

## Buddhist Ethics Applying to Integrate the Anti-Corruption Policy, Northeast Thailand

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### ABSTRACT

Corruption is a major problem in all countries, where international organizations have an annual rating of Corruption-Free, to encourage stakeholders to recognize and pay attention to the issue. Buddhism has been with Thai society for a long time and it can be said that it is a culture that is deeply rooted in the territory of Thailand, however, it has not yet appeared in a concrete study that the application of Buddhist ethics has been integrated for prevention. What will be the prevention of corruption? Therefore, this research aimed to (1) to study the application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy. 2) to analyze the factors affecting the application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy, and 3) to present a guideline for applying Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy. This research used a blended methodology with a sample of 400 people, and interviews with 12 key informants. Quantitative data analysis using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. Information from in-depth interviews is based on content analysis methods. The results of the research were as follows:

The application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy, in general, is at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}=3.07$ , S.D=.38), considering each aspect, it was found that the monitoring and evaluation were at a moderate level. ( $\bar{x}=3.11$ , S.D=.37), Government policy formulation is at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}=3.08$ , S.D=.17), and the implementation of government policies at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}=3.02$ , S.D=.69) respectively.

Factors affecting the application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy with statistical significance were: Public participation, policy satisfaction, the role of the Office of the Auditor General, the role of the Provincial National Anti-Corruption Commission, the motivation for achievement, with the predictor coefficient in the raw score (b) equal to .391, .299, .156, .138 and .074 respectively, and the forecast weight was 80 percent. ( $R^{adj}=0.80$ ,  $F=20.23$ ,  $Sig.=0.001$ ).

The guidelines for applying Buddhist ethics at 3 levels consist of 5 precepts (Śīl), 10 roots of goodness (Kuṣīlkrmbh), 8 ways to success (Mrrkhmīxngkh) 8 is involved in the performance of duties containing the principles of Buddhist ethics as Morality to integrate public policy by applying Buddhist principles to cover all levels of policy in the policy-making process. In particular, (1) ignoring personal and companionship is effective and efficient. (2) Establish strategies for each agency to be seriously implemented, (3) Encourage staff to be conscious, (4) Organize training seminars to make officials aware of the implementation of government policies. Monitoring and evaluation of all departments. Besides, the public sector is urged to set indicators, standards, or criteria for assessing public policy based on morality and transparency. These will help in the fight against corruption in the public sector, respectively.

### Keywords

Buddhist Ethics, Prevention and Suppression, Corruption, Public Policy

### Introduction

Today's global society has advanced advancements in communication technology and the development of essential materialism, which has resulted in international competition at a higher level every day, this causes the neglect of the development of psychological values. The unification of the peoples of ASEAN, which is the cooperation of the ASEAN group in the political and economic, and social security, as well as the national culture of each country, will affect various areas of change such as Trends in the flow of goods, investment and free labor, including the different types of crime in each country such as drug problems, illegal labor



movement, smuggling, transnational human trafficking, smuggling, money laundering, the insurgency in each country (WeeraSomboon, **2008: 56**). This includes international economic and computer crimes, public health problems causing the free flow of labor and tourists, and the disease-related problem faced by people in each country, that is, the COVID-19 problem that continues to take an increasingly serious direction today, even though each country has stricter protection and control measures, it is becoming more and more severe. Besides, there is a lack of cooperation in formulating plans for setting up management policies, introducing new ideas, and monitoring the implementation of each step of the plan to solve problems in all aspects of the process to create a system of problem-solving mechanisms that are comprehensive in each area of the country administration (KanokonBoonmee, ThawushThaphech, and NapharatPhutnark, **2017: 85**).

Thailand is a country that is among the world population that has changed with the times to achieve a balanced national and competitive population, whose principles emphasize material development rather than mental development. Today, the most common problem faced by people in Thailand is the economic problem that implies that people focus on earning income to meet consumer demand. Besides, the current political problems from **2006 to 2020**, which are the main problems in the administration of the country, have resulted in less assistance, less hospitality, there was exploitation, a lack of unity, no respect for other's rights, and a lack of adherence to common interests, causing corruption in departments or ministries (WitayakornChiangkul, **2006: 78**). The corruption problem in the Thai civil service industry is a type of crime that is detrimental to Thai society today, and there was great opposition from the people of society, but the main problem was that politically dissenting had a great impact on the Thai administrative system in every age. But the government, therefore, has ideas on preventing and suppressing corruption to reduce government administration problems in the administration of the country that can be audited and transparent, thus creating problems that require people to receive services. Public areas of poor quality, also cause investors from abroad and within the country to lose confidence in the Thai bureaucracy, which is often abused by corrupt mechanisms that continuously accumulate. (SaowaneeThairungroj et al, **2010: 59**)

Application of Buddhist principles for the prevention of corruption in the organization under the policy of managing the country in the management of good governance following the principles of good governance to find ways that can lead to applying it to benefit the management of modern organizations today in both the public and private sectors. The guidelines for good governance under the policy of managing the country with good governance, which emphasizes and focuses on the management of various organizations, especially budget management and contributing to the stakeholders in terms of procurement, and bribery, and other bribes. Buddhist ethics is, therefore, one of the options to strengthen the minds of the prevention of corruption, and all parties must cooperate seriously to provide people as well as the population to have a safe and healthy lifestyle, eat well, be happy physically, mentally, emotionally and receive organizational management effectively (Sirirattanajit, A., 2013: 215).

Thailand's government policies are currently the most-watched by foreigners in the administration of the country, especially among countries that have progressed in moral, psychological, and civil liberties. If this continues to be the case, the national government administration at the international level will affect the development of the country. Corruption is a problem that everyone in the country must work together to solve. However, in the past, despite the ongoing corruption prevention and suppression of various departments, many new laws have emerged. But there is an ongoing process of corruption in the public sector, both detectable and undetectable, it is also unable to eliminate corruption from the country as the government has



intended to administer the country according to the national strategy to respond effectively to various problems (ApichartKhunnawatbandit, **2018: 92**).

For the reasons mentioned above, the researcher is interested in studying the Buddhist Ethics in the Prevention and Suppression of Corruption Public Policy, which collects information on the application of Buddhist ethics to be able to analyze the current situation and trends in corruption in Thailand and propose solutions to the next. The results of the research will be able to lead to the Anti-Corruption Guidelines Government policies for Thailand are truly developed and sustainable, coordinating policies and monitoring the implementation of the policy to provide an overview of the problem and use it as a basis for solving the problems in the future.

### **Research objectives**

This study aims to (1) study the application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy. 2) to analyze the factors affecting the application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy, and 3) to present a guideline for applying Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy

### **Research methodology**

This research uses a combination of research models, both quantitative research and qualitative research methods by collecting information from relevant documents and research to bring to the conclusion the application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy, the detail was as follow;

**Research Areas:** This study was conducted in the upper northeastern region of Thailand, consisting of UdonThani Province, NongKhai Province, NongBua Lam Phu Province, and BuengKan Province.

The respondents were citizens and civil servants aged **18** years and over living in the research area who calculated the number of samples according to the Yamane formula (**1973: 142**) **400** people (Population is **2,409,617** people) and was randomized on a stratification sampling (KanlayaVanichbuncha, **1999: 75**).

A total of **12** participants were interviewed in-depth on the application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy using a specific random sampling method.

Quantitative data analysis by using statistical packages with descriptive statistics and Multiple Regression Analysis. the analyzes of the data obtained from the interviews were analyzed employing content analysis, summarizing and interpreting, and then presenting descriptive presentations (SuwimonTirakanant. **2007**).

### **Research Results**

The application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy, in general, is at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}=3.07$ , S.D=.38), considering each aspect, it was found that the monitoring and evaluation were at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}=3.11$ , S.D=.37), government policy formulation is at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}=3.08$ , S.D=.17), the implementation of government policies is at a moderate level as well ( $\bar{x}=3.02$ , S.D=.69) respectively.

Factors affecting the application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy with statistical significance were: Public participation, policy satisfaction, the role of the Office of the Auditor General, the role of the Provincial National Anti-Corruption Commission, the motivation for achievement, with the predictor coefficient in the raw score (b) equal to.391, .299, .156, .138 and .074 respectively, and the forecast weight was **80** percent. ( $R^{adj}=0.80$ ,  $F=20.23$ , Sig.=0.001).



The guidelines for applying Buddhist ethics at **3** levels consist of **5** precepts (Śīl), **10** roots of goodness (Kuṣḷkrmbh), **8** ways to success (Mrrkhmīxngkh **8**) is involved in the performance of duties containing the principles of Buddhist ethics as Morality to integrate public policy by applying Buddhist principles to cover all levels of policy in the policy-making process. In particular, (1) ignoring personal and companionship is effective and efficient. (2) Establish strategies for each agency to be seriously implemented, (3) Encourage staff to be conscious, (4) Organize training seminars to make officials aware of the implementation of government policies. Monitoring and evaluation of all departments. Besides, the public sector is urged to set indicators, standards, or criteria for assessing public policy based on morality and transparency. These will help in the fight against corruption in the public sector, respectively.

### Discussion

The application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy, in general, is at a moderate level, which is inconsistent with the research of DithapartBorworncha (2017: 50-62) found that the problem of corruption and misconduct of the police officers at the station level was at a high level overall, where the causes of corruption and misconduct were summarized as follows: (1) Internal factors are: rewarding benefactor, acknowledgment of corruption as normal, thought that no one can catch, lack of integrity worth taking risks, insatiable greed, selfishness, the habit of thinking who they do, the mind is not strong, the desire for wealth, the non-compliance with the code of conduct, the praise of the rich, powerful. (2) External factors include no serious punishment for perpetrators, being under the influence of the authority, the opportunity to claim benefits to have a stake in the establishment, the monopoly of power, the appointment of political influence, people's misunderstandings, political interference, delays of law enforcement processes, ignorance of corruption laws, differently educated.

Factors affecting the application of Buddhist ethics to integrate the anti-corruption policy with statistical significance were: Public participation, policy satisfaction, the role of the Office of the Auditor General, the role of the Provincial National Anti-Corruption Commission, the motivation for achievement, which is consistent with the research of Phrarachrattanalongkorn and SanyaKenaphoom (2016: 71-87) Found that (A) Buddhist ethics has 2 levels: The basic level consists of Benjasin (5 Prohibitions) and Benjadham (5 Good Practices), and social role levels consisted of (1) Religious institution including body, mind, and wisdom (2) State institutions include the principles of self-governance, the principles of people management, and the principles of good governance. (3) Educational institutions Including Dharma Sermon (method of preaching), examination principle (Considering goodness), Kalayanamittham (building friendship), Global Dharma (foundations of ethics), divinity (good practice), and teaching style (teaching tactics). (4) Family institute These are the secular principles (the principle of doing good for the laypeople), and the sixth direction (the principle of family administration). (2) Citizens of NongKhai Province have Buddhist ethics, that is, government officials or administrators and heads of households adhere to basic ethics and ethics according to their social roles at the overall level at the highest level.

The guidelines for applying Buddhist ethics at **3** levels consist of **5** precepts (Śīl), **10** roots of goodness (Kuṣḷkrmbh), **8** ways to success (Mrrkhmīxngkh **8**) is involved in the performance of duties containing the principles of Buddhist ethics as Morality to integrate public policy by applying Buddhist principles to cover all levels of policy in the policy-making process. In particular, (1) ignoring personal and companionship is effective and efficient. (2) Establish strategies for each agency to be seriously implemented, (3) Encourage staff to be conscious, (4) Organize training seminars to make officials aware of the implementation of government



policies. Monitoring and evaluation of all departments. Besides, the public sector is urged to set indicators, standards, or criteria for assessing public policy based on morality and transparency, according to research by DithapartBorworncha (2017: 50-62), it was found that there were four phases of the prevention and correction of corruption and misconduct, starting from the pre-police phase, the police school term, the police service period, and the termination from police service. The five police departments in the police station are the Suppression Department, the Investigation Department, the Investigation Department, the Traffic Department, and the Administration Department, should be prevention and problem solving should be carried out in an integrated way in which the government and the public sector can take part as participation, support, knowledge promotion, budgeting, welfare, personnel development, and work audit, with a rigorous internal and external audit system from organizations or independent agencies such as The Police Complaint Committee, which has to use modern technology in its operations and to check the working system, has a strong system for promoting good police.

### Recommendations

Practical recommendations: (1) Should drive the prevention and suppression of corruption, government policy every year. And develop the use of Buddhist ethics in the prevention and suppression of corruption and government policies regularly to instill and build management consciousness. (2) Corruption prevention plans should be initiated by regular changes in the behavior of personnel in the organization, development of management systems, and anti-corruption. (3) Public participation in the administration of agencies should be promoted, in particular the Provincial National Anti-Corruption Commission and the Office of the Auditor-General, to contribute to the promotion of knowledge and understanding of Prevention and suppression of corruption for the public sector regularly.

Suggestions for further research: (1) Buddhist ethics should be used in the prevention and suppression of corruption or other principles of Buddhism to comprehensively know the opinions of the people. (2) Corruption prevention research should be conducted by changing the size of the research study area to be wider and larger, such as the control of the Northeast level or as a government organization or other work center.

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