



A Model for Enhancing the Happiness of Students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

รูปแบบการส่งเสริมความสุขสำหรับนักเรียนในโรงเรียนพุทธศาสนาวันอาทิตย์
มหาวิทยาลัยมหาจุฬาลงกรณราชวิทยาลัย

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Abstract

The purposes of the dissertation “A Model for Enhancing the Happiness of Students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University”, are: 1) to study a model for the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2) to develop a model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, and, 3) to publicize a model for enhancing the happiness of students in all Buddhist Sunday Schools. This research is qualitative. It is comprised of: 1) document analysis, 2) in-depth interviews of twenty-seven informants, and 3) focus group discussion by six experts in specific fields. Data analysis occurs through content analysis. Research findings reveal as follows:

1. The current model for happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU.), demonstrates that opportunities in choosing what students are interested in learning leads them to happier learning in a satisfactory atmosphere.

2. The development of a model for enhancing the happiness of students at Buddhist Sunday School, MCU is comprised of three strands with the same five elements: well-being, pleasant mindedness, and community strength. Each of the strands is comprised of five elements: loving kindness (Mettā), self-training (Kāya Bhāvanā), positive emotion, relationship, and local wisdom.

3. The model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, MCU is dependent upon the support of practicing Buddhist monks and the

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community working with the students of Buddhist Sunday School, MCU., to follow BuddhaDhamma. The element practiced is based on loving kindness (Mettā), and self-training (Kāya Bhāvanā) in order to reach the wisdom of BuddhaDhamma.

Keywords: happiness in Buddhism, happiness in Western wisdom, happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, the loving-kindness-Metta, the physical training- Kāya Bhāvanā

บทคัดย่อ

วัตถุประสงค์ของดุษฎีนิพนธ์เรื่อง “รูปแบบการส่งเสริมความสุขสำหรับนักเรียนในโรงเรียนพุทธศาสนาวันอาทิตย์ มหาวิทยาลัยมหาจุฬาลงกรณราชวิทยาลัย ” เพื่อ:- ๑) ศึกษารูปแบบความสุขสำหรับนักเรียนในโรงเรียนพุทธศาสนาวันอาทิตย์ มหาวิทยาลัยมหาจุฬาลงกรณราชวิทยาลัย ๒) พัฒนารูปแบบการส่งเสริมความสุขสำหรับนักเรียนในโรงเรียนพุทธศาสนาวันอาทิตย์ มหาวิทยาลัยมหาจุฬาลงกรณราชวิทยาลัย ๓) เผยแพร่รูปแบบการส่งเสริมความสุขสำหรับนักเรียนในโรงเรียนพุทธศาสนาวันอาทิตย์ การวิจัยนี้เป็นวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ประกอบด้วย ๑) การวิเคราะห์เอกสาร ๒) การสัมภาษณ์ผู้ให้ข้อมูลเชิงลึก ๒๗ รูป/คน ๓) การสนทนากลุ่ม โดยผู้เชี่ยวชาญเฉพาะทาง ๖ รูป/คน ๔) การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล โดยวิธีวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา ผลการวิจัยพบว่า

๑. รูปแบบความสุขสำหรับนักเรียนโรงเรียนพุทธศาสนาวันอาทิตย์ มหาวิทยาลัยมหาจุฬาลงกรณราชวิทยาลัย (มจร.) ที่ใช้อยู่ในปัจจุบัน เป็นรูปแบบที่ส่งเสริม และให้โอกาสแก่นักเรียนในการเลือกเรียนรู้ ตามความสนใจของนักเรียนแต่ละคน รูปแบบนี้ มีส่วนในการสร้าง และส่งเสริมบรรยากาศ ให้เกิดความพอใจและมีความสุข ในการเรียนรู้

๒. การพัฒนารูปแบบการส่งเสริมความสุขสำหรับนักเรียน ในโรงเรียนพุทธศาสนาวันอาทิตย์ มหาวิทยาลัยมหาจุฬาลงกรณราชวิทยาลัย ประกอบด้วย สาระสำคัญ ๓ ประการ ได้แก่ ความเป็นอยู่ที่ดี จิตใจดี และชุมชนมีเสถียรภาพและความเข้มแข็ง ทั้งนี้ แต่ละสาระมี ๕ องค์ประกอบ คือ ความเมตตากรุณา การฝึกตนให้รู้จักกับสิ่งทั้งหลายภายนอกทางอินทรีย์ทั้งห้าด้วยดี (กายภาวนา) อารมณ์เชิงบวก ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างบุคคล และ ภูมิปัญญาท้องถิ่น

๓. รูปแบบการส่งเสริมความสุขสำหรับนักเรียนในโรงเรียนพุทธศาสนาวันอาทิตย์ เป็นรูปแบบความสุขตามหลักพุทธธรรม โดยมีพระสงฆ์ให้การส่งเสริมและสนับสนุน ร่วมกับชุมชนที่มีความเข้มแข็ง ให้ความร่วมมือและสนับสนุนด้วย สาระพื้นฐานสำคัญที่ปฏิบัติคือ ความเมตตากรุณา และกายภาวนา

คำสำคัญ: ความสุขตามแนวคิดพุทธศาสนา, ความสุขตามแนวคิดตะวันตก, ความสุขสำหรับนักเรียนในโรงเรียนพุทธศาสนาวันอาทิตย์, ความเมตตากรุณา, กายภาวนา



Introduction

Education is important for a country's development. It plays a dynamic role in the growth of economics and social factors. Education helps people become better citizens. In addition, educated people are aware of the socio-economic situation of the country, and can help in the progress of the country. An educated person knows how to contribute towards the country's well-being.

In Buddhism, education aims for happiness resulting from mental development and knowledge from regular practice in beliefs, attitudes and behavior. Happiness in Buddhism is described as two types. They are the super-mundane happiness (lokutrara sukka) and mundane happiness (lokiya sukka). Super-mundane happiness (lokutrara sukka) is the description of the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path, and Bhāvanā-maya-Paññā, and Bhāvetabba-dhamma.

A person practices happiness in Buddhism, through one of the following methods:

- 1) the Noble Eightfold Path [293-D.II.312;M.I.61;M.III.251;Vbh.235.]
- 2) the Four Noble Truths [204-Vin.I.9; S.V.421; Vbh.99]
- 3) the Threefold Training [124- D.III. 202; A.I.229.]
- 4) Mettā [161-AIII.226; Dhs.262; Vism.320.]
- 5) Bhāvanā 4 [37-AIII.106].

Happiness in western theory mentioned in: 1) Maslow's basic needs theory, 2) Seligman's PERMA model, and 3) Carl Jung's unconsciousness in relation to personality. Maslow's basic needs theory states that people are motivated to achieve certain needs and that some needs take priority over others. Once the certain level is fulfilled, the next level up is what motivates us, and so on. He lists that every person is capable and has the desire to move up the hierarchy towards a level of self-actualization. Some people's progress is often disturbed by a failure to meet lower level needs. Therefore, not everyone will move through the hierarchy in a unidirectional method but may move back and forth between the different types of needs. Whereas Seligman's, the PERMA model was designed with five core elements of psychological well-being and happiness. Seligman believes that these five elements can help people reach a life of fulfillment and happiness. In accordance with Jung's five factors for happiness of good physical and mental health, personal and intimate relationships, the ability for perceiving beauty in art and nature, reasonable standards of living and satisfactory work, and, a philosophic or religious point of view capable of coping successfully with the changes of life.



Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, Office of the Prime Minister, Bangkok, declares the overall objectives and development targets of the Twelfth Plan (2017-2021) stipulates that Thai people should have a good value-system, possess discipline, attitudes and manners according to the norms of society. Thai people should also be receptive to learning, practical, well-informed, responsible, physically and mentally healthy, spiritually refined, self-sufficient and able to represent Thainess. The Thainess is the Thai culture and tradition and many more.

In addition, the National Education Act of 2017-2021 set goals for achievement upon completing basic education. Parts of those focus on students' ability of critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, cross-cultural understanding, collaboration, teamwork and leadership, communications, information and media literacy, computing and ICT literacy, career and learning skills, and compassion.

The Basic Education Core Curriculum, Ministry of Education, Thailand (2008) declares that learners are enabled to acquire knowledge and understand the lives of human beings as both individuals and as coexisting members of a society. The learning area of social studies addresses student self-adjustment in harmony with environmental situations.

Uthaiyayuck, D. reveals in "The Development of the Buddhist Instructional Model for Enhancing Environmental Conservational Behavior of Young Children", that a "Buddhist Instructional Model" provides and encourages young children with knowledge, attitude, and practice of environmental conservation at a significantly high level.

However, although the National Education Act of 2017-2021, the Basic Education Core Curriculum, and many sectors try to help students in learning, they are still not strong in terms of morality and the ability to adjust knowledge gained for application in leading their lives appropriately. Based upon rational and significant of the problems, purposes for the research of "A Model for Enhancing the Happiness of Students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University", is proposed.

Purposes of the Study

There are three purposes for the research of a model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday school, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University as follows:



1. To study a model for happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
2. To develop a model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
3. To publicize a model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

Research Methodology

The research methodology is quality research for a model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, has the following research propose:

1. Study articles, documents, documentaries, and research related to happiness, local wisdom, Buddhist Sunday School, and Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), WangNoi District, PhraNakhon Si Ayutthaya Province. Topics studied are as follows:-

1) Source of information: articles, documents, documentaries, online media and research related to happiness, local wisdom, and Buddhist Sunday School under the patronage of MCU

2) Research devices: interview guideline form, participant-observation form, and focus group guideline questions

3) Data collection: Data is collected from document studied, in-depth interview, observation of twenty-seven informants and focus group discussion.

4) Data analysis: Data analysis is carried out by examining documents, interview information, observation data, and information obtained from focus group discussions.

2. Development of a model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

1) Source of information: Information of Buddhist wisdom, and local wisdom are studied in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

2) Research devices: Devices are interview topics related to happiness in Buddhism, happiness in Western wisdom, Thai local wisdom, and focus group discussions.

3) Data collection: Data is collected through in-depth interviews of twenty-seven informants. They are administrators and office assistants, teachers both



Buddhist monks and volunteers of lay persons, students and guardians of Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

4) Data analysis: Data is analyzed through content analysis.

3. Publicize the model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University by confirming analysis of documents studied and in depth-interviewed data, using focus group discussion.

Conclusion of the Research

Conclusion of the research follows the purposes of the study. They are presented below:

1. A model for the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University:

The conclusion of the research result reveals that providing various classes for elective courses encourages and offers opportunity to students in choosing what they are interested and motivated to learn. Opportunities in choosing what students are interested in learning leads them to happy learning with satisfactory knowledge.

Data analysis for the research is divided into two parts, first the messages from document analysis and second, data collected from interviews. After the data was collected for this research project, first it was in raw form. Then, the analysis and interpretation has been reached for qualitative data.

2. Development of a model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University:

The conclusion of research result presents that a model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University is to practice five elements. The five elements are developed from data analysis of the document studied and in-depth interviews. The five elements are: 1), loving kindness (*Mettā*), 2) positive emotion, 3) good governance, 4) relationship, and 5) local wisdom. These elements support students' happiness in learning in three fields, well-being, pleasant-mindedness, and community strength. The elements mentioned enhances the happiness in learning for students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

3. Publication of the model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University:

The research reveals that the model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University should include five elements developed for a model to support students' happiness



in learning in three fields. They are 1) well-being, 2) pleasant mindedness, and 3) community strength. Each of the field is comprised of: 1) loving kindness (Mettā), 2) positive emotion, 3) good governance, 4) relationships, and 5) local wisdom. Elaboration is respectively presented in the following:

First Element: Loving-kindness (Mettā): The loving-kindness (Mettā) is a traditional Buddhist concept. It indicates acting with compassion toward all feeling beings. Offering the Mettā, is like offering an important part of Buddhist medicine. The Mettā is given with selflessness (dāna), compassion (karuṇā), and sympathetic joy (muditā). Buddhists believe that the Mettā is Lord Buddha's Healer.

Second Element: Self-Training (Bhāvanā): Self-Training (Bhāvanā) is considered a pillar for happiness. Policies and programs are developed generally in line with the values of the happiness of individual, family, community and the nation. The Self-Training (Bhāvanā) is enhanced by greater efficiency, clearness and responsibility.

Third Element: Positive emotions: Positive emotions refer not only to the individual, but also to the nation and to society. It is also the happiness of future generations. The measurements of human well-being includes social concerns which is living standards, health, and education. The quality of happiness relates to responsive well-being. In addition, happiness is a cultural value that includes community strength and environmental variety.

Fourth Element: Relationships and social connections: Building positive, strong relationships and social connections gives a person support in difficult times. Research points out that the brain of a person activates negatively when he is at risk of being isolated.

Fifth element: Local wisdom: Local wisdom is the use of one's intelligence, creativity, common sense, and knowledge by positive principled values toward the achievement of a common good through a balance among intrapersonal, interpersonal, and extra-personal interests.

Body of the Knowledge

The body of the knowledge of the research entitled A Model for Enhancing the Happiness for Students of Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU) is mainly on happiness in learning. It focuses on the Bhāvanā 4 [37-A.III.106.], Kāya Bhāvanā, Sila Bhāvanā, Citta Bhāvanā, and Paññā Bhāvanā.

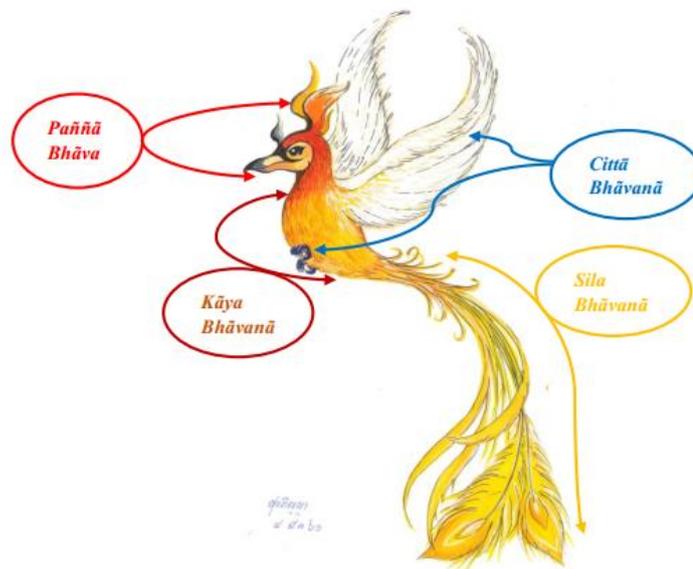
The Karavika bird, a mythical bird in Buddhism, was mentioned for her beautiful voice that stops every living to listen to her. It is used here to imply to the



voice of Buddhadharma that stops unhappiness to practice the Kāya Bhāvanā toward the path of happiness.

The four parts of the bird described the Bhāvanā 4 as follows: The top part, head, eyes, beak, and neck represents Paññā Bhāvanā. The wings and legs symbolize Citta Bhāvanā. The body is the practice of Kāya Bhāvanā. And, last, the Sila Bhāvanā is the tail that controls the mind toward the state of healthy and peaceful mindedness.

The Karavika Bird in the following represents as the first practice of Bhāvanā 4, which is the first stage of development for enhancing the happiness.



Picture courtesy of 'Supinya'
8 March 2018

Figure Karavika Bird as Symbolized for the Bhāvanā 4:
Kāya Bhāvanā, the first stage of development for enhancing the happiness of
students in Buddhist Sunday School, MCU.

Research Discussion

Research discussion for “A Model for Enhancing Happiness of Students in Buddhist Sunday School, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, is respectively presented:

The research shows the happiness of students in learning is strengthened by the method, training to be a good citizen. Students learn etiquette and manners by living peaceful lives in the community of a classroom. The “less formal school atmosphere” encourages students to learn happily. Studying in a relaxing atmosphere, encourages students to practice what they observe automatically.



Students are in the atmosphere of teachers, both Buddhist monks and lay-person volunteers, who practice the good household life of Saccā, Danā, Khanti and Cāga. Being in such a practical environment, students gradually learn by being in a positive environment. That would soon lead them to true happiness.

First Element: Loving-kindness (Mettā): Loving-kindness (Mettā) is a traditional Buddhist concept. Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto) explains in a Constitution for Living that Mettā, Mettā-kāyakamma, shows friendliness and goodwill to their colleagues and fellow community members. Offering the Mettā, is like the person is developing kindness and thoughtfulness within himself too.

Second Element: Self-Training (Bhāvanā): Self-Training (Bhāvanā) is considered a pillar for happiness. King Rama IX of Thailand practiced the Kāya-Bhāvanā by studying and working for the benefit of the majority of people in the country. As a result, Thai people look up to him as if he has super-natural power. Phra Bhramagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto) clarifies the Kāya-Bhāvanā in “Characteristics of Buddhism” that humans have the potential to develop themselves. When they are fully developed, they are the noblest of beings.

Third Element: Positive emotions: Positive emotions refer not only to the individual, but also to the nation and to society. It is also the happiness of future generations. The measurements of human well-being include social concerns such as living standards, health, and education. One of the nine domains of the Growth National Happiness (GNH) of the kingdom of Bhutan, states that government performance, fundamental right, service, and political participation relate to the positive emotions of people.

Fourth Element: Relationships and social connection: Building positive, strong relationships and social connection gives a person support in difficult times. Seligman’s PERMA model points out that the brain of a person is adversely affected when he is at risk of being isolated.

Fifth element: the local wisdom: The local wisdom is the use of one’s intelligence creativity, common sense, and knowledge by positive principled values. The values mentioned include the achievement of a common good through a balance among intrapersonal, interpersonal, and extra-personal interests. This element relates to the concept of happiness in Buddhist wisdom. It is knowledge and experience related to occupations and culture. Buddhist wisdom plays important roles in the local wisdom of Thai people. They can be seen through the Thai’s day to day living. It also promotes lifelong learning.



Research Suggestions

This research is to encourage the government policies of education regarding children involved in informal education and the study of Buddhist wisdom. A person who practices Buddhist wisdom gradually could reach true happiness. The following are three suggestions from the research. They are on policy, on active practice, and on further research.

1. Suggestions on Policy:

1) Today's material society indicates that institutional education is to focus on preparing students for their careers. In a Buddhist country like Thailand, government and related sectors should study responsibility for conveying “A Model for Enhancing Happiness of Students in Buddhist Sunday School” into active practice.

2) Authorities should see if there is possibility for further development of “A Model for Enhancing the Happiness of Students in Buddhist Sunday School” into a manual of a model for enhancing happiness of students for the benefit of the country.

2. Suggestions for Active Practice

1) To further active practice for “enhancing happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School” a detailed manual should be developed.

2) To keep active practice as “a model for enhancing the happiness of students in Buddhist Sunday School”, time allotment should be considered. A suggestion is that it should last at least four to six years. That is to keep on researching and developing the lessons according to the grade level in Thai school system.

3. Suggestions for Further Study

1) Due to the fact that the research entitled “A Model for Enhancing the Happiness of Students in Buddhist Sunday School” is qualitative, the quantitative and/ or mix methodology should be experimented with to determine the possibility for further development.

2) The well-known stories from Buddhist Jataka that relate to people's every day life and their living should be presented in classes. Chosen stories should be integrated into the lessons of various subjects. For example the story of Mahajanaka and the perseverance, the story of Angkulimala and the mindset, etc..



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