



## The Influence of Buddhist Philosophy for Achievement in Mitigating the Negative Impacts on Workers' Performance during the Covid-19 Era

Charamporn Holomyong<sup>1\*</sup>, Sirinan Kittisuksathit<sup>2</sup> and Suporn Jaratsit<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1\*,3</sup>Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University, Thailand

<sup>2</sup>Thailand Center for Happy Worker Studies, Mahidol University, Thailand

(Received: October 3, 2024; Revised: February 2, 2025; Accepted: February 13, 2025)

### Abstract

This article presents the results of a study of the influence of Buddhist philosophy for achievement in mitigating the negative impacts on workers' performance during the Covid-19 pandemic by using indicators from a survey of happiness of 25,955 employees in organizations from all regions of Thailand. The sampling frame of the survey was established by the National Statistical Office (NSO), which represent of the worker population across 17 industrial sectors, classified according to the Thai Standard Industrial Classification (TSIC) criteria. The authors classify the factors into four practices according to the doctrine of Buddhist philosophy. The results of a binary logistic regression analysis indicate that love of work (Adjusted odd ratio: AOR = 0.73; P-value < 0.01), commitment to effort (AOR = 0.97; P-value < 0.05), concentration on work (AOR = 0.97; P-value < 0.05), and review of the work (AOR = 0.94; P-value < 0.01) were influential in reducing the likelihood of negative impacts on the worker's overall performance during a crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic. When analyzed by sector of employment, it was found that the love of work, commitment, and concentration on works reduces the likelihood of having a negative impact of work by employees in government and state enterprise organizations. The love of work, concentration on work, and review of the work can help reduce the chances that a crisis will have a negative impact on performance of people working in private organizations. This study highlights the benefits of applying Buddhist philosophy in human resource management to help workers cope with changes in the organization and adapt to a new way of life. The Buddhist philosophy also guidelines human resource development on performance enhancement that appropriate to the organizational context.

**Keywords:** 1) Workplace Achievement 2) Organization 3) Workers' Performance 4) Human Resource Management 5) Covid-19

<sup>1\*</sup> Associate Professor; E-mail: joycharam@gmail.com (Corresponding Author)

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor; E-mail: prskt@mahidol.ac.th

<sup>3</sup> Researcher; E-mail: suporn.jar@mahidol.edu

## Introduction

The Covid-19 epidemic situation has compelled the world of work to change. Organizations are keen to improve human resource management in terms of the reassessment of essential workforce, changes in job titles/roles/responsibilities of people in the organization, and changing the way and where employees work in the organization (Collings, et al., 2021, pp. 1379-1380; Fu, 2020, pp. 604-605). Along with support and helping workers cope with changes in the organization and adapt to new lifestyles (Carnevale and Hatak, 2020, pp. 184-185), executives are being forced by circumstance to adopt the philosophy, knowledge, and inspiration of various disciplines to optimize human resource management. The goal is an integrated solution that will help cope with future uncertainties.

In the midst of a crisis situation, how will working people prevail? Resilience is of paramount importance to help people deal with and cope with the problems they are facing (Tregoning, Remington and Agius, 2014, pp. 2-3; Kaplan, et al., 1996, pp. 162-166). A person's outlook on an external calamity can play an important role in helping to try a different approach, train oneself to be flexible, and adapt to a new work culture to overcome change. Past research by Carol S. Dweck has shown that beliefs and mindsets drive people to be brave enough to face challenges, work hard, accept advice, and pursue effective strategies to overcome crises (Dweck, 2017, pp. 17-52; Dweck and Yeager, 2019, pp. 482-484). Duckworth and colleagues take the position that personality traits help people overcome

disappointment and uncertainty through 'grit,' a concept that reflects perseverance as the engine that drives people on the journey to long-term success (Duckworth, et al., 2007, p. 1087). Thai workplaces rooted in Buddhist culture often organize regular religious ceremonies, such as annual merit-making, pouring water over Buddha statue during Songkran festival, or giving food to Buddhist monks for purification and good fortune. HR personnel commonly use these Buddhist activities to boost morale and relieve suffering of employees in the organization. A person's ability to confront life's problems is a personal trait that depends on a variety of factors, including circumstances, upbringing, environment, knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Lown, et al., 2015, p. e708). What helps people overcome bad situations can be 'rules' or 'formulas' that can be explained by science or knowledge and multiple perspectives such as philosophy, religion, and psychology. Some hold the view that a philosophy which enhances consciousness and wisdom will help lead people to overcome the crisis that has occurred. Among adherents to Buddhism, there is a philosophy of work that has been passed down from generation to generation. This is referred to as Iddhipada 4 (the path of accomplishment), and this is a philosophy that has helped individuals and communities to prevail under difficult circumstances. The sudden emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in extreme reactions by governments and societies around the world to prevent and contain the spread of the deadly virus. These containment measures have resulted in massive unemployment



and displacement of workers, sharp reductions of income, and a mandate to adopt new working styles to guard against outbreaks. Covid-19 is a unique challenge for the world, and a question is whether the age-old Buddhist philosophy for success - that has worked well in the past - will still be a shining light to show the way to persevere and overcome the crisis? This research aimed to answer that question by studying the influence of Buddhist philosophy to help workers and organizations in Thailand to respond and adapt to the negative impact of Covid-19 to turn adversity into opportunity. The findings of this study will show how beneficial the integration of religious philosophy in human resource management will be for workers and organizations during the Covid-19 epidemic in Thailand.

#### **Buddhist Philosophy as a path toward success**

Iddhipada 4 is a prescription for success in everyday life, with rules and guidelines for people to embrace love, satisfaction, diligence, and focus. As applied to one's work life, the practice of Iddhipada 4 will lead to productive accomplishment and success.

Philosophy for achievement consists of four principles (Sayadaw, 2007, pp.178-181; Bhikkhu, 1996, p.13):

- Love of work, namely Chantha in Pali language, is contentment and love in what is being done in the moment, with a desire to achieve good results.
- Commitment to effort, namely Viriya in Pali language, is diligence in doing a task with patience, strength, and

indomitableness to obstacles. Commitment to effort of Buddhist Philosophy for achievement has a similar meaning to grit that was psychological constructed by Duckworth which represents perseverance of effort and consistency of interest [8].

- Concentration on work, namely Chitta in Pali language, is paying focused attention to what is being done, and to concentrate on even the most trivial task
- Review of one's work, namely Vimangsa in Pali language, is prudence in doing the job, and always reflecting on what has been done.

Those who implement Iddhipada 4 in their work should experience success because those who follow this philosophy will be satisfied with the work they do, they will diligently strive for excellence, concentrate on each and every task, persevere in the face of obstacles, work carefully, regularly scrutinize for errors so that they can be found and resolved in a timely manner, and always seek ways for self-improvement to produce more satisfactory results (Payutto, 1998, p. 35). These are the key factors that lead to the success of work (Duckworth, et al., 2012, pp. 5-6; Perkins-Gough, 2013, p. 14).

#### **Applying Iddhipada 4 to human resources management**

In most organized enterprise, people are a key resource with the potential to drive the organization toward its goals. A knowledgeable and highly efficient work force should result in exceptional quantity and quality of

work processes, outputs, and outcomes. However, efficiency on the job does not depend solely a worker's skills and abilities -- it is also related to the determination and dedication to perform to the best of one's ability. The basic tenets of Buddhism include principles of practice that were originally designed as a path to enlightenment can also be applied to promote efficiency at work and in everyday life. Love of work and Commitment to effort are principles that help people cope with problems and obstacles in life and work, while Concentration on work and Review of the work are principles of practice that help individuals to overcome more difficulties and obstacles. In terms of human resource development, the Iddhipada 4 can be empowered through training and campaigning to communicate its' principles. Employees should be satisfied with their work, happy and enjoy working. Supervisors should assign tasks that are appropriate for employees' abilities while employees should be diligent, not discouraged by obstacles, enthusiastic for their work, determine and care for their work, consistently reviews of works and seek additional knowledge to improve their work. (Dhammasantiko, et al., 2021, pp.3762-3764). Iddhipada 4, therefore, is a code of conduct that contributes to the benefit of workers which can positively affect the organization and, accordingly, the concept can also be applied in human resources management in various organizations such as academic institutions (Dhammasantiko, et al., 2021, p.3760),

the healthcare setting (Lovichakorntikul, Walsh and Anurit, 2012, p. 27), and local government organizations (Sucitto, Chaimusik and Lairin. 2020, p. 1), etc.

## Methods

This research studied the influence of Buddhist philosophy on achievement in mitigating the negative Impacts on workers' performance by assessing the impact of Covid-19 on the work life of employees in various sectors of the Thai labor force. The core research question was as follows: "Can the Buddhist philosophy for achievement Code of Conduct help workers avoid the negative job impact of the Covid-19 epidemic?"

### (1) Data

Data were collected using a quantitative methodology by extracting data from a large-scale secondary database of the Thai labor force. The original survey was conducted by the Thai National Statistical Office (NSO) in collaboration with the Institute for Population and Social Research of Mahidol University funded by the Thai Health Promotion Foundation to explore quality of life, happiness, and engagement of formal workers in Thailand. Field data was collected during October 2020–March 2021 using the HAPPINOMETER<sup>2</sup>. This instrument is a self-administered questionnaire used to survey the happiness of people age over 15 years, working in various sectors of the economy. The database consists of 25,955 workers from all industries and every region

---

<sup>2</sup>The HAPPINOMETER was developed through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and expanded to include indicators to measure the quality of life of workers in industrial and service sectors and government sectors. Furthermore, HAPPINOMETER has integrated the "Happy 8" concept, which focuses on eight dimensions of happiness.



in Thailand. The original target sample size for the HAPPINOMETER survey is 20,000 respondents. This number was determined to ensure sufficient representation across 17 industrial sectors, classified according to the Thai Standard Industrial Classification (TSIC) criteria. The sampling frame for this survey was established by the National Statistical Office (NSO), which represent of the worker population in each industrial sector. The allocation of samples was proportional to the distribution of workers in these sectors, reflecting the composition of the Thai working population. This method ensures that the survey results reflex the diversity of worker across all industries in Thailand. The reliability of HAPPINOMETER was tested with the Cronbach's alpha of 0.936, indicating strong reliability.

For the purposes of this research, only employees of government, state enterprises, and the private sector were included. Workers in the non-formal sector and self-employed individuals were excluded from the sample.

## (2) Variables in the analysis

Variables in the analysis comprise of the impact of work during the period of epidemic spread of Covid-19, Buddhist philosophy of achievement at work, demographic variables, and employment variables.

- Impact of work during the period of epidemic spread of Covid-19 in Thailand

Work life impact of Covid-19 was measured by the question: "How has the Covid-19 situation affected your overall job performance?" Response was coded according to a 5-point Likert Scale, with values from very negative, slightly negative, no impact, slightly

positive, and very positive impact. Response was then condensed into a binary variable: 1 = Affected negatively; and 0 = Unaffected or Affected positively. Those who responded that they were negatively affected, either to a great extent or to a slight extent, were grouped together into the negatively affected group.

- Demographic variables

Demographic variables consist of gender, age, and personal lifestyle.

'Gender' is classified into female, male and LGBTQ+.

'Age' is a ratio type variable (Ratio Scale) showing the actual age of the sample who were currently employed (at the time of the survey) and age over 15 years.

'Marital' status is categorized as single, married, widowed/divorced/separated.

'Region of residence' is classified into Bangkok, central region of Thailand, northern region of Thailand, northeastern region of Thailand, and southern region of Thailand.

'Educational attainment' is classified as primary school or lower, lower secondary, higher secondary or vocational certificate/diploma, college/university, and postgraduate.

- Buddhist philosophy of achievement at work

The HAPPINOMETER survey tool is comprised of questions which are proxies for the Buddhist philosophy for achievement attributes: love of work, commitment to effort, concentration on work, and review of one's work. These four ideals are a path to success, not only in life in general, but also regarding performance in the workplace. The following presents results by each of these four components:

**Table 1** Factor loading for the group of questions showing love and satisfaction in work (N=25,955).

Order	Questions	Factor loading
1	Are you satisfied with the overall environment of the organization?	0.86
2	Are you satisfied with the benefits that the organization provides?	0.83
3	Overall, are you happy with your work?	0.81
4	Are you proud to be an employee of this organization?	0.80

**Note:** Response was initially coded by 5 levels of the Likert Scale: none/least, low, moderate, very, most

‘Love of work’: This refers to devotion, faith, and trust (in your vocation), or love of work. The values are presented as a ratio scale, which is derived from a series of questions on satisfaction in work. The raw data were subjected to a Confirmatory Factor Analysis by using Principal Component Analysis. The eigenvalue was greater than 1, the KMO test was 0.80, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a P-value

$< 0.01$ , indicating that the variables were related. This factor grouping could account for 67.9% of the variance among the component variables (Table 1). The questions focused on satisfaction with the overall environment and benefits of the organization, happiness at work, and pride in being an employee of the organization, which are indicators that well reflect love of work.

**Table 2** Factor loading for the group of questions showing commitment and effort to improve work potential (N=25,955).

Order	Questions	Factor loading
1	Overall, are you interested in acquiring new knowledge from various sources?	0.88
2	Overall, are you interested in self-improvement to advance in life?	0.86
3	Are you dedicated to working for the benefit of your organization?	0.63

**Note:** Response was initially coded by 5 levels of the Likert Scale: none/least, low, moderate, very, most

‘Commitment to effort’: This refers to perseverance (grit), and values are presented as a ratio scale, derived from a series of questions that show commitment and endeavor to develop work potential. The data were subjected to a Confirmatory Factor Analysis by using Principal Component Analysis. The eigenvalue was greater than 1, the KMO test was 0.57, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a P-value

$< 0.01$ , indicating that the variables were related. This factor grouping could account for 63.8% of the variance among the component variables (Table 2). All questions emphasize self-development, knowledge accumulation, and dedication to work, which are indicators that well reflect commitment to effort.

‘Concentration on work’: This component refers to dedication, and was measured by response to the question: “Each day, do you have performance goals for your work?” Response was initially coded by 5 levels of the Likert Scale: none/least, low, moderate, very, most

**Table 3** Factor loading for the group of questions showing review of the work (N=25,955).

Order	Questions	Factor loading
1	Do you express opinions and participate in offering suggestions for improving the work with employers and supervisors?	0.78
2	Are you a person who thinks up new ways to make progress for your organization?	0.73
3	Overall, do you and your co-workers share experience and try to be a model worker for each other?	0.79

**Note:** Response was initially coded by 5 levels of the Likert Scale: none/least, low, moderate, very, most

‘Review of the work’: This refers to reviewing the work that has been done (circumspection), and the data is analyzed as a ratio scale. Data were derived from a series of questions that represent the review of one’s work. Data were subjected to a Confirmatory Factor Analysis by using Principal Component Analysis. The eigenvalue was greater than 1, the KMO test was 0.65, and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity was P-value < 0.01, indicating that the variables were related. Together, this factor grouping could account for 58.7% of the variance among the component variables (Table 3). All questions emphasized the importance of exchanging ideas with supervisors and colleagues, as well as the commitment to promote work efficiency, which are indicators

that well reflect the review of the work.

- Employment variables

Employment variables include job description, type of employment, and income.

‘Job description’ is classified into office, production, service administrative, and other work.

‘Employment type’ is classified into regular, contractual, daily, other (e.g., certain periods, based on work, contract).

‘Income’ refers to monthly income, and includes other compensation from work, classified as not more than 10,000 baht, 10,001-20,000 baht, 20,001-30,000 baht, and 30,001 baht or more.

## Results

**Table 4** Demographic characteristics by type of employer (%)

		Total (N= 25,955)	Sector Gov’t or state enterprise (N= 6,715)	Private (N= 19,178)	Test (P)
Age [mean (SD)]		36.4	39.4	35.3	t=28.9
range 16-75		(9.9)	(10.1)	(9.7)	(P<0.01)
Gender	Male	33.8	29.6	35.3	$\chi^2 = 79.3$ (P<0.01)
	Female	65.4	69.8	63.8	
	LGBTQ+	0.8	0.6	0.9	

		Total	Sector		Test (P)
		(N= 25,955)	Gov't or state	Private	
			enterprise		
			(N= 6,715)	(N= 19,178)	
Marital status	Single	39.8	44.2	38.2	$\chi^2 = 87.7$ (P<0.01)
	Married	55.1	50.2	56.8	
	Widowed/divorced/separated	5.2	5.6	5.0	
Region	Bangkok	26.1	36.6	22.4	$\chi^2 = 4662.0$ (P<0.01)
	Central	57.2	25.8	68.3	
	North	7.2	19.7	2.8	
	Northeast	5.0	10.4	3.2	
	South	4.5	7.5	3.4	
Education	Primary or less	4.9	0.3	6.5	$\chi^2 = 6729.8$ (P<0.01)
	Lower secondary	11.4	1.1	15.0	
	Upper secondary/vocational	22.1	5.3	28.0	
	Commercial college	13.2	6.1	15.7	
	College/university	37.4	56.7	30.7	
	Post-graduate	11.0	30.5	4.2	
Monthly Income	Not over 10,000 baht	10.6	4.2	12.9	$\chi^2 = 3347.2$ (P<0.01)
	10,001-20,000 baht	47.5	25.4	55.2	
	20,001-30,000 baht	19.5	26.7	17.0	
	30,001 baht or over	22.4	43.7	14.9	

Table 4 shows the demographic characteristics of the sample. The majority of the sample was female (65.4%), followed by male (33.8%) and only a small percentage claimed an LGBTQ+ gender (0.8%). The sample had an average age of 36.4 years, and those persons working in a state enterprises had a slightly higher average age than those working in the private sector (39.4 and 35.3 years, respectively). About half the sample was married (55.1%), and another 39.8% were single. The proportion single among government and state enterprise workers is higher than among private

sector workers (44.2% and 38.2%, respectively).

Most of the sample lived in the country's central region (57.2%), followed by Bangkok (26.1%). When classified by employment sector, it was found that more government/state enterprise workers were in Bangkok (36.6%), followed by the central (25.8%) and north (19.7%) regions. Among private sector workers, two-thirds lived in the central region (68.3%), followed by Bangkok (22.4%), and South (3.4%).

More respondents had post-secondary





education (34.9%) than upper secondary/vocational school (28.0%), and about equal proportions had completed lower secondary or commercial college (15-16%). The proportion who graduated from college/university was much higher among government/state enterprise workers compared to those in the private sector (56.7% and 30.7%, respectively). About half of the sample (47.5%) had income in the range of 10,000 -20,000 baht per month (about

300 - 600 USD). However, those who worked in the government sector had a higher level of income than their counterparts in the private sector. Over two in five (43.7%) employees in government/state enterprise had monthly income of more than 30,000 baht per month (above 900 USD), while over half (55.2%) the workers in the private sector had incomes in the range of 10,000 -20,000 baht per month (about 300 -600 USD).

**Table 5** Extent to which work life was impacted by Covid-19 by type of employer.

Impact	Total	Sector		Test (P)
	(N= 25,955)	Gov't or state enterprise	Private	
		(N= 6,715)	(N= 19,178)	
Very negatively	8.9	5.9	10.0	$\chi^2 = 216.8$ (P<0.01)
Slightly negatively	26.3	24.1	27.1	
None	23.8	28.7	22.1	
Slightly positively	29.7	28.7	30.0	
Very positively	11.3	12.6	10.8	

About one-third (35.2%) of the respondents reported that the Covid-19 epidemic and response negatively impacted their work life, and the proportion of people who were negatively impacted was higher in the private sector than the government/state enterprise group (37.1% vs. 30.0%, respectively) (Table

5). That said, more than half the sample said that the Covid-19 epidemic did not affect the overall work life or had a positive effect, particularly among the government/state enterprise workers, among whom 28.7% reported being unaffected and 41.3% reported positive impact.

**Table 6** Logistic regression analysis of factors influencing the impact on work due to the Covid-19 situation.

	All Sectors			Gov't. & State Enterprise			Private Sector		
	AOR	95% CI	P	AOR	95% CI	P	AOR	95% CI	P
<b>Buddhist philosophy for achievement</b>									
Love of work	.73	(0.70,0.75)	.00	.74	(0.69,0.80)	.00	.72	(0.69,0.75)	.00
Commitment to effort	.97	(0.94,1.00)	.04	.91	(0.85,0.97)	.00	.99	(0.95,1.03)	.51
<b>Concentration on work</b>									

	All Sectors			Gov't. & State Enterprise			Private Sector		
	AOR	95% CI	P	AOR	95% CI	P	AOR	95% CI	P
None/least	Ref.	-							
Very little	.89	(0.75,1.06)	.21	.77	(0.56,1.07)	.12	.95	(0.77,1.16)	.62
Moderate	.73	(0.62,0.85)	.00	.62	(0.46,0.84)	.00	.78	(0.64,0.94)	.01
Very much	.61	(0.51,0.72)	.00	.50	(0.36,0.68)	.00	.65	(0.54,0.79)	.00
Most	.53	(0.43,0.64)	.00	.42	(0.28,0.63)	.00	.57	(0.46,0.72)	.00
Review of the work	.94	(0.90,0.98)	.00	.97	(0.90,1.06)	.50	.93	(0.89,0.97)	.00
<b>Demographic variables</b>									
Age	1.01	(1.00,1.01)	.00	.99	(0.99,1.00)	.13	1.01	(1.01,1.01)	.00
Gender									
Male	Ref.	-							
Female	1.07	(1.01,1.14)	.02	1.01	(0.90,1.15)	.82	1.12	(1.04,1.20)	.00
LGBTQ+	1.10	(0.82,1.49)	.52	1.26	(0.64,2.50)	.51	1.08	(0.78,1.51)	.63
<b>Region of residence</b>									
Bangkok	Ref.	-							
Central	1.04	(0.97,1.12)	.24	1.06	(0.92,1.23)	.41	1.06	(0.97,1.15)	.18
North	1.16	(1.03,1.31)	.01	1.18	(1.00,1.39)	.04	1.21	(0.99,1.47)	.06
Northeast	1.17	(1.02,1.34)	.02	1.24	(1.02,1.51)	.03	1.11	(0.92,1.35)	.27
South	1.35	(1.18,1.55)	.00	.86	(0.68,1.08)	.20	1.86	(1.56,2.23)	.00
<b>Marital status</b>									
Married	1.04	(0.98,1.11)	.17	1.04	(0.91,1.17)	.58	1.06	(0.99,1.13)	.12
Widowed/ divorced/ separated	1.03	(0.91,1.18)	.63	1.01	(0.78,1.30)	.96	1.05	(0.91,1.22)	.50
Single	Ref.	-							
<b>Education</b>									
Primary or less	Ref.	-							
Lower secondary	.98	(0.84,1.14)	.82	.74	(0.25,2.18)	.59	1.01	(0.86,1.17)	.93
Upper secondary or vocational	1.13	(0.98,1.30)	.10	.59	(0.22,1.56)	.29	1.18	(1.02,1.36)	.03
Commercial college	1.20	(1.03,1.40)	.02	.46	(0.17,1.24)	.13	1.29	(1.10,1.51)	.00
College/university	1.41	(1.21,1.65)	.00	.66	(0.25,1.73)	.39	1.48	(1.26,1.73)	.00
Post-graduate	1.45	(1.21,1.74)	.00	.68	(0.26,1.80)	.44	1.51	(1.21,1.89)	.00
<b>Characteristics of employment</b>									
Income									



	All Sectors			Gov't. & State Enterprise			Private Sector		
	AOR	95% CI	P	AOR	95% CI	P	AOR	95% CI	P
Not over 10,000 Baht.	Ref.	-							
10,000-20,000 Baht.	1.11	(1.00,1.22)	.04	1.19	(0.86,1.65)	.30	1.14	(1.02,1.26)	.02
20,001-30,000 Baht.	1.17	(1.04,1.32)	.01	1.33	(0.94,1.88)	.10	1.19	(1.04,1.37)	.01
30,001 Baht. or over	1.10	(0.96,1.26)	.19	1.49	(1.03,2.15)	.03	1.08	(0.92,1.26)	.34
Type of work									
Production	1.01	(0.92,1.10)	.90	.97	(0.66,1.41)	.86	1.01	(0.91,1.11)	.90
Services	1.13	(1.04,1.23)	.00	1.22	(1.06,1.39)	.00	1.06	(0.96,1.17)	.28
Management	1.14	(0.99,1.30)	.06	1.10	(0.90,1.36)	.35	1.16	(0.97,1.38)	.11
Other	1.07	(0.95,1.20)	.26	1.00	(0.84,1.18)	.99	1.17	(0.99,1.37)	.06
Office	Ref.	-							
Type of hire			.59			.72			.41
Contract	1.05	(0.95,1.16)	.36	1.08	(0.94,1.25)	.27	1.09	(0.94,1.27)	.24
Daily	1.05	(0.96,1.16)	.27	1.01	(0.62,1.65)	.97	1.07	(0.97,1.18)	.16
Other	.98	(0.81,1.19)	.85	.99	(0.77,1.28)	.96	1.01	(0.74,1.39)	.94
Permanent	Ref.	-							
Type of organization									
Private	1.50	(1.38,1.63)	.00						
Other	2.48	(2.11,2.92)	.00						
Gov't/State enterprise	Ref.	-							
Constant	.26		.00	.93		.89	.30		.00
$\chi^2$	1,304.62		333.07		892.88				
N	24,804	6,566	17,434						

Table 6 shows the results of the logistic regression analysis to test the influence of factors contributing to the negative impact on work from the Covid-19 crisis. The analysis was conducted for the following three models: Predictive model for (1) workers in all sectors; (2) workers in a government/state enterprise organization; and (3) workers in a private organization.

The results of the three models found that Buddhist philosophy for achievement

could help mitigate the negative impact on work from the Covid-19 pandemic. Thai workers with love of work (Adjusted odd ratio: AOR = 0.73; P-value < 0.01), commitment to effort (AOR = 0.97; P-value < 0.05) and review of the work (AOR = 0.94; P-value < 0.01) were more likely to have reduced negative impact at work due to the Covid-19 pandemic and response. People with concentration on work were less likely to be negatively impacted at work as well. Those with a moderate to the highest

level of goal-oriented approach to their work each day were less likely to have experienced a negative impact of Covid on their work than those who worked aimlessly (AOR = 0.73, 0.61, 0.53, respectively; P-value < 0.01). By sector of employment, love of work, commitment to effort, and concentration on work were influential in reducing the likelihood of negative Covid impacts for workers in government and state enterprises, while love of work, concentration on work, and review of the work were significantly associated with reduced negative Covid-19 impact on the work of employees in private sector organizations.

Some demographic characteristics had a negative impact on work performance. Increasing age increased the likelihood of negative work impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic among employees in all sectors (AOR =1.01; P-value <0.01) and those working in the private sector (AOR =1.01; P-value <0.01). Across all sectors, women were 1.07 times more likely to be negatively impacted at work than men. In the private sector, female employees were 1.12 times more likely to be negatively impacted at work than their male counterparts. However, age and gender were not associated with Covid-related work impact among government/state enterprise workers.

Geographical region was associated with Covid-19 impact on work life. Overall, workers in the north (AOR =1.16; P-value <0.05), northeast (AOR =1.17; P-value <0.05) and south (AOR =1.35; P-value <0.01) were more likely to have experienced a negative impact on work from Covid-19 than those working in the Bangkok area. It was also found

that people working in government/state enterprise in the north (AOR =1.18; P-value <0.05) and northeast (AOR =1.24; P-value <0.05) were more likely to be negatively impacted at work by the epidemic than those working in Bangkok. In the private sector, workers in the south region (AOR =1.86; P-value < 0.01) were more likely to be negatively impacted at work than those working in Bangkok.

Educational attainment was associated with work-life impact of Covid-19. For all workers combined and those working in the private sector, as education level increased, the likelihood of negative Covid impact on work increased. Income was also related to work impact. In the entire sample and those working in the private sector, people with income higher than 10,000 baht per month but not more than 30,000 baht were more likely to be affected negatively at work than those with income below 10,000 baht per month (i.e., at the minimum wage level). People working in government/state enterprises with income more than 30,000 baht per month (AOR = 1.49; P-value < 0.05) were more likely to be affected negatively at work than those in government/state enterprises with income less than 10,000 baht per month.

The sector of employment was differentially affected by Covid-19 on the work. For the entire sample and those working in government or a state enterprise, it was found that those who work in services (AOR =1.13 and 1.22, respectively; P-value <0.05) were more likely to experience a negative impact of the epidemic than office workers.



## Summary and Discussion

The Covid-19 epidemic is making it difficult for people around the world to live and work normally. The pandemic has also reinforced the realization that public health, economic, and social issues are not as separate as one might have thought. Changes in the world of work have driven organizations to adjust strategies, including managing human resources in the organization. This research studied the application of Buddhist philosophy in human resource management science. The results show that the application of the Buddhist philosophy for achievement mitigates the negative impact of Covid-19 on a person's work life.

'Buddhist philosophy for achievement' is a guideline for studying, working, and pursuing a vocation successfully. Philosophy for achievement consists of four practices, love of work (Chantha), commitment to effort (Viriya), concentration on work (Chitta), and review of the work (Vimangsa). This study found that philosophy for achievement reduces the chance of experiencing negative work impacts of a crisis such as Covid-19. It suggests that applying Buddhist philosophy to success in the workplace can help create resilience of employees across different levels and types of organizations. The practice of Buddhist philosophy for achievement enables a worker to manage and cope with problems that arise.

Love of work and concentration on work are influential in reducing the likelihood of experiencing negative effects at work, whether they are working in the public or private sector. Love of work involves the feeling

of a passion for work, as if it were one's "calling in life." Social psychology also contends that this type of attitude is predictive of behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1977, p.130; Eagly, 1992, p.693), morale, and a positive contribution to productivity in the workplace (Strauss, 1968, p.264). The concept of concentration on work refers to a focused mind, and that is another factor that helps to deepen one's knowledge and understanding of the work an employee is tasked with carrying out. Those insights can also contribute to success at work (Buckingham, 2007, pp.71-116). These inner attributes help workers to have the determination to overcome obstacles that arise, and see solutions to problems so that they can prevail.

Commitment to effort is commitment and dedication, and that is an indicator of the level of effort to follow one's faith and convictions. This principle is comparable to Angela Duckworth's concept of 'Grit,' which predicts that effort will help lead individuals to their intended goals (Duckworth, et al., 2007, p.1087). When experiencing negative effects at work by external calamity, a sense of dedication to the job and sense of indomitableness to obstacles motivates the workers to strive to overcome any problems faced. This reduces the likelihood of work performance being adversely affected by a problematic event (Blalock, Young and Kleiman, 2015, p.783). However, dedication alone may not be enough to meet the challenges of working in a private organization. Developing human resources in an organization may also require cultivating skills in other areas, such as the use of digital technology for quick and effective communication, and de-

veloping employee skills through self-learning (Przytula, Strzelec and Krysińska-Koscińska, 2020, pp.79-80).

Review of the work is the 4th practice of philosophy for achievement that reduces the likelihood of negative impacts at work across all sectors of employment. Review of the work is a review of what one has done, or a task one has performed. The worker uses their knowledge and prudence to be self-critical in a constructive way, with an objective eye toward the employer and its mission, and that helps guide trouble-shooting and problem-solving in the workplace (Antoniou, 2010, pp.19-22).

The spread of the Covid-19 virus has affected different groups of workers in different ways. The chances of being affected vary according to demographic characteristics. However, female employees in an organization, the elderly, those with high education, and people with moderate income are more likely to be negatively affected by the Covid-19 epidemic than other groups of workers. Other studies have also found that the Covid-19 crisis may contribute to discrimination in the workplace. For example, workers in certain demographic groups, such as women, the elderly, and women with dependent children were more negatively impacted at work than any other group (Landivar, et al., 2020, p.1; Lim and Zabek, 2024, p.504 ; Previtali, Allen and Varlamova, 2020, p.506). At the same time, the nature of a worker's job can also be predictive of their ability to adapt in the face of adversity. For example, factory workers on a production line who have lower education and income often do not have the flexibility or freedom to adapt

to externalities, such as an epidemic. They cannot "work from home" as an office worker or manager might be able to do. Thus, those workers of higher educational attainment are more likely to be in a job with flexible work hours and/or the ability to take their work outside the workplace. Today's advancements in information technology and digital communication are making it increasingly easy to continue to work full-time when at home or any place outside the physical worksite. At the same time, the acceleration of changes in the work life caused by the Covid-19 pandemic can cause negative effects, both mentally and physically.

Assistances from government and institutions have an impact in mitigating the negative impacts of workers during crisis. Low-income workers tend to be more negatively affected than high-income workers during the COVID-19 crisis due to the lower level of economic flexibility. Nevertheless, Thai government has an outstanding policy to help low-income people by providing support and assistance through the state welfare card for those with an income equal or lower than 100,000 baht per year. Some of those with an income below 10,000 baht per month are qualified to have a state welfare card and could received assistance, money to increase purchasing power, supporting budget to reduce consumption burdens, child supports, and budget allowance for utility bills during the COVID-19 crisis (Ministry of Finance, 2022, pp.22-34). There is also cooperation from various institutions to alleviate the suffering, such as providing special loans to state wel-



fare cardholders from the Government Savings Bank. At the same time, many workplaces have organized relief activities for employees in the organizations in various forms for employees with very low incomes. These state assistance measures have helped alleviate the suffering of low-income groups very well. However, the state welfare card policy does not cover people with an income higher than 100,000 baht per year, leaving those with an income between 10,000-30,000 baht per month to struggle alone. As a result, in the entire sample and those working in the private sector, people with income higher than 10,000 baht per month but not more than 30,000 baht were more likely to be affected negatively at work than those with income below 10,000 baht per month.

The Covid-19 pandemic is causing unpredictable changes in the workplace. This is pushing executives and managers to seek

ideas and philosophies in various disciplines to create and maintain effective production systems. The application of Buddhist principles to human resources management is a potentially effective way to help workers cope and adapt to a new type of work life. Those principles can be applied to bolster a worker's resilience so that they are ready to face the problems that may arise in the future. The benefits that accrue are not limited to the comfort of workers only. These attributes can significantly enhance work efficiency, morale, job satisfaction and, thereby, create an overall positive atmosphere in the organization. Good mental health in the workplace is intrinsically passed on among colleagues (Youssef and Luthans, 2007, pp.792-793), helping to boost productivity for the organization as a whole.

### Bibliography

- Antoniou, E. (2010). Career planning process and its role in human resource development. **Annals of the University of Petroșani, Economics**, 10(2), 13-22.
- Bhikkhu, T. (1996). **The Wings to Awakening** (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). California: Metta Forest Monastery.
- Dhammasantiko, S., Bhuripanyo, P. C., Chaisuk, P. and Sritragarn, T. (2021). Model of human resource development according to Iddhipada IV principle of educational institutions under office of primary educational service area. **Psychology and Education**, 58(1), 3760-3765.
- Blalock, D. V., Young, K. C. and Kleiman, E. M. (2015). Stability amidst turmoil: Grit buffers the effects of negative life events on suicidal ideation. **Psychiatry Research**, 228(3), 781-784.
- Buckingham, M. (2007). **Go put your strengths to work: 6 powerful steps to achieve outstanding performan.** New York: Free Press.
- Carnevale, J. B. and Hatak, I. (2020). Employee adjustment and well-being in the era of Covid-19: Implications for human resource management. **Journal of Business Research**, 116, 183-187.

- Collings, D. G., McMackin, J., Nyberg, A. J. and Wright, P. M. (2021). Strategic human resource management and Covid-19: Emerging challenges and research opportunities. **Journal of Management Studies**, 58(5), 1378-1382.
- Duckworth, A. L., Peterson, C., Matthews, M. D. and Kelly, D. R. (2007). Grit: perseverance and passion for long-term goals. **Journal of Personality and Social Psychology**, 92(6), 1087–1101.
- Duckworth, A. L., Weir, D., Tsukayama, E. and Kwok, D. (2012). Who does well in life? Conscientious adults excel in both objective and subjective success. **Frontiers in Psychology**, 3(356), 1-8.
- Dweck, C. (2017). **Changing the way you think to fulfil your potential Mindset** (updated ed.). London: Hachette UK.
- Dweck, C. S. and Yeager, D. S. (2019). Mindsets: A view from two eras. **Perspectives on Psychological Science**, 14(3), 481-496.
- Eagly, A. H. (1992). Uneven progress: Social psychology and the study of attitudes. **Journal of Personality and Social Psychology**, 63(5), 693-710.
- Fishbein, M. and Ajzen, I. (1977). Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: An introduction to theory and research. **Philosophy and Rhetoric**, 10(2), 130-132.
- Fu, X. (2020). Research on the survival strategy of SMEs under Covid-19--based on the perspective of organizational resilience. **Advances in Economics, Business, and Management Research**, 159, 603-606.
- Kaplan, C. P., Turner, S., Norman, E. and Stillson, K. (1996). Promoting resilience strategies: A modified consultation model. **Children & Schools**, 18(3), 158-168.
- Landivar, L. C., Ruppanner, L., Scarborough, W. J. and Collins, C. (2020). Early signs indicate that Covid-19 is exacerbating gender inequality in the labor force. **Socius**, 6, 2378023120947997.
- Lim, K. and Zabek, M. (2024). Women's labor force exits during COVID-19: Differences by motherhood, race, and ethnicity. **Journal of Family and Economic Issues**, 45(3), 504-527.
- Lovichakornতিকুল, P., Walsh, J. and Anurit, P. (2012). Buddhist social work: A case study of the Samrong General Hospital. **The International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU)**, 27.
- Lown, M., Lewith, G., Simon, C. and Peters, D. (2015). Resilience: what is it, why do we need it, and can it help us?. **British Journal of General Practice**, 65(639), e708-e710.
- Ministry of Finance (2022). **Annual Report of the Welfare Fund for Grassroots Economy and Society, Fiscal Year 2022**. Bangkok: Ministry of Finance.
- Payutto, P. A. (1998). **A constitution for living: Buddhist principles for a fruitful and harmonious life** (30<sup>th</sup> ed.). Nakhon Pathom: Wat Nyanavesakavan.





- Perkins-Gough, D. (2013). The significance of grit: A conversation with Angela Lee Duckworth. **Educational Leadership**, 71(1), 14-20.
- Previtali, F., Allen, L. D. and Varlamova, M. (2020). Not only virus spread: The diffusion of ageism during the outbreak of Covid-19. **Journal of Aging & Social Policy**, 32(4-5), 506-514.
- Przytula, S., Strzelec, G. and Krysinska-Koscianska, K. (2020). Re-vision of future trends in human resource management (HRM) after Covid-19. **Journal of Intercultural Management**, 12(4), 70-90.
- Sayadaw, M. L. (2007). **The manuals of dhamma**. India: Vipassana Research Institute.
- Strauss, G. (1968). Human relations—1968 style. Industrial Relations. **A Journal of Economy and Society**, 7(3), 262-276.
- Sucitto, P., Chaimusik, S. and Lairin, C. (2020). Application of the 4 principles of Iddhipada in personnel's performance in Local Administration Organization, Wong-Noi district, Pranakorn Si Ayutthaya province. **Journal of Nisitwang**. 22(2), 1-13.
- Tregoning, C., Remington, S. and Agius, S. (2014). Facing change: Developing resilience for staff, associate specialist, and specialty doctors. **British Medical Journal**, 348, g251.
- Youssef, C. M. and Luthans, F. (2007). Positive organizational behavior in the workplace: The impact of hope, optimism, and resilience. **Journal of Management**, 33(5), 774-800.