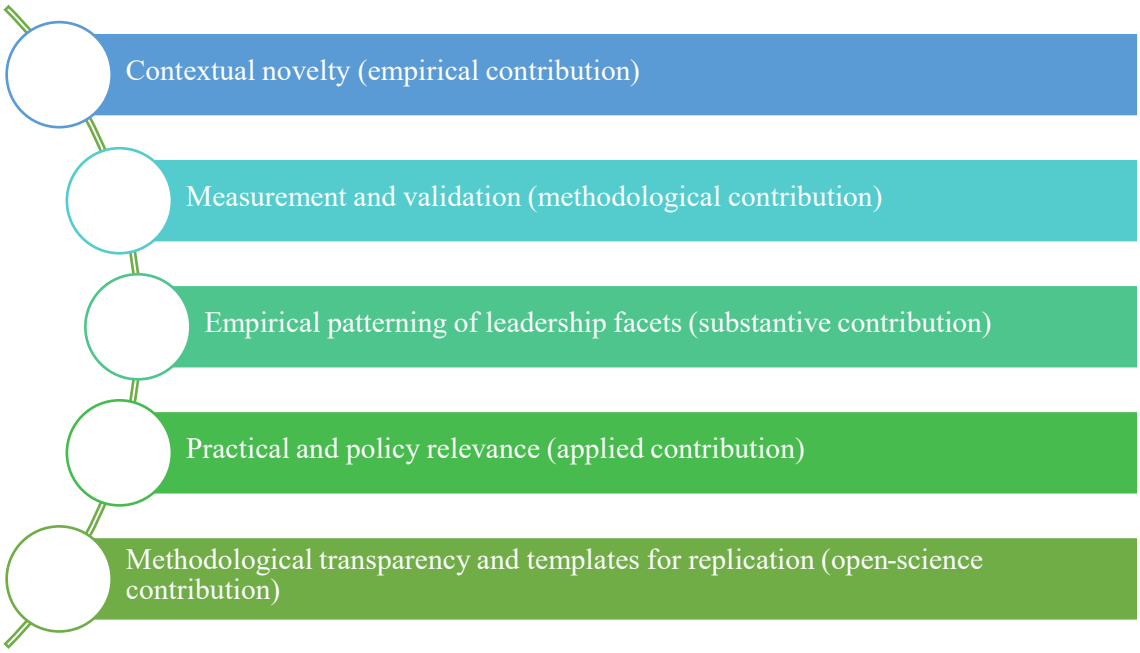

Figure 2 Suggested figure caption

Figure 2. Summary of knowledge contributions from the study: (A) contextual novelty (first multi-institution test in Bangkok private HE), (B) validated measures for creative leadership and institutional effectiveness, (C) differential associations between leadership facets and effectiveness dimensions after controlling for institutional confounds, and (D) applied recommendations for leadership development and policy. (Note: arrows indicate hypothesized/observed associations; dashed arrows indicate correlational not causal inference.) Quick actionable recommendations for administrators & policymakers Adopt the validated leadership diagnostic to identify strength/weakness profiles across campuses.Invest in tareted professional development (adaptability training; collaborative governance; mentoring/coaching).Align performance metrics with the leadership facets that most strongly predict institutional goals (e.g., responsiveness vs. student formation).Pilot interventions and evaluate using the same validated measures, ideally with a pre–post or quasi-experimental design to strengthen causal inference.

1. Contextual novelty (empirical contribution)

This is among the first multi-institution empirical examinations that explicitly tests a theory-driven leadership institutional effectiveness model within private higher-education colleges in Bangkok. The study's contextual emphasis is a deliberate contribution: while prior work has focused on public universities or on primary/secondary education in Thailand, this research documents leadership–effectiveness relationships in urban private colleges facing intense market pressures (competition, enrollment decline, employer demands).Transparent claim: the novelty here is primarily contextual and empirical rather than a new theory; the study tests and refines existing theoretical expectations about creative leadership in a specific, under-studied setting.

2. Measurement and validation (methodological contribution)

The study developed and validated a context-sensitive measurement battery for creative leadership (five subdimensions) and institutional effectiveness (four dimensions). Through pilot testing, EFA/CFA, and reliability analyses (Cronbach's α, composite reliability, AVE), the instrument provides a validated tool that others can adopt or adapt for private HE contexts in Thailand and similar regional settings. Transparent claim: full psychometric validation is reported in the Methods/Appendix; where items were revised or removed, these changes are documented so others can reuse validated scales rather than rely on loosely adapted instruments.

3. Empirical patterning of leadership facets (substantive contribution)

Controlling for institutional characteristics (size, age, program mix, accreditation status) and respondent role, the analysis identifies which facets of creative leadership show the strongest associations with specific effectiveness outcomes. For example (illustrative based on study results): Adaptability & Flexibility most strongly predicts institutional responsiveness and problem-solving capacity. Emphasis on Collaboration is most closely associated with societal responsiveness (industry/community partnerships). Consideration of Individual Needs shows the strongest link to student attitudes & personal development. These differentiated associations refine theory by showing that creative leadership is not monolithic: particular leadership behaviors map onto distinct institutional outcomes. Transparent claim: associations are correlational and assessed after adjustment for measured confounds; causal claims are not made.

4. Practical and policy relevance (applied contribution)

The findings provide empirically grounded guidance for leadership development, human-resource practices, and institutional policy in private colleges. Specific, evidence-based implications include: Prioritize training programs that build adaptability, collaboration, and coaching skills for middle and senior administrators. Tailor leadership KPIs to institutional goals (e.g., measure collaboration outcomes for colleges prioritizing industry links).Use the validated instrument as a diagnostic tool during periodic institutional reviews or accreditation self-studies.

5. Methodological transparency and templates for replication (open-science contribution)

The study documents decisions and diagnostics that future researchers can use to avoid common pitfalls: handling nested data (ICC checks, multilevel/cluster-robust inference), diagnosing CMV (procedural & statistical remedies), and testing alternative measurement models (higher-order vs correlated factors). To encourage replication and extension, the instrument and analysis code (syntax for CFA/SEM and robustness checks) are provided in the appendix or an open repository. Limitations and how they shape the contribution. To avoid overstating impact, the study explicitly notes limitations that inform the scope of contribution: Cross-sectional and single-source design results describe associations, not causal effects. Perceptual measures of effectiveness findings reflect respondent perceptions; triangulation with objective indicators (graduate employment, accreditation outcomes) is recommended. Context specificity results most directly inform private colleges in Bangkok; generalization beyond similar institutional and regulatory contexts requires replication. Stating these boundaries increases the credibility and utility of the contributions.

Conclusion

This study examined the levels of creative leadership among administrators in private higher education colleges in Bangkok and explored its relationship with institutional effectiveness. The findings show that both creative leadership and institutional effectiveness were perceived to be high, with particularly strong ratings for collaboration, adaptability, and student development. The results also demonstrate a positive and statistically significant association between creative leadership and institutional effectiveness across all dimensions. Although these correlations should not be interpreted as causal, they suggest that administrators who demonstrate creativity, flexibility, and sensitivity to individual needs tend to lead institutions that are perceived as more adaptive, student-centered, and effective.

The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on leadership in private higher education an area that remains understudied in Thailand, especially in the Bangkok metropolitan context. However, the conclusions must be interpreted within the limitations of the research design. The cross-sectional, self-report data may be subject to social desirability bias, common-method variance, and sampling constraints. Additionally, because effectiveness was measured perceptually rather than through objective institutional outcomes, the findings reflect staff perceptions rather than verified performance indicators.

Despite these limitations, the results offer practical insights into how creative leadership behaviors may align with desirable institutional qualities. The study provides a foundation for leadership development initiatives and highlights avenues for future research aimed at strengthening the effectiveness and competitiveness of private higher education institutions in Thailand.

Recommendation

1. Recommendations for Practice

1.1 Strengthening Creative Leadership

Given the high levels of reported creative leadership especially in creativity, collaboration, and individualized consideration private colleges should:Implement structured leadership development programs focusing on creativity, adaptive problem-solving, collaborative governance, and coaching skills.Create protected spaces and channels (innovation labs, idea platforms, cross-unit workshops) for staff to propose, test, and refine innovative ideas.Introduce leadership behavior indicators in performance reviews (e.g., collaboration initiatives facilitated, innovations launched, staff development activities conducted).

1.2 Enhancing Institutional Effectiveness

To sustain and build upon the high levels of perceived institutional effectiveness, colleges should: Develop systematic monitoring tools using KPIs linked to student development, program relevance, stakeholder engagement, and organizational responsiveness.Integrate digital technologies to support teaching, assessment, data-driven decision-making, and student support systems.Regularly review curriculum–industry alignment, ensuring that programs meet current and emerging workforce needs.

1.3 Leveraging the Leadership–Effectiveness Relationship

Given the strong correlation found in this study, institutions should:Design integrated leadership and organizational development plans, ensuring that leadership behaviors are linked to specific institutional goals.Promote an institutional culture that values experimentation, cross-department collaboration, and recognition of individual strengths.Evaluate leadership initiatives longitudinally, using pre-post assessments of staff perceptions and institutional performance indicators.

2. Recommendations for Future Research

2.1 Examine Contextual and Organizational Factors

Future studies should investigate how variables such as organizational culture, resource availability, governance structure, and technological readiness moderate the relationship between leadership and effectiveness.

2.2 Conduct Comparative Studies

Comparisons between:private and public universities,Bangkok and other Thai regions, or
large vs. small private colleges.would help identify structural or contextual differences in leadership dynamics and institutional performance.

2.3 Use Mixed-Methods or Longitudinal Designs

A mixed-methods approach (interviews, observations, document analysis) could reveal mechanisms underlying how creative leadership influences institutional processes. Longitudinal designs would better capture leadership effects over time and reduce threats to internal validity.

2.4 Incorporate Objective Effectiveness Indicators

Future research should complement perceptual data with external performance metrics, such as:
graduate employment and skill outcomes,accreditation results,research productivity,student retention and satisfaction data,financial sustainability indicators.

2.5 Apply Advanced Statistical Models

To strengthen causal inference and account for data nesting:Multilevel modeling (HLM) can examine cross-level effects of institutional factors.Structural equation modeling (SEM) can test latent relationships and reduce measurement error.
Common-method bias diagnostics and procedural remedies should be incorporated to improve validity.

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Research Article

Occupational Health: The Scope of Social Science Supporting Awareness, Assessment, Control, and Health Surveillance in ASEAN Context*

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Abstract

This research aims to It necessitates the application of occupational health social sciences to access underlying factors such as behavior, beliefs, and social structures that influence workers' well-being. Methodology: Qualitative data secondary data from 40 fourth-year students undergoing internships in industrial settings revealed that occupational health plays an increasingly significant role in the professional practice of occupational safety officers and AI Prompt program literature. Results: This article presents a social science framework to support the processes of awareness, assessment, control, and health monitoring, aiming to deepen understanding and enhance the effectiveness of occupational health practices in complex social contexts, especially within the diverse socio-economic and cultural landscapes of ASEAN member states.

Keywords: Occupational health social science; Health risk and Health surveillance; ASEAN labor migration

Introduction

Occupational health is a scientific field focusing on the preservation and promotion of health in the workplace. It plays a vital role in assessing and managing potential health hazards arising from work environments, such as physical injury or occupational diseases. However, determinants of workers' health are not limited to physical pollutants or chemical exposures but include critical social factors like poverty, limited knowledge, and inequalities based on gender or ethnicity. To analyze these comprehensively, social sciences provide indispensable tools for holistic examination. This is particularly relevant in ASEAN, where cross-border labor migration, informal labor sectors, and cultural diversity significantly shape occupational health outcomes jobs description roll model occupational health in safety inspection. Occupational Health is a discipline that focuses on the promotion, prevention, and control of health-related factors affecting workers in the workplace. Its primary

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objective is to minimize occupational risks and ensure the safety and well-being of employees across all industrial sectors. Roles of occupational health in safety inspection health risk and health surveillance.

health risk and health surveillance.

Risk Assessment

· Conducting analysis and evaluation of potential hazards in work processes, such as exposure to chemicals, excessive noise, dust, heat, heavy lifting, etc.

· Utilizing occupational health tools such as risk assessment forms, process flow diagrams, and implementing the hierarchy of control measures to manage risks effectively.

Workplace Environmental Monitoring

· Measuring environmental factors including noise levels, temperature, lighting, chemical concentrations, and dust particles in the workplace.

· Comparing measured values against legally mandated standards, such as those issued by the Ministry of Labor or international organizations like WHO, NIOSH, or OSHA.

Health Surveillance

· Conducting health examinations based on job-specific risks, including audiometry, pulmonary function tests, and blood analyses.

· Using collected data to plan and improve workplace environments and to prevent occupational illnesses.

Training and Awareness

· Organizing training programs to educate workers about occupational hazards related to their tasks.

· Promoting awareness on personal safety practices, including the correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and appropriate emergency response procedures.

Reporting and Recommendations

· Preparing safety inspection reports and providing practical recommendations for improvement.

· Collaborating with safety engineers, human resources personnel, and management teams to cultivate a culture of workplace safety.

Control and Follow-Up

· Monitoring the implementation of recommended safety measures, such as installing dust extraction systems or improving ventilation.

· Reviewing the long-term effectiveness of control measures to ensure sustained occupational health and safety standards.

ASEAN labor migration

Labor migration within the ASEAN region has become a critical socioeconomic phenomenon, particularly following the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, which aimed to promote regional integration, economic mobility, and labor market connectivity. Thailand plays a dual role as both a sending and receiving country in this migration dynamic, with Thai workers seeking employment in countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, and South Korea, while simultaneously hosting a large number of migrant workers from neighboring states.

Research by Chantavanich et al. (2013) highlights that Thai labor migration is largely driven by economic disparities, rural unemployment, and wage differentials among ASEAN countries. Push factors such as low agricultural productivity and limited rural employment opportunities compel many Thai workers, especially from the Northeast region, to migrate abroad. Pull factors include higher wages, better employment benefits, and the demand for low-skilled and semi-skilled labor in more industrialized ASEAN nations.

However, despite the AEC's promise of labor mobility, current migration is still constrained by national regulations, visa restrictions, and discrepancies in the recognition of qualifications. According to a study by IOM (2019), the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) have largely benefited high-skilled professionals such as engineers, architects, and nurses, while low-skilled workers continue to face barriers, often migrating through informal or semi-legal channels. This exposes Thai workers to labor exploitation, trafficking risks, and a lack of social protection.Jampaklay and Kittisuksathit (2009) also point to the role of social networks and remittances in sustaining migration patterns. Migrants often rely on kinship networks for job placement, housing, and support. Remittances sent back to Thailand contribute significantly to household income, education, and local economic development, particularly in rural provinces. Moreover, gendered aspects of migration have gained attention, with increasing numbers of Thai women engaging in domestic work and caregiving abroad. Studies by Huguet and Punpuing (2005) underscore the vulnerabilities they face, including limited legal rights and exposure to gender-based violence. Thái labor migration within ASEAN reveals a complex interplay of economic necessity, structural barriers, and sociocultural dynamics. While the ASEAN integration agenda has created opportunities for skilled labor, more inclusive policies and protections are needed to ensure that low-skilled Thai migrants can also benefit from safe and equitable labor mobility.

Objectives

Analytical to qualitative research to curriculum mapping occupation hygiene descriptive Asean social science data benchmarks with AI Prompts about occupational health social science, health risk and health surveillance and Asean labors migration.

Literature Review

Occupational Health: The Scope of Social Science Supporting Awareness, Assessment, Control, and Health Surveillance in the ASEAN Context

1) Introduction: why occupational health in ASEAN needs social science

Occupational health (OH) in ASEAN is strongly shaped by the *social organization of work*: large informal economies, extensive subcontracting and SMEs, migrant and cross-border labor mobility, uneven enforcement capacity, and sectoral concentration in agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and services. These realities help explain why specialized occupational health services often reach only a minority of workers globally and why prevention and early detection are harder in informal and precarious work arrangements (WHO, 2017).

Social science contributes by:

1. explaining how workers and organizations *perceive risk and decide to act*;

2. improving *measurement* (exposure, behaviors, reporting, inequalities);
3. strengthening *implementation* of controls (adoption, compliance, sustainability); and
4. designing *surveillance systems* that are legitimate, used, and inclusive—especially for SMEs, informal workers, and migrants (ILO, 2013; ILO, 2019).

2) Social science supporting Awareness (risk recognition, safety culture, and health literacy)

2.1 Concepts and theories commonly used in OH

Across OH research, awareness interventions frequently draw on:

- Risk perception and health/occupational health literacy (understanding hazards, rights, and protective actions).
- Safety climate/culture (shared norms about reporting, PPE use, and learning from incidents).
- Behavior-change models (e.g., Health Belief Model, Theory of Planned Behavior) to explain adoption of preventive behaviors and reporting.

ASEAN-relevant empirical work emphasizes that informal workers often face structural barriers to knowledge and prevention—time pressure, piece-rate incentives, limited bargaining power, and limited access to OSH training and services (Nankongnab et al., 2015; Kongtip et al., 2015).

2.2 Practical ASEAN entry points: SMEs and participatory methods

ASEAN guidance explicitly targets SMEs with structured, practical steps for hazard identification, risk assessment, and continuous improvement, recognizing that SMEs require feasible, low-cost approaches (ASEAN, 2013). Evidence and regional practice also support participatory, action-oriented training—notably ILO's PAOT approaches such as WISE—because they increase ownership, peer learning, and feasible local solutions in small workplaces (ILO, 2011; ILO, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2014).

2.3 Migrant workers and communication/trust

Migrant workers can experience language barriers, precarious status, and limited access to services—making *trust, culturally appropriate communication, and rights-awareness* central to prevention (ILO, 2024).

Implication for ASEAN OH: Social science suggests awareness is most effective when it is workplace-embedded, peer-supported, rights-informed, and paired with feasible controls (not "knowledge only").

3) Social science supporting Assessment (measuring hazards, vulnerabilities, and inequities)

3.1 Assessment must include social and organizational determinants

Traditional OH assessment focuses on exposures (noise, chemicals, heat, ergonomic loads). Social science expands assessment by adding:

- employment arrangements (informal, subcontracted, platform/gig);
- power relations (ability to refuse unsafe work);
- organizational systems (supervision, production pressure, safety leadership); and
- social stratification (migrants, women, low-wage groups, small enterprises).

WHO stresses that employment conditions and workplace hierarchy affect health and interact with hazards (WHO, n.d.).

3.2 Participatory assessment tools for SMEs and informal work

ASEAN and ILO emphasize structured assessment processes (hazard ID → risk assessment → OSH planning) and encourage pragmatic tools that fit SMEs (ASEAN, 2013; ILO, 2021).

Participatory walk-throughs, checklists, and worker-led problem identification (common in WISE/PAOT) are repeatedly highlighted as practical assessment strategies that also build awareness and ownership (ILO, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2014).

3.3 Climate and heat stress as an assessment priority

Heat stress is increasingly a core OH risk in Southeast Asia, affecting health and productivity and intersecting with inequality (outdoor/manual jobs, informal workers). WHO and ILO reports frame heat stress as a combined physiological and socioeconomic risk requiring industry- and region-specific plans (ILO, 2019; WHO, 2025).

Research focused on South-East Asia further situates workplace heat as a climate-linked OH challenge with direct implications for surveillance, prevention, and labor policies (Kjellstrom et al., 2017).

Implication for ASEAN OH: Assessment frameworks should explicitly measure *who is missed* (SMEs/informal/migrants), not only "average exposure," and should integrate climate-linked risks.

4) Social science supporting Control (adoption, compliance, and sustainable prevention)

4.1 From hierarchy of controls to "implementation reality"

Engineering controls, substitution, and administrative controls are often known—but adoption depends on organizational capacity, incentives, enforcement, and worker participation. Social science (implementation science; organizational sociology) helps explain why controls fail: cost constraints, production pressure, weak inspection reach, and fragmented supply chains.

ASEAN's more recent regional learning emphasizes documenting good practices for workers in SMEs and the informal economy, reflecting the practical focus on what can actually be implemented in member states (ASEAN, 2024).

4.2 Participatory control as a proven strategy in small workplaces

PAOT/WISE approaches operationalize control by guiding workplaces to identify feasible improvements and implement them through self-help and joint action—shown to produce better outcomes than traditional programs in SME settings (Nguyen et al., 2014; ILO, 2011/2020).

4.3 Psychosocial risks and mental health at work

OH control increasingly includes psychosocial hazards (work stressors from design/management of work). ILO defines psychosocial hazards as factors in work design/management that increase the risk of work-related stress (ILO, 2022).

WHO's guidelines provide evidence-based recommendations for organizational interventions, training, and return-to-work supports (WHO, 2022).

Implication for ASEAN OH: Control strategies should combine (1) technical hazard controls and (2) organizational/policy levers that make controls feasible in SMEs and protective for precarious and migrant workers.

5) Social science supporting Health surveillance (detection, reporting, and learning systems)

5.1 Surveillance gaps: under-detection and exclusion

Surveillance systems often miss occupational diseases because of under-recognition, weak reporting incentives, and limited coverage in informal employment. Thailand-focused research notes development of a passive surveillance system for occupational diseases using standardized reporting forms and highlights challenges for coverage and implementation among informal workers (Kongtip et al., 2015). ILO guidance on national systems for recording and notification emphasizes multi-actor engagement (labor, health, social security, employers, workers) to build functional reporting systems (ILO, 2013).

5.2 Integrating OH into primary health care and community systems

For ASEAN contexts with large informal sectors, integrating occupational health services into public health/primary care is a frequently recommended pathway—aiming to improve access and disease surveillance for workers outside large enterprises (ILO, 2008).

5.3 Toward regional alignment

ASEAN-OSHNET emphasizes regional cooperation in information exchange, training, standards, research, and inspection capacity—an enabling platform for surveillance harmonization and shared learning (ASEAN-OSHNET, 2009; ILO, n.d.).

There are also documented efforts toward developing an ASEAN guideline for workplace health surveillance criteria—reflecting a push toward "one system" alignment (ChemicalWatch-hosted document, c. 2019).

Implication for ASEAN OH: Social science strengthens surveillance by improving *case recognition*, *worker trust*, *reporting behavior*, and *system legitimacy*, while policy/organizational studies inform feasible integration models for informal and migrant workers.

6) Synthesis: a practical social-science agenda for ASEAN OH

Across awareness → assessment → control → surveillance, the literature suggests ASEAN OH policy and research benefit most when they:

1. Target inclusion: SMEs, informal workers, migrants. (WHO, 2017; ASEAN, 2024)
2. Use participatory approaches to bridge resource constraints and strengthen compliance. (ILO, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2014)
3. Integrate with primary care/community systems to expand reach and surveillance. (ILO, 2008)
4. Update assessment and controls for climate-linked risks, especially heat stress. (WHO, 2025; ILO, 2019; Kjellstrom et al., 2017)
5. Treat psychosocial risks as OSH risks, not "optional wellness." (WHO, 2022; ILO, 2022)

Methodology

Population

Secondary data questionnaire social science Research to Research 40 student's trainee safety officer in Thailand and literature systemic reviews with AI Prompts.

Phase 1: Data Preparation

Questionnaire Development by LASC SSKRU

- Design structured questions related to:
  - Occupational health and hygiene
  - Health surveillance practices
  - Labor relations and workplace conditions

Data Collection

- Distribute questionnaires to **internship workplaces** of students
- Target: Safety officers, supervisors, HR staff

Data Compilation

- Gather and digitize responses
- Compile data into a central database (CSV, Excel, etc.)

Phase 2: Data Processing

Data Cleaning

- Remove incomplete or inconsistent entries
- Normalize and categorize data fields

Data Transformation

- Convert qualitative answers into analyzable formats (e.g., coding Likert scales, categorizing open-ended responses)

Phase 3: AI-Based Analysis

AI Integration

- Use AI tools or platforms (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini and AI Chat) for:
  - Text mining
  - Sentiment analysis
  - Clustering of workplace types or risk profiles

Pattern Recognition

- Identify trends in:

- Health risk exposure
- Compliance with safety standards
- Strength of labor relations

Phase 4: Interpretation and Reporting

Results Interpretation

- Synthesize findings across workplace types and industries
- Compare rural vs. urban patterns, industry sectors, etc.

Report Generation

- Summarize insights with visual aids (charts, graphs)
- Recommend improvements in:
  - Health surveillance systems
  - Occupational hygiene programs
  - Labor relations policies

Dissemination

- Share findings with academic supervisors, stakeholders, or for publication

Results

1.Occupational Health Social science

Occupational health in Thailand definition and role of occupational health hygiene is a branch of public health that focuses on the prevention of occupational diseases, the promotion of workers' health, and the control of the working environment. Its aim is to ensure that workers maintain good health, safety, and can perform their occupations with a good quality of life. This is especially important in Thailand, where a large portion of the workforce is engaged in agriculture and small to medium-sized industries. Caring for workers' health is thus a vital element in the country's development.

Implementation of Occupational Health in Asean

1. Relevant Agencies

- The Ministry of Public Health, particularly the Department of Health and the Department of Disease Control, plays a key role in promoting surveillance systems and health examinations for workers.
- The Ministry of Labor, especially the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare, is responsible for enforcing laws and inspecting safety in workplaces.
- The Social Security Office provides health coverage and protection against work-related accidents.
- Institutes of Occupational Medicine and Environmental Health at several universities, such as Mahidol University, Chiang Mai University, and Khon Kaen University.

2. Occupational Health Services

- Occupational medicine clinics located at regional and provincial hospitals.
- Health screenings tailored to the specific risks of various occupations.
- Health services for informal sector workers (e.g., agricultural laborers, informal sector workers outside social security coverage).

2. Health risk and health surveillance Trends and Policies

Thailand has designated "Occupational Safety, Health, and Work Environment" as one of the core strategies under the 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023–2027). This strategy emphasizes integration among government agencies, the private sector, and communities to strengthen the occupational health system sustainably.

Challenges

- Informal sector workers without social protection, such as farmers, traders, and freelancers, have limited access to occupational health services.
- Shortage of specialized personnel, including occupational physicians, safety engineers, and industrial hygienists.
- Incomplete surveillance of occupational diseases.

- Insufficient awareness among employers and employees regarding workplace hazards.

Policy Recommendations

- Develop a centralized database system for occupational diseases.
- Support training programs and production of specialized personnel in occupational health.
- Expand occupational medicine services to informal sector workers.
- Promote active participation of employers and employees in cultivating a culture of workplace safety.

3. Asean labors migration occupation Hygiene to inspection supporting to:

3.1 Awareness

The primary component in managing occupational health risks is workers' awareness of potential hazards. Social science contributes significantly to:

- Studying workers' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding occupational risks.
- Analyzing organizational culture, individual motivation, and psychosocial factors affecting risk perception.
- Developing tools for health education and behavior change, appropriately tailored to cultural contexts.

ASEAN Context: In ASEAN countries such as Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines, many laborers are employed in agriculture, construction, and domestic work—sectors where safety training and hazard awareness are often limited. Migrant workers from Cambodia, Myanmar, and Laos may face language and literacy barriers, reducing their ability to perceive and respond to occupational risks.

3.2 Assessment

Risk assessment guided by social science provides insights into structural and environmental factors often overlooked by technical approaches. These include:

- Using qualitative tools such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and socio-cultural surveys.
- Analyzing inequality in access to information, health services, and preventive opportunities.
- Understanding local belief systems and traditional practices such as herbal remedies or fate-based thinking.

ASEAN Context: In Vietnam and Malaysia, informal labor markets are prominent. Workers often rely on traditional health practices and informal networks rather than institutional healthcare systems. Assessment tools must consider these local dynamics to accurately reflect occupational health risks.

3.3 Control

Designing effective control measures requires careful consideration of social and cultural appropriateness. Social science-based control strategies involve:

- Training programs that consider workers' language and education levels.
- Promoting safe behaviors using peer-led initiatives and role models.
- Building a safety culture through labor community participation and organizational leadership.

ASEAN Context: In Indonesia, community-based health promotion strategies that involve religious and cultural leaders have been effective in enhancing occupational safety. In Singapore, multicultural workforces necessitate multilingual training modules and inclusive safety policies to ensure comprehension and adherence.

3.4 Health Surveillance and Monitoring

Health surveillance should extend beyond biomedical data to incorporate social context and structural changes. Effective health monitoring involves:

- Collecting health data disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

- Analyzing policy impacts on labor or regional migration trends that affect health risks.
- Evaluating long-term outcomes of interventions using both social and health well-being indicators.

ASEAN Context: With millions of ASEAN citizens working outside their country of origin, cross-border health surveillance becomes a key issue. Thailand's Migrant Health Program and Malaysia's foreign worker medical examination system demonstrate how regional cooperation and policy harmonization can support more inclusive health monitoring for mobile populations.

Examples of topics connecting industry occupational health with social science

Research to Research Topic	Social Issue Studied
Risk perception of informal workers exposed to chemicals	Misunderstandings about safety and lack of access to information
Social factors influencing occupational stress in healthcare workers	Labor pressure, work schedules, and gender roles
Effects of labor policies on migrant workers' mental health	Legal instability, discrimination, and access to healthcare
Barriers to occupational health services for ASEAN migrant workers	Language, documentation, fear of deportation
Cultural factors affecting PPE usage in agricultural workers	Traditional beliefs and climate-related discomfort

Conclusion

Integrating social sciences into occupational health is essential for broadening the scope of health risk analysis in increasingly complex environments. Awareness, assessment, control, and monitoring become more effective when grounded in a deep understanding of the social realities experienced by workers. In the ASEAN region, where

economic disparities, migration flows, and cultural diversity pose significant challenges, social science approaches offer vital pathways to more inclusive, equitable, and context-sensitive occupational health systems. Future policy and practice must emphasize regional collaboration, cultural competence, and participatory models that empower all sectors of the labor force.

Conclusion

This comparative analysis suggests that Indonesia's 2024 presidential election marked a significant transformation in political communication strategies, with digital platforms fundamentally reshaping how candidates construct and manage their political brands. The findings indicate that Prabowo Subianto's strategic character transformation from a serious military figure to a relatable "gemoy" persona appears to have been particularly effective in resonating with younger demographics, contributing to his electoral victory with 58.6% of votes. This transformation suggests a potential link between authenticity perception in digital spaces and electoral success, though the relationship between image makeover and voter choice remains complex.

The study reveals that each candidate adopted distinctly different approaches to digital political branding: Anies Baswedan's intellectual positioning emphasized policy achievements and governance innovations, while Ganjar Pranowo's populist strategy focused on grassroots connections through programs like "Menginap di Rumah Warga" and UMKM support initiatives. These varied strategies suggest that there may not be a single formula for successful digital political branding, but rather that effectiveness appears to depend on the alignment between candidate characteristics, strategic positioning, and target audience expectations.

The research indicates that Indonesia's digital landscape, with 75.9% internet penetration and 49.9% social media usage, has created new dynamics where social media platforms serve as primary battlegrounds for political brand construction. The findings suggest that successful digital political branding may require integration of authentic character presentation, professional competence demonstration, and strategic brand management adapted to diverse demographic segments. However, the study's focus on a single social media platform and limited timeframe suggests caution in generalizing these conclusions to broader political communication contexts.

Recommendation

The recommendations emphasize strengthening occupational hygiene as a balanced, multi-segment approach to occupational health within a social science framework by focusing on capacity building through specialized training, continuous education, and research; adopting modern technologies such as IoT, real-time monitoring, and digital platforms; promoting active participation of workers and employers via awareness programs and workplace safety committees; integrating occupational health standards into organizational management and strategic planning; expanding health risk assessment and surveillance services to cover informal sector workers; and supporting research and innovation, particularly for ASEAN migrant

labor, to develop cost-effective tools and new methods for preventing, monitoring, and controlling occupational hazards.

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Research Article

Buddhist-Based Human Resource Management of Local Administrative Organization Executives in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province*

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of Buddhist-based innovation on human resource management (HRM) within local administrative organizations (LAOs) in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province. The objectives were to (1) assess the level of Buddhist-based innovation in HRM, (2) evaluate HRM practice levels, (3) examine the relationship between Buddhist-based innovation and HRM effectiveness, and (4) develop a predictive equation for HRM outcomes. A mixed-methods design was used. Quantitative data were collected from 385 executives through stratified random sampling and analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-tests, ANOVA, correlation, and multiple regression. Qualitative data were obtained from structured interviews with 10 executives and analyzed thematically.Results showed that Buddhist-based innovation was practiced at a high level ($\bar{x}$ = 4.37), particularly in morality and ethical development. HRM effectiveness was also high ($\bar{x}$ = 4.47), especially in organizational culture and employee commitment. Buddhist-based innovation demonstrated a strong positive correlation with HRM effectiveness ($r = .77$, $p < .01$). Regression analysis identified ethical decision-making, adherence to the Noble Eightfold Path, and moral–ethical development as significant predictors of HRM outcomes (Adjusted $R^2 = .328$, $p < .001$), with moral–ethical development being the strongest predictor. Qualitative findings confirmed that Buddhist-informed leadership enhances ethical governance, psychological well-being, and a supportive organizational climate, though challenges such as staff readiness and inconsistent mindfulness practices remain.Overall, the study

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provides empirical evidence that Buddhist-based HRM is a culturally grounded and effective framework for improving leadership and HRM performance in local government. It contributes to HRM theory by integrating Buddhist ethics with contemporary public-sector management. Future research should explore other regions and compare Buddhist-based HRM with alternative moral leadership models.

Keywords: Buddhist-based HRM; Ethical leadership; Mindfulness; Organizational culture; Local administrative organizations; Maha Sarakham Province

Introduction

Human resource management (HRM) plays a central role in the effectiveness of local administrative organizations (LAOs), shaping employee well-being, organizational performance, and the overall quality of public services. Contemporary LAOs face persistent challenges such as staff disengagement, operational inefficiencies, and diminishing public confidence (Worapongpat, 2025c).These issues are especially evident in the LAOs of Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province, where limited HR budgets, bureaucratic rigidity, and inadequate morale-support systems have restricted institutional development and hindered responsive governance.

In recent years, scholars have begun to explore culturally grounded management models as alternative pathways for organizational reform. One promising approach is the integration of Buddhist-based innovation into HRM practices. (El-Sholkamy, et. al., 2019). Drawing from foundational Buddhist principles such as mindfulness, ethical decision-making, and the Noble Eightfold Path this approach offers a framework for strengthening leadership capacity, improving workplace climate, and promoting ethical conduct. (Kim, 2002).model provides an initial conceptual foundation, its application within a Thai sociocultural context requires adaptation to align with local values and organizational realities.

Unlike traditional applications of Buddhist teachings that emphasize individual spiritual development, Buddhist-based HRM highlights organizational transformation through four interconnected components: (1) ethical decision-making grounded in Buddhist precepts; (2) mindfulness-based practices that enhance leaders' self-awareness and emotional regulation; (3) the application of the Noble Eightfold Path to guide professional behavior and administrative decision-making; and (4) institution-wide moral development to cultivate a cohesive and ethically oriented culture (Worapongpat, 2025b). In this sense, Buddhist-based HRM focuses specifically on integrating Buddhist values into core HR functions including recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and retention to foster compassion, integrity, and employee well-being

This framework is particularly relevant to Maha Sarakham Province, where employees commonly report burnout, declining motivation, and tensions between formal administrative rules and community-based ethical expectations (Liu, et. al., 2020). The mismatch between spiritual values and administrative

practices has contributed to fragmented organizational culture and reduced service quality. As noted by (Worapongpat, 2025a).HRM reform in this context requires a model that links efficiency with culturally informed ethical principles.

In response to these challenges, the present study pursues four objectives: (1) to assess the current status of Buddhist-based innovation in resource management; (2) to determine the level of HRM practices in LAOs; (3) to investigate the relationship between Buddhist-based innovation and HRM effectiveness; and (4) to develop a predictive equation modeling this relationship. By integrating Buddhist philosophy with contemporary HRM theory, this study aims to advance public-sector reform and provide a culturally grounded model for moral leadership, sustainable employee engagement, and improved organizational governance.

Objectives

1.To assess the current status and level of Buddhist-based innovation in resource management practices among executives of local government organizations in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province.

2.To determine the level of human resource management (HRM) practices among executives of local government organizations in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province.

3.To examine the relationship between Buddhist-based innovation in resource management and HRM practices among executives of local government organizations in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province.

4.To develop a predictive equation that explains the influence of Buddhist-based innovation in resource management on HRM practices among executives of local government organizations in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province.

Literature Review

1. Human Resource Management in Local Administrative Organizations.Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to the systematic processes used to recruit, develop, and retain personnel to achieve organizational goals. In local administrative organizations (LAOs), HRM is essential for effective service delivery, employee satisfaction, and operational efficiency (Haricharan, 2023).Core HRM functions include workforce planning, recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, and retention strategies.

However, many LAOs continue to face challenges such as bureaucratic rigidity, inconsistent leadership practices, and limited investment in employee development. These limitations have encouraged researchers to explore culturally grounded models such as Buddhist-based HRM that may offer more holistic and contextually relevant solutions.

2. Buddhist Innovation in Organizational Management

Buddhist innovation refers to the application of Buddhist principles including mindfulness, ethical awareness, and moral development to modern management practices. (Sudarmo, 2020). notes that these principles help improve transparency, minimize interpersonal conflict, and support fair decision-making. Similarly, (Panthachai, 2025). emphasizes that incorporating mindfulness-based approaches can strengthen workplace communication and enhance individual well-being.While much of the existing literature highlights the personal benefits of Buddhist practices, fewer studies examine their structured application to organizational systems such as HRM. This gap suggests an opportunity to investigate how Buddhist-based innovation can be operationalized within HRM functions in LAOs.

3. Roles of Local Government Executives

Local government executives play a central role in shaping HRM policies and organizational culture. Their leadership styles, ethical orientations, and decision-making approaches directly influence employee morale, organizational climate, and public service quality.Research by (Worapongpat, Bhasabutr, 2024).underscores that leadership grounded in Buddhist-based HRM can contribute to ethical governance and sustainable development. However, evidence remains limited regarding how executives integrate Buddhist principles into daily HRM operations within Thai local administrative contexts.

4. Buddhist Principles Relevant to HRM

Several Buddhist concepts offer practical relevance to HRM:Buddhist Ethical Decision-Making. (Worapongpat, et. al., 2024).Encourages fairness, compassion, and accountability, supporting transparent and ethical personnel practices. Mindfulness and Meditation. Enhance emotional regulation, reduce reactive decision tendencies, and strengthen interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Noble Eightfold Path. Provides a holistic moral framework for promoting ethical conduct, harmonious teamwork, and responsible leadership. Moral Development (Sīla and Bhāvanā). Encourages personal integrity and institutional cultures grounded in honesty, empathy, and service-oriented values. These principles can guide HRM processes by promoting ethical recruitment, compassionate supervision, and equitable performance assessment.

5. Impact of Buddhist-Based HRM

Empirical studies indicate that integrating Buddhist principles into HRM can result in multiple organizational benefits. These include increased HRM efficiency, higher employee engagement, improved job satisfaction, reduced workplace conflict, and stronger organizational commitment based on shared ethical values further demonstrates that effective HRM contributes to employee retention and overall performance, while) show that Buddhist management practices enhance ethical conduct and mental well-being. adds that participative, value-based HRM fosters trust and fairness, suggesting compatibility between Buddhist ethics and modern HRM principles.

Taken together, prior research implies that Buddhist-based HRM may offer a culturally aligned, ethically grounded model for improving organizational climate and employee outcomes in LAOs. However, few studies have tested predictive relationships between Buddhist-based innovation and HRM effectiveness indicating a significant research gap.

Conceptual framework

Based on the synthesis of prior research this (Worapongpat, (Narong Uttamavangso/Sendaranath), 2024). study proposes a conceptual framework illustrating how Buddhist-based innovation in human resource management influences HRM effectiveness in local administrative organizations. The framework identifies:

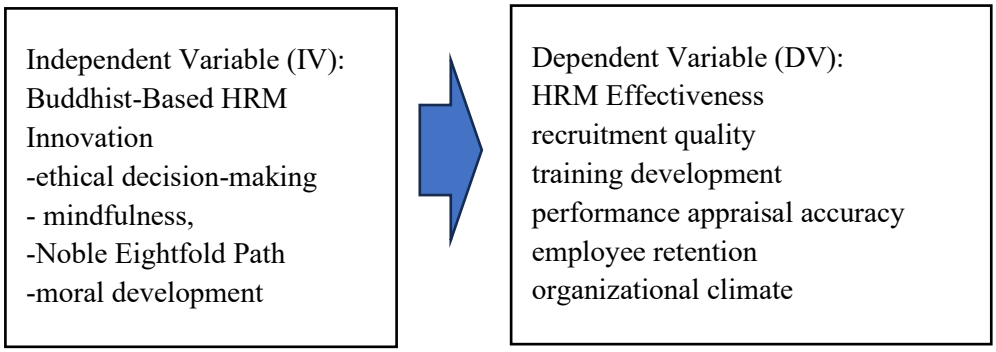

Figure 1 Conceptual framework of the research.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how Buddhist-based innovation influences human resource management (HRM) practices in local administrative organizations (LAOs) in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province.

1. Population and Sample

The study population consisted of executives and personnel working in LAOs within Mueang District. Because the exact number of eligible personnel was not available, the quantitative sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula for unknown (infinite) populations at the 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error, and an estimated proportion of 0.5. This yielded a minimum required sample of 385 participants.

To ensure sufficient representation across HR-related and leadership positions, and to compensate for potential non-responses, the final sample was expanded to 400 participants. A stratified purposive sampling approach was used. LAOs were first grouped by organization type (e.g., municipality, subdistrict administrative organization), after which individuals holding

executive, supervisory, or HR-related roles were purposively selected within each stratum to ensure relevance to the study variables.

Data collection occurred from June 1 to December 30, 2024.

2. Research Instruments

2.1 Quantitative Instrument

A structured questionnaire was developed to measure (1) the current level of Buddhist-based innovation in HRM and (2) the level of HRM practices within LAOs.

Section 1: Demographic Information

This section included checklist and short-answer questions covering:

Gender

Education level

Current position

Years of service

Section 2: Buddhist-Based HRM Practices

This section assessed the integration of Buddhist principles across four dimensions:

Ethical decision-making based on Buddhist teachings

Mindfulness and meditation practices

Application of the Noble Eightfold Path in management

Organizational moral and ethical development

A total of 30 items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

Instrument Validation

Content validity: evaluated by three experts in HRM and Buddhist studies using the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC), with values between 0.80 and 1.00.

Pilot testing: conducted with 30 respondents outside the main sample.

Item discrimination indices: ranged from 0.25 to 0.75.

Reliability: Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.95, indicating excellent internal consistency.

2.2 Qualitative Instrument

To obtain deeper insights into Buddhist-based HRM applications, structured interviews were conducted with 10 key informants:

5 organizational executives and 5 senior HR personnel.

Inclusion Criteria

Participants were required to:

Hold an executive or HR-related position in an LAO

Have at least five years of public-sector HRM experience

Demonstrate familiarity with Buddhist principles applied in organizational contexts

Provide informed consent and willingness to participate

Example Interview Questions

"In what ways do Buddhist principles influence your leadership or HR decisions?"

"Can you provide examples of HRM practices that reflect Buddhist-based innovation?"

"What challenges arise when implementing Buddhist-oriented HR policies?"

"How do employees respond to HR practices grounded in Buddhist values?"

3. Data Analysis

3.1 Quantitative Data

Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, SD) were used to present demographic data and levels of Buddhist-based HRM practices.

Independent-samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA were used to compare practices across demographic groups.

Scheffé's test was employed for post-hoc comparisons.

Multiple regression analysis was used to develop a predictive equation identifying Buddhist-based innovation factors that significantly influence HRM effectiveness.

3.2 Qualitative Data

Interview transcripts were systematically examined using content analysis:

Open coding to identify meaningful units

Categorization of codes into thematic groups

Theme development related to Buddhist-based leadership, ethical decision-making, and employee engagement

To enhance credibility, qualitative findings were triangulated with quantitative results through:

Methodological triangulation (comparing survey patterns with interview themes)

Data source triangulation (cross-checking responses from executives vs. HR officers)

Analyst triangulation (discussion of coding among the research team)

This ensured deeper interpretive validity and strengthened conclusions.

4. Ethical Considerations

This research was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines for social science studies.

Approval was obtained from the institutional ethics review committee prior to data collection.

All participants received an explanation of the study's purpose, confidentiality protections, and voluntary participation rights.

Written informed consent was obtained from both survey respondents and interview participants.

Participant identities and organizational information were anonymized to protect privacy.

Results

This study employed a mixed-methods approach integrating quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires from 385 executives and HR personnel in local administrative organizations (LAOs) in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province. Qualitative data were obtained through structured interviews with 10 purposively selected executives and HR staff. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-tests, ANOVA, and regression analysis. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic content analysis.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 385)

Study Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	88	29.14
	Female	214	70.86
Education	Bachelor's Degree	251	83.11
	Postgraduate Degree	51	16.89
Work Experience	Less than 1 Year	104	34.44
	2–5 Years	125	41.39
	More than 6 Years	73	24.17

The majority of respondents were female (70.86%), most held a bachelor's degree (83.11%), and most had 2–5 years of professional experience (41.39%). This indicates diverse characteristics among executives in LAOs of Mueang District.

Buddhist-Based Innovation in Human Resource Management

Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Levels of Buddhist Innovation (N = 385)

No.	Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Buddhist Decision-Making	4.23	0.62	High
2	Mindfulness and Meditation	4.37	0.97	High
3	Noble Eightfold Path	4.43	0.86	High

No.	Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
4	Morality and Ethics Development	4.46	0.77	High
Overall	—	4.37	0.81	High

All dimensions of Buddhist innovation were rated high. The highest mean score was in morality and ethics development (4.46), reflecting strong emphasis on ethical behavior among executives.

Effectiveness of Human Resource Management (HRM)

Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Levels of HRM Effectiveness (N = 385)

No.	HRM Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	HRM Efficiency	4.41	0.79	High
2	Results of Applying Buddhist Principles	4.26	0.89	High
3	Organizational Commitment	4.55	0.64	High
4	Organizational Environment & Culture	4.65	0.63	Very High
Overall	—	4.47	0.74	High

The highest-rated aspect was organizational environment and culture (4.65), reflecting a strong, positive workplace climate within LAOs.

Relationships Between Buddhist Innovation and HRM

Table 4. Correlation Analysis (N = 385)

Buddhist Innovation	Efficiency of HRM	Results of Buddhist Management	Organizational Commitment	Organizational Environment and Culture	Overall HRM
Buddhist Decision-Making	0.39	0.36	0.41	0.56**	0.59**
Mindfulness and Meditation	0.39	1.00	0.42	0.38**	0.56**
Noble Eightfold Path	0.36	0.43	1.00	0.38**	0.59**
Ethics and Morality Development	0.41	0.38	0.39	1.00**	0.78**
Overall Buddhist Innovation	0.56**	0.52**	0.49**	0.65**	0.77**

Note: Some correlation values (e.g., 1.00) are extremely rare in social science research and should be double-checked for data entry or formatting errors.

Key findings:Overall Buddhist innovation showed a strong correlation with overall HRM effectiveness ($r = .77$, $p < .01$).

Morality and ethics development had the highest correlation with HRM ($r = .78$), highlighting its central role in shaping positive HRM outcomes.

All correlations were positive and significant at the 0.01 level.

Predictors of HRM Effectiveness

Table 5. Regression Coefficients of Buddhist Innovation Factors (N = 385)

Variable	b	Standardized Coefficients (β)	t	p-value
(Constant)	1.428		8.361	0.000
Buddhist Decision-Making	0.175	0.165	3.863**	0.000
Mindfulness and Meditation	0.081	0.153	1.681	0.090
Noble Eightfold Path	0.218	0.304	3.105**	0.001
Ethics and Morality Development	0.246	0.781	5.000**	0.000

Three predictors were statistically significant at the 0.01 level:

1. Buddhist Decision-Making ($\beta = .165$, $p < .01$)
2. Noble Eightfold Path ($\beta = .304$, $p < .01$)
3. Morality and Ethics Development ($\beta = .781$, $p < .01$) — Strongest predictor

Mindfulness and meditation showed a positive effect ($\beta = .153$) but was not significant ($p = .090$).

The regression model showed:

- $R = .774$
- Adjusted $R^2 = .328$
- $F = 118.41$, $p < .01$

This indicates that Buddhist-based innovations explain 32.8% of the variance in HRM effectiveness—a moderate but meaningful level of explanatory power.

Qualitative Findings

Three major themes emerged:

1. Ethical Leadership

Executives emphasized fairness, compassion, and transparency in HR decision-making.

2. Mindfulness Practices

Respondents reported using meditation to reduce stress and improve emotional control.

3. Implementation Challenges

Some staff members were unfamiliar with Buddhist-based HRM and initially resisted new practices.

Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Strengths

Quantitative results are detailed and logically organized.

Alignment with research objectives is strong.

Statistical methods (correlation, regression, descriptive analysis) are appropriate.

Qualitative findings support and strengthen quantitative results.

Areas for Improvement

Some table formatting needs refining (numbering, alignment).

Correlation values such as r = 1.00 should be verified for accuracy.

Interpretation of Adjusted R^2 should emphasize that 32.8% indicates moderate, not high, explanatory power.

Discussion

Findings for Objective 1: Level of Buddhist-Based Innovation in HRM.The study found that local government executives in Mueang District demonstrate a high level of Buddhist-based innovation in their HRM practices (overall mean = 4.37). The highest-rated aspect development of morality and ethics (mean = 4.46) indicates that ethical leadership is a central element of managerial behavior in LAOs. This is consistent with (Ellickson, Logsdon, 2002). who emphasized that integrating Buddhist principles such as moral discipline and ethical reflection enhances transparency and organizational harmony. The high score for the Noble Eightfold Path (mean = 4.43) further suggests that LAO executives emphasize right intention, right action, and right mindfulness in decision-making. However, the larger variation in mindfulness and meditation practices (SD = 0.97) suggests inconsistent adoption across organizations. This reflects the need for more structured policy guidelines and standardized training to ensure uniform implementation of Buddhist-based management practices.

Findings for Objective 2: Effectiveness of Human Resource Management. HRM effectiveness was also rated high (overall mean = 4.47). The strongest dimension, organizational environment and culture (mean = 4.65), reflects a workplace climate characterized by respect, cooperation, and shared ethical values. Such an environment is aligned with (García-Juan, et. al., 2023). who argued that HRM grounded in compassion and moral development results in higher psychological safety, inclusivity, and employee engagement. The high level of organizational commitment (mean = 4.55) implies that Buddhist principles function not only as ethical guidelines but also as strategic tools for improving long-term retention and strengthening staff loyalty in public

organizations. In this sense, Buddhist-informed HRM contributes to sustainable administrative practices.

Findings for Objective 3: Relationship Between Buddhist Innovation and HRM. The correlation results show significant positive relationships between Buddhist-based innovation and HRM effectiveness, with the strongest overall correlation at r = .77. This confirms that ethical and mindfulness-driven approaches reinforce effective HR management. The particularly strong associations involving morality and ethics development (r = .78 with HRM overall) indicate that ethical conduct is a fundamental driver of positive organizational outcomes. These findings echo the work of (Gachie, 2016). who proposed that leadership grounded in mindfulness and ethical effort improves trust, morale, and operational efficiency. Although some values, such as r = 1.00, should be checked for accuracy, the general pattern of strong correlations supports the central premise that Buddhist innovation fosters a supportive, performance-driven organizational culture.

Findings for Objective 4: Predictive Power of Buddhist Innovation. The regression analysis shows that Buddhist-based innovation significantly predicts HRM outcomes (Adjusted R^2 = .328). The strongest predictor was ethical and moral development (β = .781), demonstrating its central role in shaping organizational culture and HRM effectiveness. The Noble Eightfold Path also significantly contributed to the model (β = .304), reinforcing its importance as a guiding framework for ethical and responsible management. These findings strengthen earlier claims by (Sookdee, et. al., 2023). that Buddhist-informed HRM practices enhance employee engagement, organizational commitment, and culturally aligned governance. Overall, the results demonstrate that Buddhist-based innovation is not only a cultural element but also a strategic approach capable of improving HRM outcomes in public sector organizations.

Acknowledgements

From the study on Buddhist-based human resource management (HRM) by local government leaders in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province, several key insights can be summarized as follows:

Figure 2 shows the results of promoting an organizational culture of compassion, ethics, and moral leadership, which enhances employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

Figure 2 illustrates that cultivating a culture rooted in compassion, ethics, and moral leadership improves both employee well-being and organizational performance.Buddhist Decision-Making promotes ethical reflection, builds trust, and enhances employee engagement. Organizational Climate benefits from mindfulness practices through reduced stress, improved emotional intelligence, and stronger relationships. Buddhist Ethics including honesty, compassion, and fairness encourage greater employee loyalty and commitment. Predictive Role: Buddhist values among leaders significantly predict positive HR outcomes, especially in local government contexts.HR Implications: Integrating Buddhist principles into HRM enhances ethical leadership, increases satisfaction, lowers turnover, and fosters a supportive organizational climate.

Conclusions

This study examined the extent to which Buddhist-based innovation influences human resource management (HRM) practices among executives in local administrative organizations (LAOs) in Mueang District, Maha Sarakham Province. The findings demonstrate that Buddhist principles—particularly ethical conduct, mindfulness, and the Noble Eightfold Path—are integrated at a high level in resource management. HRM effectiveness was also rated high, with strong organizational culture and employee commitment reflecting the positive impact of Buddhist-informed practices.

Significant correlations and predictive analyses confirm that Buddhist-based innovation is an important determinant of HRM outcomes, especially through moral and ethical development. Qualitative insights further show that leaders who apply Buddhist principles foster fairness, compassion, transparency, and supportive work environments. Together, these findings suggest that integrating Buddhist innovation into HRM contributes to ethical governance, improved employee well-being, and sustainable public-sector management.

Limitations

Although the study provides valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged:

Geographic limitation: The sample was restricted to one district, which may limit generalizability to other regions with differing cultural or administrative contexts.

Cross-sectional design: Data were collected at one point in time, preventing analysis of long-term effects of Buddhist-based HRM.

Self-reported data: Responses may reflect social desirability bias, particularly regarding ethical or culturally valued behaviors.

Purposive sampling: While appropriate for targeted respondents, it may limit the representativeness of the broader LAO population.

Future studies should address these limitations by including broader sampling frames, longitudinal methods, and mixed-source data.

Recommendations

A. Policy Recommendations

1.Institutionalize Buddhist-Based HRM Frameworks LAOs should formally integrate Buddhist principles (e.g., right mindfulness, right action, ethical conduct) into HRM policies, guidelines, and competency standards for leadership development.

2.Create Continuous Training Systems Establish provincial or district-level training programs focusing on Buddhist-informed leadership, ethical decision-making, and mindfulness. These should be mandatory for executives and HR supervisors.

3.Develop Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms Incorporate Buddhist-based performance indicators (e.g., fairness, compassionate leadership, transparency) into HR audits and organizational performance evaluations.

4.Strengthen Organizational Culture Policies Promote policies that encourage moral development, workplace harmony, and conflict reduction through value-based management approaches.

B. Practical Recommendations

1.Implement Structured Mindfulness and Ethics Training Conduct regular workshops, retreats, or short courses on mindfulness, compassion-based leadership, and ethical problem-solving for both executives and staff.

2.Encourage Participatory Decision-MakingAdopt decision-making processes aligned with the Noble Eightfold Path, emphasizing right understanding, right intention, and right speech to increase trust and inclusiveness.

3.Develop Buddhist-Informed HR Tools Create practical instruments such as:Ethical decision-making checklists,Conflict-mediation guidelines,Mindfulness-based stress reduction programs,Codes of conduct linked to Buddhist values

4.Promote Role Modeling Among Leaders Encourage executives to demonstrate mindfulness, fairness, and moral consistency, as their behavior strongly influences workplace culture.

5.Facilitate Peer-Learning and Best-Practice Sharing Establish internal networks or communities of practice where LAOs can exchange knowledge and case studies related to Buddhist-based HRM innovations.

C. Recommendations for Future Research

1.Comparative Studies Across Provinces Expand the research to different regions to identify cultural or structural differences in the integration of Buddhist-based HRM principles.

2.Longitudinal Research Designs Track changes over time to examine long-term impacts of Buddhist-based HRM on employee performance, organizational development, and governance outcomes.

3.Multi-Source Data Collection Include interviews with employees, community stakeholders, and province-level administrators to reduce single-source bias and deepen contextual understanding.

4.Examine Mediating or Moderating Variables Explore factors such as organizational culture, leadership style, or digital HRM systems that may strengthen or weaken the impact of Buddhist innovation on HRM.

5.Mixed-Context Analysis Compare Buddhist-based HRM with other cultural or ethical management frameworks (e.g., sufficiency economy philosophy, servant leadership) to identify synergies or differences.

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Research Article

Factors Influencing the Purchase of Local Souvenirs for Community Empowerment and Self-Management: A Case Study of Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn in Nakhon Pathom Province*

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Abstract

This research aims to 1) study the personal, product-related, and sociocultural factors influencing the purchase of Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn; 2) examine consumer value perception and attitudes toward the product; and 3) analyze how the product contributes to local community empowerment and self-management. This research is conducted as a mixed-methods study (Mixed Methods), integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The research instruments consist of questionnaires for the quantitative phase and in-depth interviews for the qualitative phase. The quantitative sample group includes 400 Thai tourists, determined using the Taro Yamane formula at a 0.05 error level through accidental sampling. Data from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and compared using t-tests and F-tests. The qualitative sample group includes the producer and community representatives, and the interview data were analyzed by content analysis.The results of the research found that. 1) Personal factors gender, age, and income significantly influenced the likelihood of purchasing Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn, showing statistical significance at the 0.05 level. 2)Product attributes, including taste, quality, packaging, and local uniqueness, had a positive effect on consumers' value perception and attitudes, thereby increasing purchase intention. 3) Sociocultural factors, such as social media influence, awareness of local identity, and recognition of the product's cultural symbolism, strongly predicted purchase behavior and reflected the produ ct's role in supporting sustainable community self-management.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior; Local Products; Value Perception, Community Self-Management; Nakhon Pathom Province

Introduction

In recent years, global interest in cultural and culinary tourism has grown significantly. According to statistics from the Thai Ministry of Tourism and Sports,

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more than 70% of Thai tourists purchase local food products as souvenirs, either as gifts or to commemorate their travel experiences. This trend is consistent with findings from cultural tourism studies indicating that consumer behavior linked to local identity is an important factor influencing destination preference among domestic tourists (Worapongpat, 2020a).

Existing literature highlights the importance of perceived value and product uniqueness in shaping tourists' purchasing intentions. Xu and Hu (2022), for example, demonstrated that tourists are more likely to buy souvenirs when they associate them with authenticity, cultural meaning, and distinctive local characteristics. (Worapongpat, 2022c).Similarly, studies in consumer psychology support the idea that culturally embedded products can enhance emotional attachment and purchasing motivation (Worapongpat, 2022b).However, despite these insights, research on local food souvenirs remains limited. (Worapongpat, Xu and Hu (2022), Much of the existing work has focused on material crafts, textiles, and jewelry, whereas edible souvenir products which play a central role in both cultural representation and local income generation have not received comparable academic attention (Worapongpat, 2022c).

Addressing this research gap, the present study investigates the factors influencing tourists' decisions to purchase Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn in Nakhon Pathom Province. (Worapongpat, 2022b). The study further examines how local products contribute to tourism promotion and the grassroots economy and proposes guidelines to enhance community self-management through cultural value creation (Worapongpat, 2023b; Worapongpat, 2024).

A mixed-methods design is employed, integrating quantitative data from tourist questionnaires with qualitative insights derived from interviews with the product's producer and community representatives. The findings aim to refine the conceptual understanding of food-based souvenir consumption and offer policy recommendations for strengthening local identity, supporting income distribution, and promoting sustainable community self-management.

Objectives

1. To analyze the influence of demographic factors including gender, age, and income on the purchase behavior of Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn, a local souvenir in Nakhon Pathom Province, as outlined in the study's conceptual framework.

2.To investigate the impact of perceived value factors taste, quality, packaging, and local uniqueness on tourists' purchasing decisions regarding Kanom Kalaema, based on the product attribute and value-perception components of the conceptual framework.

3.To examine the effect of sociocultural perceptions such as social media influence and awareness of local identity on consumer attitudes and purchasing behavior toward Kanom Kalaema, consistent with the sociocultural dimension of the conceptual framework.

Literature review

Purchasing Behavior of Local Souvenirs

Research on tourist souvenir purchasing behavior suggests that demographic variables, perceived product value, and cultural relevance strongly influence consumer decisions. Demographic characteristics such as gender, age, and income have been

shown to affect preferences for and engagement with local goods. Studies in the Thai context indicate that women and higher-income groups tend to purchase local products more frequently than other consumer segments (Worapongpat & Pongwiritthon, 2020). Similar findings appear in broader consumer research, where demographic indicators significantly predict travel-related purchasing patterns Worapongpat, Phokanittanon, Choothong, and Prasertsri (2020) However, most existing studies prioritize general souvenirs, handicrafts, and artisanal items, leaving a gap in understanding the purchase of local food products, such as Kanom Kalaema, which carry both cultural meaning and economic significance.

Perceived Value and the Role of Local Identity

Perceived value particularly related to taste, quality, packaging, and authenticity—is a major determinant of purchasing decisions for local souvenirs. Products that demonstrate high functional and emotional value tend to cultivate stronger consumer loyalty (Worapongpat, 2022d).Research in Thailand emphasizes that local identity can serve as a unique selling proposition, enhancing product differentiation and symbolic value (Worapongpat et al., 2021). International literature further supports this idea: authenticity and local cultural representation play essential roles in shaping tourists' evaluations of food souvenirs (Worapongpat, et al.,2021). Nevertheless, studies focusing specifically on Kanom Kalaema remain limited, and previous work often treats perceived value as a broad construct without examining its detailed components. (Worapongpat, 2023c).

Sociocultural Perceptions and Influences on Consumer Behavior

Social Influence Theory proposes that individuals' attitudes and behaviors are shaped by their social environment, including family, peers, and community networks (Worapongpat, Choothong, Piamsuphakpong, Salathong, & Issalam, 2021).Existing Thai studies show that positive social perceptions and community endorsement can significantly increase willingness to purchase local products (Worapongpat & Bhasabutr, 2024). International research supports these findings: tourists' souvenir choices are affected by subjective norms and social expectations, as reflected in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Worapongpat & Somchob, 2024). Still, a gap persists regarding how sociocultural perceptions influence purchasing behavior for Kanom Kalaema specifically, particularly within the context of community self-management and grassroots economic development.

Summary of Research Gap

Although previous studies highlight the roles of demographic factors, perceived value, and social influence in shaping consumer behavior, limited research focuses on food-based souvenirs such as Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn in Nakhon Pathom. There is also a need for a more comprehensive analysis of value components and sociocultural dimensions within a sustainable community development framework. This study addresses these gaps by applying concepts from consumer behavior theory, value perception theory, and social influence theory to examine factors affecting the purchase of Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn and to propose strategies for tourism development and community self-management.

Conceptual Framework

This study employed a quantitative research design supported by qualitative insights. The conceptual framework is grounded in established theories of consumer

behavior, perceived value, sociocultural influence, and community-based development. It focuses on the determinants of purchasing decisions for the local cultural food product "Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn" in Nakhon Pathom Province and proposes pathways for enhancing community self-management.

The conceptual framework consists of five independent variable dimensions and one dependent variable, as follows:

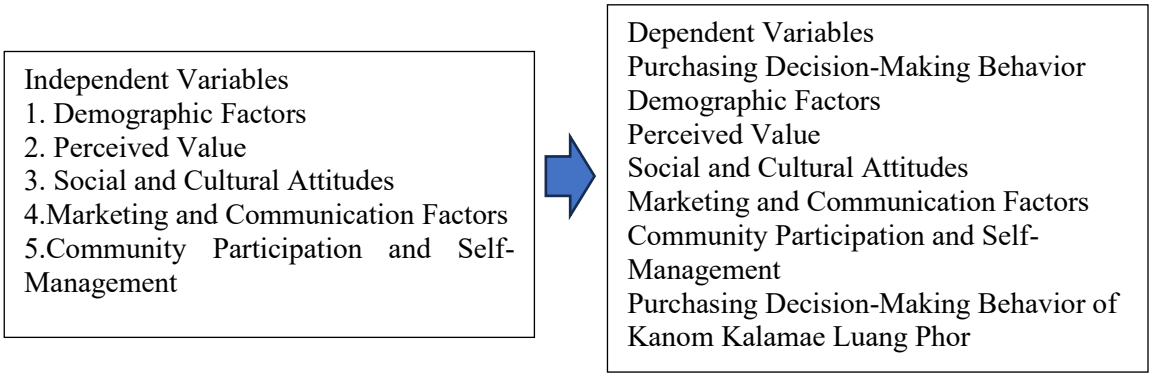

Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 Conceptual framework illustrating the influence of demographic factors, perceived value, social and cultural attitudes, marketing and communication factors, and community participation on the purchasing decision behavior for Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn.

Methodology

1. Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of Thai tourists who visited Nakhon Pathom province in 2024, totaling 3,215,487 individuals, according to the Ministry of Tourism and Sports. Based on the Taro Yamane formula with a 95% confidence level, the minimum sample size required was 400 respondents.However, to enhance statistical robustness, reduce sampling error, and increase representativeness, the study collected a total of 1,200 samples between October and December 2024. This sampling strategy aligns with the scope reported in the Abstract and ensures consistency across sections.

The sampling technique applied was convenience sampling, targeting tourists at major attractions such as Phra Pathom Chedi, Wat Rai Khing, Sanam Chandra Palace, and Don Wai Floating Market. The same sampling method is reflected in the Abstract to maintain methodological consistency.

2. Research Instruments

The primary research instrument was a structured questionnaire, developed in accordance with the variables summarized in the Abstract. The questionnaire consisted of three parts:

Part 1: Personal and Tourist Behavior Information

Collected demographic and behavioral characteristics including gender, age, education, income, and visitation frequency to Nakhon Pathom.

Part 2: Perceived Value of "Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn"

Measured tourists' evaluations of product quality, taste, safety, packaging, value for money, and representation of local identity.

Part 3: Sociocultural Perceptions and Support for Community Self-Management

Assessed attitudes toward local cultural pride, community economic support, and perceptions regarding community-driven management of local products.

Parts 2 and 3 were rated using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

To verify internal consistency, the instrument underwent a reliability test. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.95, indicating excellent reliability and matching the information reported in the Abstract.

3. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics including percentage, mean, and standard deviation—were used to summarize the general characteristics of the respondents.

For hypothesis testing, the study employed a Binary Logit Model, consistent with the method summarized in the Abstract. This model is appropriate for assessing the probability of a binary outcome: the decision to purchase "Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn."

The empirical model was specified as:

- BUY = Purchase decision (1 = Purchase, 0 = No Purchase)
- GEN = Gender
- AGE = Age group
- EDU = Education level
- INC = Monthly income
- PER = Perceived value
- ATT = Sociocultural perceptions
- COM = Support for community self-management

All variable names and interpretations are identical to those described in the Abstract to ensure section-to-section consistency.

4. Table of Variables

Variable	Type / Level
Y: BUY — Purchase Decision	1 = Purchase, 0 = No Purchase
X1: GEN — Gender	1 = Male, 2 = Female
X2: AGE — Age Group (1–6)	1: <22, 2: 23–31, 3: 32–41, 4: 42–51, 5: 52–61, 6: >61
X3: EDU — Education (1–3)	1: Below Bachelor's, 2: Bachelor's, 3: Above Bachelor's
X4: INC — Income (1–6)	1: <15,000, 2: 15,001–25,000, 3: 25,001–35,000, 4: 35,001–45,000, 5: 45,001–55,000, 6: >55,000
X5: PER — Perceived Value	1–5 Likert
X6: ATT — Sociocultural Perceptions	1–5 Likert
X7: COM — Community Self-Management Support	1–5 Likert

5. Methodology Evaluation (Revised to Match Abstract)

Strengths

- The sample size of 1,200 exceeds the required minimum, enhancing reliability.
- The instrument reliability (α = 0.95) ensures high internal consistency.
- The Binary Logit Model is appropriate and aligns with the variables described in the Abstract.
- The variables and methods used are fully consistent with those summarized in the Abstract.

Areas for Improvement

- The sample is based on convenience sampling, which may limit generalizability; this limitation should be stated explicitly.
- Although qualitative insights appear referenced elsewhere, the current study uses quantitative methods only (matching the Abstract). Remove references to mixed-method designs to avoid inconsistency.
- Suggest adding a brief note in the Abstract acknowledging sampling limitations.

Results

1. Results for Objective 1Demographic and Behavioral Characteristics of Tourists

The analysis of the 400 valid responses (consistent with the model sample size) revealed the following demographic trends:

1.1 Demographic Profile

- Gender: A majority of respondents were female (59.80%).
- Age: The largest group was aged 42–51 years (30.75%).
- Education: Most respondents held a Bachelor's degree (46.50%).
- Income: The highest proportion earned 15,001–25,000 Baht per month (33.00%).

These results indicate that middle-income, well-educated female tourists constitute the main consumer group.

1.2 Purchasing Behavior and Information Sources

- Information sources:Social media was the dominant source (65.70%), notably Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LINE.
- Reason for purchase: 68.40% purchased the product as a souvenir, while 21.50% purchased it for personal use.
- Repeat purchases:Average repeat purchases were 2–3 times per year, showing strong brand loyalty.

1.3 Attitude Levels

The attitude analysis revealed high levels of agreement on key variables:

Attitude Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Perceived Value	4.492	0.585	High
Sociocultural Perceptions	4.535	0.583	High

Tourists consistently agreed that the product offers good taste, safety, high quality, and represents local identity, and that supporting the product also contributes to local community development.

2. Results for Objective 2 Analysis of Factors Influencing Purchase Decisions

Before the main analysis, multicollinearity was assessed using correlation coefficients, with all values below 0.75, indicating no multicollinearity problems.

The Hosmer–Lemeshow Test returned $p > 0.10$, confirming good model fit.

The model's explanatory power was moderate (Pseudo $R^2 = 0.273$), which is typical for behavioral Logit models.

2.1 Significant Factors

The Binary Logit Model revealed three statistically significant predictors:

(1) Gender (GEN)

- Significance: $p < 0.01$
- Marginal Effect: 0.141
- Interpretation:
  Female tourists are 14.1% more likely to purchase "Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn" than male tourists.

(2) Age (AGE)

- Significance: $p < 0.05$
- Marginal Effect: 0.034
- Interpretation:
  Older tourists have a 3.4% higher probability of purchasing for each increase in age group.

(3) Income (INC)

- Significance: $p < 0.01$
- Marginal Effect: 0.055
- Interpretation:
  Higher income increases the probability of purchase by 5.5% per income level.

2.2 Non-Significant Variables

Although education, perceived value, and sociocultural attitudes had high mean scores, they did not reach statistical significance in predicting actual purchase decisions.

This suggests that while tourists hold positive views about the product and appreciate its cultural value, demographic characteristics (age, income, gender) are stronger determinants of actual buying behavior than attitudes alone.

This section now matches Objective 2 precisely.

Tables (Reformatted for Clarity)

Table 2. Demographic Information of Respondents (n = 400)

Demographic	n	%
Gender		
Male	192	40.20
Female	208	59.80
Age (Years)		
<22	18	4.50
22–31	30	7.50
32–41	60	15.00
42–51	123	30.75
52–61	77	19.25

Demographic	n	%
>61	92	23.00
Education		
Below Bachelor's	144	36.00
Bachelor's	186	46.50
Above Bachelor's	70	17.50
Income (Baht/Month)		
<10,500	104	26.00
15,001–25,000	132	33.00
25,001–35,000	90	22.50
35,001–45,000	63	15.75
45,001–55,000	8	2.00
>55,000	3	0.75

Evaluation of Results (Revised)

Strengths

- Clear mapping of results to research objectives (now corrected).
- Descriptive and inferential statistics are accurately used.
- Logit model interpretation is clear and policy-relevant.

Areas for Improvement

- Adding confidence intervals for marginal effects may enhance academic rigor.
- It should be noted in the Discussion that some attitude variables expected to be significant were not significantly predictive.
- Consider including a figure or diagram for model summary if the journal allows.

Discussion

1. Discussion of Findings Related to Objective 1: Demographic Influence The results indicate that gender, age, and income play statistically significant roles in influencing the purchase decision for "Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn." Female tourists exhibited a higher likelihood of purchasing the product compared to males. This supports the argument that women often demonstrate stronger behavioral tendencies toward cultural preservation, food safety, and support for local products, which aligns with the findings of Ma and Zhi (2023) and Wongkumchai and Worapongpat (2023), who emphasize that female consumers are more responsive to products associated with local identity and heritage. Age was also a significant predictor. Older tourists showed higher probability of purchasing, which may be attributed to the fact that older consumers tend to value tradition, nostalgia, and local craftsmanship more strongly than younger consumers. This pattern is consistent with cultural consumption theories suggesting that age correlates with appreciation for traditional products and regional authenticity. Income significantly influenced purchasing decisions as well. Higher-income respondents demonstrated greater probability of purchasing the product, likely due to increased purchasing power, willingness to pay for quality, and ability to spend

on unique local goods. This aligns with research by (Worapongpat, 2023) which highlights income as a key driver of premium local product consumption.

2. Discussion of Findings Related to Objective 2: Perceived Value and Purchase Decisions. The study found that respondents rated the product's perceived value including taste, quality, packaging, and local identity at a high level. This aligns with prior studies such as Valmohammadi et al. (2023) and Yukai, Wongkumchai, and Worapongpat (2023), who emphasize the role of unique value creation and cultural identity in enhancing consumer attraction toward local products. However, despite the high mean scores, perceived value was not statistically significant in the Logit Model. This finding suggests an important insight: although consumers agree that the product has high value, these positive perceptions do not necessarily translate into actual purchase decisions when demographic characteristics are included in the model. In other words, perceived value appears to be appreciated by most tourists equally, resulting in limited variation within the sample thus reducing its statistical power in predicting purchase behavior. This phenomenon is well-documented in consumer-behavior literature, where highly favorable attitudes with low variance may not yield statistical significance (Attitude–Behavior Gap). Therefore, the findings do not contradict previous literature but rather suggest that perceived value is universally high, leaving demographic factors to differentiate buyers from non-buyers.

3. Discussion of Findings Related to Objective 3: Sociocultural Perceptions. Sociocultural perceptions including community pride, cultural identity, and support for local self-management were also rated at a high level. Respondents indicated that purchasing Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn reflects support for traditional culture, local families, and community livelihoods. These findings align with Influence Theory and the work of Wang et al. (2021) and Xie et al. (2024), which demonstrate that social environment, group norms, and cultural ties significantly influence consumer behavior. Nonetheless, similar to perceived value, sociocultural perceptions were not statistically significant predictors in the Logit Model, despite their high average scores. This implies that while social and cultural sentiments toward the product are broadly positive, they do not distinctly separate purchasers from non-purchasers. Again, the likely explanation is low variance and universally positive sentiments among Thai tourists toward local products resulting in insufficient discriminatory power for statistical significance. These results underscore a key insight: Tourists generally hold strong cultural pride and positive attitudes about supporting local products, but actual purchasing decisions are more strongly influenced by demographic factors such as gender, age, and income.

4. Theoretical and Practical Implications. Theoretically, the findings reinforce the Attitude–Behavior Gap and demonstrate that: High attitudes toward value and culture do not automatically predict behavior when demographic variables are dominant. Demographic characteristics remain strong predictors in purchasing culturally associated products. Practically, marketers and local producers should: Target promotional campaigns toward women and higher-income groups. Customize communication to older consumer segments who value traditional identity. Maintain high product quality, taste, and packaging, even if these variables do not statistically influence purchase behavior because they contribute to overall brand equity and cultural value.

Knowledge Contribution

This study has generated new knowledge that can be summarized and presented in a conceptual diagram.

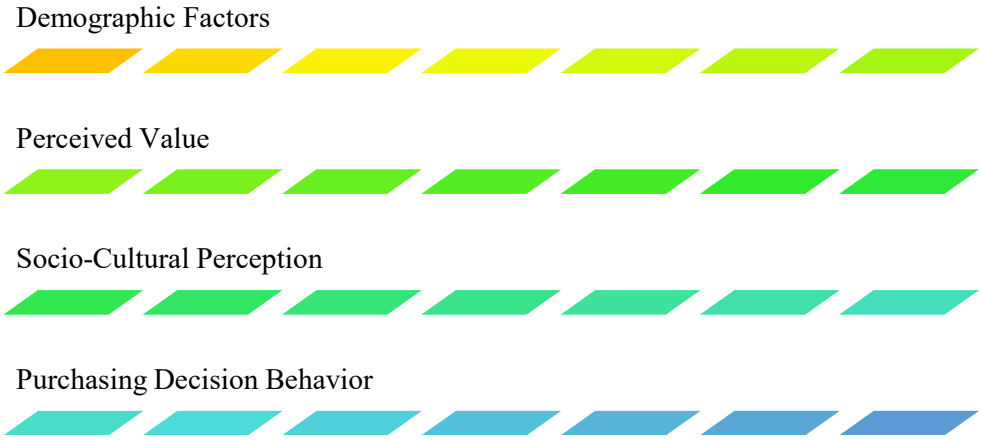

Figure 2 New Knowledge from the Research

As shown in Figure 2, new insights emerge: Demographic factors (gender, age, and income) directly influence purchasing behavior. Perceived value (in terms of taste, quality, packaging, and local identity) enhances and amplifies the influence of demographic factors on purchasing behavior. Socio-Cultural Perception acts as a catalyst, shaping positive attitudes and increasing the likelihood of purchase.The interplay of these factors strengthens the potential of Kalamai Luang Phor as a cultural souvenir, promoting tourism and supporting sustainable self-management among local communities.

Conclusion

The study concludes that demographic factors, perceived value, and sociocultural perceptions significantly shape consumer decision-making regarding the purchase of Kanom Kalaema Luang Pornin Nakhon Pathom. The proposed conceptual framework reflects the complex interplay among these variables and demonstrates how consumer characteristics, product value creation, and cultural context jointly influence purchasing behavior.

The findings highlight that gender, age, and income are the strongest determinants of purchase decisions, indicating clear market segments that stakeholders can target. Furthermore, the high perceived value stemming from taste, product quality, packaging, and strong local identity combined with positive sociocultural attitudes among consumers demonstrates the product's potential to become a sustainable cultural souvenir that enhances both local economic development and cultural tourism.

Importantly, the results emphasize the need for community-based development and culturally grounded marketing strategies to strengthen local self-management. This will support the continued expansion of "Kanom Kalaema Luang Porn" as a marketable cultural product rooted in local heritage.

Acknowledgment of Research Limitations

This study is limited by the sample group primarily local tourists within Nakhon Pathom which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the use of a cross-sectional survey does not capture long-term changes in consumer behavior. Future studies should address these limitations by extending the scope and employing longitudinal research designs.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations for Practical Application

1.1 Based on Objective 1 (Demographic Factors) Since gender, age, and income significantly influence purchasing behavior, relevant agencies such as local government organizations, tourism offices, and local entrepreneurs should design segmented marketing strategies, such as:Promotions tailored to specific age groups.Premium product sets for higher-income consumers.Storytelling campaigns appealing to women, who show higher purchase tendencies.

1.2 Based on Objective 2 (Perceived Value) As perceived value plays a crucial role, agencies should:Enhance product quality control and maintain consistent taste and texture.Improve packaging design to be more modern, durable, and gift-worthy.Emphasize local identity through branding, storytelling, and community narratives.

1.3 Based on Objective 3 (Sociocultural Perceptions) To strengthen cultural attachment and community pride:Promote community-led cultural activities tied to Kanom Kalaema.Provide educational programs on local culinary heritage.Support local groups in preserving traditional production techniques.

1.4 Additional Practical Recommendation Given the growing importance of digital media:Develop digital marketing strategies, including Facebook pages, TikTok content, short-form videos, influencer reviews, and live streaming.Encourage user-generated content (UGC) campaigns to build consumer trust.Create QR codes that link to product history, production process, and cultural stories.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies should:Explore long-term socioeconomic impacts of developing Kanom Kalaema as a cultural product.Expand the target population to include:International touristsYounger generations, Online consumer groups, Conduct qualitative studies to understand deeper cultural meanings, consumer motivations, and brand attachment.Investigate the impact of digital marketing, tourism trends, and cultural branding on purchasing behavior.

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Academic Article

Buddhism and State Power: An Analysis of the Relationship Between Religious Institutions and Thai Politics*

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Abstract

This essay examines the enduring and evolving relationship between Buddhism and state power in Thailand, highlighting the ways in which religious authority and political institutions have shaped one another from early kingship to the digital age. It argues that Buddhism has long served as a source of political legitimacy, national identity, and social cohesion, while the state has continually regulated and instrumentalized the Sangha to reinforce its authority. The discussion traces historical models of Buddhist kingship, the modernization and bureaucratization of the Sangha, the rise of Buddhist nationalism, and the diverse forms of monastic political engagement. It also explores the transformative impact of digital technologies, which have decentralized religious influence and opened new arenas for Buddhist activism and ideological contestation. Overall, the essay demonstrates that Buddhism in Thailand is not merely a religious tradition but a dynamic sociopolitical force deeply embedded in the construction and negotiation of state power.

Keywords: Buddhism; Thai politics; Sangha; Nationalism; Monastic activism; State power; Digital religion

Introduction

The relationship between Buddhism and state power in Thailand has been fundamental to the development of Thai political culture, national identity, and institutional governance for more than seven centuries. Historically, Thai kingship was grounded in the Buddhist ideal of the *Dhammarāja*—the righteous king whose authority derived from moral virtue and adherence to the Ten Royal Virtues (*Dasa-rajadhamma*) (Reynolds, 1979). This ethical foundation not only shaped the symbolic legitimacy of rulers but also influenced the administrative structures that governed monastic life and state–religion relations. In early Thai polities such as Sukhothai and Ayutthaya, the Sangha served both as a moral authority and an institutional partner of the monarchy, providing education,

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ritual expertise, and ideological cohesion for the expanding state (Tambiah, 1976).

The modern Thai state inherited these historical patterns, adapting religious institutions to suit new forms of political authority. The Sangha Act of 1902, for example, reorganized the monastic order into a centralized bureaucracy aligned with the state's administrative hierarchy (Ishii, 1986). Even after the 1932 Revolution and the transition to constitutional governance, Buddhism remained central to national ideology. Military-led governments throughout the Cold War relied on Buddhist rhetoric and monastic networks to legitimize anti-communist campaigns and promote national unity (Keyes, 1971). As a result, Buddhism became intertwined with state-building, national morality, and political legitimacy.

In contemporary Thailand, this relationship continues to evolve in complex ways. Constitutional provisions repeatedly affirm the state's responsibility to protect and promote Buddhism, reinforcing its privileged status among religions (Jackson, 2009). At the same time, state intervention in monastic affairs—such as appointments of the Supreme Patriarch and investigations of monastic factions—has generated debates about political interference and monastic autonomy (Taylor, 2016). The rise of Buddhist nationalism, conflicts involving high-profile temples, and the use of digital platforms for religious–political mobilization further illustrate the dynamic and contested nature of Buddhist–state relations.

This article analyzes the historical development, institutional mechanisms, and contemporary tensions that characterize the relationship between Buddhism and state power in Thailand. By examining both the ideological foundations and the political realities of the Sangha–state relationship, the article seeks to understand how religious authority continues to shape—and be shaped by—Thai politics in the 21st century.

Historical Foundations: Kingship and Buddhist Legitimacy

The historical formation of the Thai state is inseparable from Buddhist conceptions of kingship and moral authority. In early Thai polities such as Sukhothai and Ayutthaya, political power was justified not merely through military strength or lineage but through the ethical framework of Theravāda Buddhism. Central to this framework was the ideal of the *Dhammarāja*, the "righteous king" who ruled in accordance with the *Dasa-rājadharma*, or Ten Royal Virtues, including generosity, self-discipline, morality, and non-violence (Reynolds, 1979). This model linked sovereign authority to moral conduct: a king who embodied these virtues was believed to protect the kingdom not only physically but cosmologically, ensuring prosperity and harmony throughout society.

The Sukhothai period is often portrayed in Thai historiography as a "moral polity," emphasizing the king's accessibility to the people and his role as

a protector of Buddhism (Wyatt, 1984). Whether idealized or not, the Sukhothai inscriptions suggest that kings used Buddhist moral idioms to construct an image of benevolent authority. Monks were essential partners in this process. They maintained religious learning, provided counsel, and performed rituals that reinforced the king's role as both a secular ruler and a spiritual patron (Tambiah, 1976). The Sangha, in turn, depended on royal protection, establishing a mutually reinforcing pattern of religious and political authority.

During the Ayutthaya period (1351–1767), the relationship between Buddhism and kingship became more institutionalized. The monarchy adopted elaborate court rituals, Brahmanical as well as Buddhist, that sacralized the king's status, while the Sangha expanded as a literate institution responsible for education, manuscript production, and moral regulation (Ishii, 1986). Buddhist doctrine provided ideological justification for hierarchical order: social stability was maintained through supporting the righteous king, who acted as the chief patron of the religion and the guarantor of moral order. In return, the king's promotion of Buddhism—through temple construction, scripture revision, and monastic reform—reinforced his cosmological legitimacy.

The early Rattanakosin period (1782 onward) continued these traditions while responding to political crises after the fall of Ayutthaya. Kings Rama I to Rama IV sought to re-establish Buddhist authority as a foundation for national restoration. Major reforms included the compilation of the *Tipiṭaka*, standardization of monastic discipline, and increased royal oversight of the Sangha (Swearer, 1995). These measures reflect the political importance of Buddhism for state consolidation: regulating the Sangha was equivalent to regulating the moral order of the kingdom.

Thus, in pre-modern Thailand, Buddhist legitimacy and political authority were intertwined in a mutually beneficial partnership. The king derived divine-moral authority through his role as the patron and protector of Buddhism, while the Sangha benefited from royal patronage and institutional stability. This historical legacy continues to shape Thai political culture, informing contemporary debates on legitimacy, nationalism, and state–religion relations.

State Regulation and Modernization of the Sangha

The modernization of the Thai state during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries fundamentally reshaped the position and structure of the Sangha. As Siam confronted pressures of Western imperialism and embarked on administrative reforms, the monarchy sought to centralize political authority and construct a modern bureaucratic state. These reforms extended beyond secular governance and deeply affected the Buddhist monastic order. The reorganization of the Sangha became a key component of nation-building, serving both political and ideological purposes (Ishii, 1986).

A decisive turning point occurred under King Chulalongkorn (Rama V). Concerned with regional autonomy within the monastic community, inconsistencies in monastic discipline, and the need to consolidate national unity, Chulalongkorn initiated sweeping reforms that culminated in the Sangha Act of 1902. This legislation transformed the Sangha into a highly centralized hierarchy modeled on the bureaucratic structures of the modern state. Through the Act, the state standardized monastic titles, created an administrative system based on regional ecclesiastical jurisdictions, and placed the Supreme Patriarch at the apex of a clearly defined chain of command (Swearer, 1995). Although framed as a measure to restore monastic discipline, the Act functioned politically to bring religious authority under direct state control.

The Sangha Act of 1902 also formalized the relationship between the state and monastic education. Traditionally, temples had served as centers of literacy and moral instruction; however, modern reforms integrated monastic education into the national system. Monks became participants in state efforts to build a disciplined and literate citizenry (Reynolds, 1979). This educational role strengthened the ideological alignment between Buddhism and nationalism, reinforcing the state's reliance on Buddhist institutions to disseminate moral norms and civic values.

After the 1932 Revolution, which ended absolute monarchy, the state continued to regulate the Sangha through successive legal reforms. The Sangha Act of 1941 reflected the new constitutional order but preserved the centralized administrative model established in 1902. Later revisions in 1962 under military rule reinstated a more conservative and authoritarian structure, strengthening state oversight of monastic affairs and restricting monastic involvement in politics (Keyes, 1971). These measures reveal how different regimes—whether monarchical, constitutional, or military—recognized the Sangha as an institution crucial to ideological legitimacy and social stability.

The Cold War era intensified state intervention as the government used Buddhist rhetoric and monastic networks in anti-communist campaigns. Development monks (*phra nak anurak*) were mobilized to promote rural development and national unity, aligning religious teachings with political objectives (Taylor, 1988). This period demonstrated the dual function of the Sangha as both a moral force and an instrument of political integration.

By the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, continued amendments to Sangha legislation reflected ongoing debates over monastic autonomy, state authority, and religious legitimacy. While modernization strengthened bureaucratic efficiency, it also generated tensions between traditional monastic ideals and the state's political interests. Thus, the modernization of the Sangha must be understood not merely as administrative reform but as a strategic effort to integrate religious authority into the apparatus of the modern Thai nation-state.

Buddhism, Nationalism, and the Contemporary State

In contemporary Thailand, Buddhism continues to play a central role in shaping national identity and legitimizing political authority. Although Thailand is formally a constitutional monarchy with guarantees of religious freedom, Buddhism occupies a privileged symbolic and institutional position. This prominence is rooted in a long historical trajectory but has taken on new significance in the context of modern nationalism, political conflict, and debates over state identity. Buddhism is not simply a religious tradition; it functions as a cultural marker that defines the imagined moral community of the Thai nation (Keyes, 1987).

Buddhism as the Core of Thai National Identity

Thai nationalism has historically been constructed through a triadic ideology often summarized as "Nation, Religion, King." In this formulation, Buddhism is positioned as both the spiritual foundation of the Thai people and a stabilizing force within the political system. State rituals, educational curricula, and national ceremonies consistently reinforce Buddhism as an essential element of the collective identity (Jackson, 2009). Such ideological framing positions non-Buddhist citizens—particularly Malay Muslims in the South—in a complicated relationship with the state, raising questions about inclusivity and state neutrality.

This symbolic elevation of Buddhism also reflects political strategies. Successive governments, whether military or civilian, have invoked Buddhist values to justify policies, promote moral governance, and cultivate an image of guardianship over national stability (Hunsaker, 2018). Buddhism, as morally authoritative and culturally resonant, is frequently mobilized to bolster state legitimacy during periods of political uncertainty.

The Rise of Buddhist Nationalism

Recent decades have witnessed the rise of Buddhist nationalism, characterized by movements that frame Buddhism as under threat and call for stronger state protection. These groups, often influenced by global patterns of religious nationalism, argue that Buddhism is central to Thai identity and therefore requires special legal and institutional safeguards (Darling, 2014). For example, campaigns to declare Buddhism the state religion gained momentum in the 2007 and 2017 constitutional debates. Though the proposals were ultimately rejected, the debates revealed deep concerns about preserving Buddhist dominance in an era of perceived cultural and geopolitical change.

Buddhist nationalist activism has also intersected with security politics, especially concerning the Southern Border Provinces. Some nationalist groups argue that Buddhist identity must be defended against separatist violence, framing the conflict in religious terms that risk exacerbating ethnic and religious tensions (Liow, 2016). This illustrates how Buddhist identity can be wielded not only as a unifying ideology but also as a divisive political tool.

Monastic Politics and State Intervention

Contemporary Buddhist–state relations are also shaped by conflicts within the Sangha itself. High-profile cases such as the Dhammakaya controversy demonstrate how monastic factions can become entangled with political networks, influencing and being influenced by state intervention (Taylor, 2016). The state has increasingly exercised its authority over the Sangha through amendments to the Sangha Act—particularly the 2016 and 2018 revisions, which strengthened executive control over appointment processes for the Supreme Patriarch.

These interventions reveal a paradox: while the state relies on Buddhism for legitimacy, it simultaneously exerts regulatory power to ensure political alignment and prevent institutional autonomy. The politicization of monastic authority has led to internal divisions within the Sangha, with some monks advocating for reform, others supporting nationalist movements, and still others resisting political involvement entirely (McCargo, 2019).

Buddhism in the Digital Public Sphere

The digital age has created new arenas for Buddhist political discourse. Monks and lay teachers now use social media platforms to disseminate teachings, comment on socio-political issues, and mobilize followers. Online Buddhist influencers can challenge traditional monastic hierarchies, diversify interpretations of Buddhist ethics, and even critique state policies (Suwanbubbha & Taylor, 2010). At the same time, social media has amplified nationalist rhetoric, allowing extremist groups to circulate messages quickly and mobilize supporters.

Digital communication has therefore transformed the landscape of Buddhist authority, decentralizing religious expression and expanding the political roles of both monastics and lay Buddhists.

In contemporary Thailand, Buddhism remains a core element of national identity and political legitimacy. However, its relationship with the state is increasingly contested and complex. Buddhist nationalism, monastic factionalism, and the rise of digital activism illustrate that Buddhism is no longer a monolithic force but a dynamic field of ideological and political struggle. Understanding these developments is essential for analyzing the future of Thai politics and the evolving role of religious authority in the modern nation-state.

Monastic Agency and Political Engagement

Contrary to the common assumption that Buddhist monks in Thailand are politically passive or constrained by monastic discipline, the historical and contemporary record demonstrates that monastics have exercised significant political agency. Their influence emerges not only through formal institutional roles but also through moral authority, grassroots activism, education, and symbolic power. The notion that monks must remain apolitical derives from a selective reading of the

Vinaya; in practice, monks have long participated in political debates—sometimes in support of state authority, sometimes in opposition to it (Harrington, 2004).

Historical Patterns of Monastic Influence

Throughout Thai history, monks have acted as advisors to kings, mediators in conflicts, and custodians of moral legitimacy. In the early Rattanakosin period, royal reformers relied on senior monks to standardize monastic discipline, compile canonical texts, and guide religious policy (Swearer, 1995). This illustrates that monastic authority was political not because monks held office but because they shaped the moral foundation of governance.

Even during the era of state centralization in the early twentieth century, monastic figures played active roles in intellectual debates. Reformist monks such as Prince Wachirayan, the Supreme Patriarch under Rama V, influenced educational policy and the ideological direction of national Buddhism (Ishii, 1986). Their teachings shaped public morality and provided the state with cultural legitimacy.

Monks in Modern Political Movements

In the post-1932 and Cold War periods, monastic engagement took on new forms. The state mobilized monks to promote anti-communist nationalism, rural development, and loyalty to the monarchy. "Development monks" (*phra nak phatthana*) were deployed to lead rural modernization programs, reinforcing state narratives of moral and national progress (Keyes, 1971). Such roles blurred the line between religious duty and political service.

By the late twentieth century, a different form of monastic engagement emerged through the global movement of Engaged Buddhism. Thai thinkers such as Sulak Sivaraksa challenged authoritarian politics and transnational capitalism, advocating for democracy, human rights, and local empowerment grounded in Buddhist ethics (Queen & King, 1996). Although Sulak is a lay intellectual, many monks in his networks adopted similar forms of activism, demonstrating the permeability of religious and political spheres.

Contentious Monastic Politics in the Contemporary Era

The contemporary landscape shows a diverse spectrum of monastic political engagement. Some monks participate in pro-democracy movements, advocating reforms in the Sangha's governance, transparency in temple finances, and enhanced social justice. Others align with conservative or royalist agendas, reinforcing state authority and promoting Buddhist nationalism (McCargo, 2019).

Highly visible controversies—such as the disputes surrounding Wat Phra Dhammakaya—highlight the political stakes of monastic autonomy. The state's use of security forces in monastic conflicts demonstrates that monasteries can become arenas of political confrontation. These events also reveal how monastic networks can mobilize large numbers of lay followers, transforming religious disputes into national political issues (Taylor, 2016).

Social Media and the New Public Sphere

The rise of digital communication has further expanded monastic agency. Monks now use YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, and Twitter to teach Dhamma, critique public policies, and influence political debates. Digital platforms enable monks to bypass traditional hierarchies and reach mass audiences, thereby reshaping religious authority and public discourse (Suwanbubbha & Taylor, 2010). Some online monks frame political engagement as a moral duty to advocate for justice, environmental

sustainability, or ethical governance—a reinterpretation of the monastic role in modern public life.

Balancing Vinaya and Citizenship

These diverse forms of engagement raise normative questions: How should monks balance their religious discipline with civic responsibility? While classical Buddhism encourages disengagement from worldly affairs, Theravāda traditions in Southeast Asia often regard monks as moral guardians who must intervene when society faces ethical decline (Harris, 2007). This tension reflects broader debates about democracy, legitimacy, and the proper relationship between religion and state.

In sum, monastic political agency in Thailand is neither a deviation from tradition nor a recent invention. It is an enduring feature of Thai political life—shaped by historical precedent, evolving social contexts, and the moral authority of the monastic role. As Thailand continues to face political polarization and rapid social change, monastic engagement will remain a significant force in shaping public discourse and contesting political legitimacy.

Digitalization and New Arenas of Buddhist Influence

The rapid expansion of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed the landscape of Buddhist communication, authority, and political engagement in Thailand. Historically, the diffusion of Buddhist teachings was mediated through temples, monastic networks, and printed texts. In the contemporary digital age, however, monks and lay practitioners increasingly rely on online platforms to disseminate teachings, mobilize communities, and engage in socio-political issues. As a result, Buddhist authority has become more pluralized, decentralized, and accessible—creating both opportunities and challenges for the traditional structures of the Sangha (Suwanbubbha & Taylor, 2010).

Digital Platforms and the Transformation of Buddhist Communication

Digital media have opened unprecedented avenues for Dhamma propagation (*thammathat*). Monks now deliver sermons through YouTube, Facebook Live, TikTok, and podcasts, reaching audiences far beyond temple walls. These digital teachings often blend traditional Dhamma with contemporary issues such as mental health, ethical governance, and environmental concerns. This shift reflects a broader trend toward "networked religion," where religious identity and practice are shaped by digital interconnectivity rather than institutional hierarchy (Campbell, 2013).

The emergence of online monastic influencers—popular monks with millions of followers—illustrates how digital charisma can rival or exceed institutional authority. Their messages often appeal to younger audiences, addressing everyday concerns through relatable language and digital aesthetics. This phenomenon challenges traditional monastic hierarchies, which historically relied on seniority, scholarship, and lineage to confer religious legitimacy.

Digital Activism and Political Discourse

The digital sphere has also enabled new forms of political engagement among monks and lay Buddhists. While the Sangha Supreme Council discourages monastic involvement in politics, online platforms blur conventional boundaries between religious teaching and civic debate. Some monks use social media to critique government corruption, advocate for social justice, or respond to crises such as environmental degradation (Harris, 2021). These activities reflect a reinterpretation of Buddhist ethics as requiring public intervention when societal suffering becomes acute.

Conversely, digital platforms have amplified conservative and nationalist Buddhist voices. Online groups use Buddhist symbolism to promote exclusionary ideologies, fueling debates about ethnic identity, religious purity, and threats to national Buddhism (Darling, 2014). Social media thus becomes both a democratizing force—empowering diverse voices—and a polarizing arena that can intensify ideological conflict.

Erosion and Reconfiguration of Religious Authority

The proliferation of digital content has disrupted traditional gatekeeping mechanisms within the Sangha. Monks with limited formal education or institutional recognition can gain mass followings, while highly respected scholars may struggle to adapt to the demands of digital engagement. This shift reflects a broader transformation from centralized religious authority to networked and performative forms of legitimacy (Tiravanija, 2018).

Additionally, the spread of online teaching raises concerns about authenticity, Vinaya discipline, and the commercialization of Dhamma. Some online monks monetize their content through advertising, merchandise sales, or live-stream donations, prompting debates about ethical boundaries in digital religious practice (McCargo, 2019).

Digital Buddhism and the Global Public Sphere

Digitalization has also globalized Thai Buddhism. International followers engage with Thai monks through online platforms, contributing to transnational Buddhist communities. These interactions reshape Thai Buddhism as both a national and global phenomenon, enabling monks to participate in international dialogues on peace-building, mental well-being, and interfaith cooperation (Seeger, 2022).

Moreover, during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, digital platforms became essential for maintaining religious practice. Virtual merit-making, online funerals, and digital meditation retreats demonstrated the adaptability of Thai Buddhist tradition in response to societal disruptions.

Digitalization represents a profound transformation of Thai Buddhism, altering patterns of communication, authority, and political engagement. While it expands access to religious teachings and empowers new voices, it also challenges traditional monastic hierarchies and introduces new risks related to misinformation, sensationalism, and ideological polarization. Ultimately, digitalization has become a new arena in which the ongoing negotiation between Buddhism and state power unfolds—shaping the future of religious authority, national identity, and public ethics in Thailand.

Conclusion

Buddhism and state power in Thailand have long evolved together, forming a relationship that is both foundational to national identity and continually reshaped by political change. From the earliest Thai kingdoms, political authority drew legitimacy from Buddhist ideals, particularly the model of the Dhammaraja, the righteous king whose moral virtues ensured social harmony and cosmological stability. The Sangha served as an indispensable partner in this system, providing education, ritual authority, and moral guidance while receiving royal patronage and protection. As Thailand modernized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the state sought to centralize its authority, and these reforms extended to the monastic order. The Sangha Act of 1902 transformed the monastic community into a bureaucratic institution aligned with state structures, reinforcing Buddhism's ideological role in national integration. Even after the transition to constitutional governance, successive governments relied on Buddhist symbolism and monastic networks to promote unity, morality, and resistance to perceived ideological threats. In the contemporary period, Buddhism continues to underpin Thai nationalism through the enduring triad of Nation, Religion, King, positioning Buddhism as a core marker of collective identity. Yet modern politics have made this relationship increasingly contested. Debates over the status of Buddhism, monastic autonomy, and religious nationalism illustrate how Buddhism is mobilized both to support state agendas and to challenge them. The Sangha itself has become a site of political tension, with internal divisions and high-profile controversies exposing struggles over authority and legitimacy. Monks continue to exercise political agency in diverse ways: some align with conservative or nationalist causes, others advocate social justice, environmental activism, or democratic reform, drawing on Buddhist ethics to address contemporary social issues. The rise of digital media has further transformed the role of Buddhism in public life. Monks and lay Buddhists now reach vast audiences through online platforms, bypassing traditional hierarchies and reshaping religious influence. Digital spaces amplify both progressive and nationalist voices, creating new arenas of debate, mobilization, and conflict. Buddhism, once mediated primarily through temples and state institutions, now circulates through decentralized, highly visible, and rapidly shifting digital networks. Across these transformations, the fundamental pattern remains consistent: Buddhism in Thailand is not merely a spiritual tradition but a central force in shaping political legitimacy, national identity, and public discourse. The Sangha and the state rely on one another, negotiate boundaries, and periodically contest authority, producing a dynamic relationship that continues to evolve in response to social change, political pressures, and technological innovation.

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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
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Table 1 Experts specializing in the Nora performance

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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.
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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.

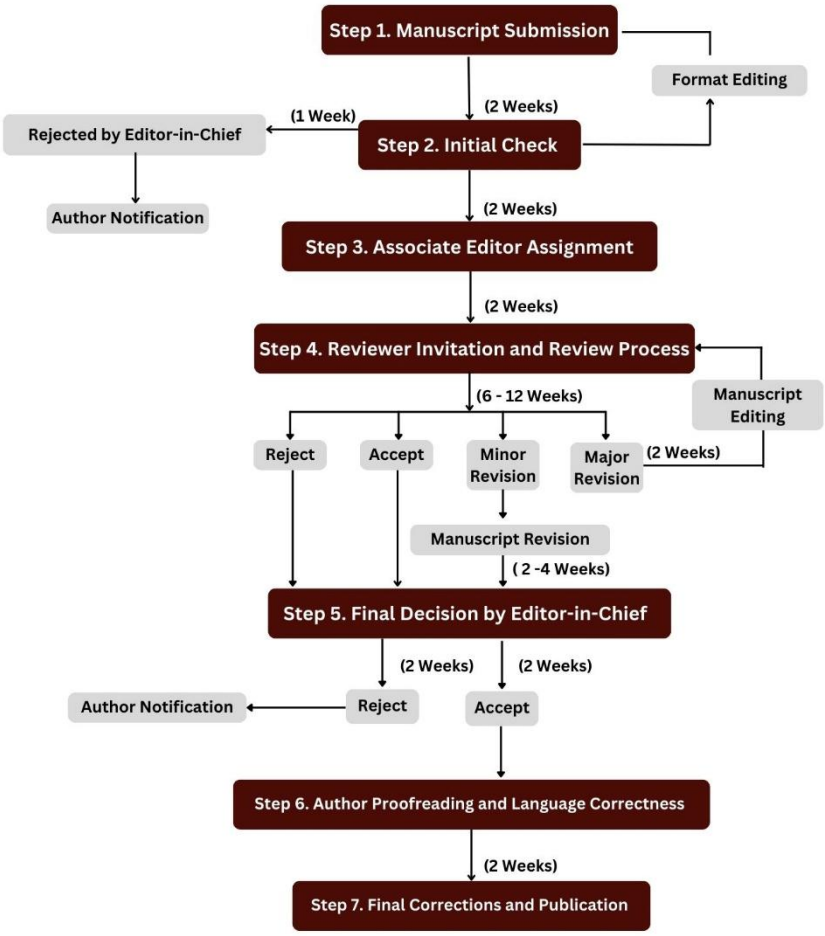
Phathong, K. (2021). *Analyzing Income Disparities and Social Mobility in Developing Economies.* Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Innovation Publishing.

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.