

# Temple Administration Skills of the Abbot

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## ABSTRACT

*This academic article aims to present the temple management skills of the abbots; it was found that the management skills are important and necessary to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the administration of the Sangha within the temple in 6 aspects: administration, education, propagation, educational assistance, public assistance, and public utilities, which the abbots are considered to be the ones who are directly involved and responsible for the administration of the temple. In Buddhism, the Buddha spoke of the principles of Pāṇādikadhamma or the principles of successful temple administration, which consist of: having a good vision, knowing how to plan, because planning is the main and important work in the administration of the temple for the benefit of the entire Sangha; good management, which is the management of people with knowledge and ability to be consistent with the duties and responsibilities that truly match the ability to manage that matter, and having human relations, which is an important skill that helps the administration succeed; unity of all stakeholders, and to create participation, participation should be created on the basis of Saṅgahavattthu, which is the principle of winning hearts to lead to smooth operations, consisting of: being kind, speaking politely, helping people, and behaving appropriately, which will make the administration within the temple truly stable and sustainable in the administrative dimension.*

**Keywords:** Skills, Administration, Temple, Abbot

## I. INTRODUCTION

The administration of the Sangha or the administration of the Sangha in principle is the administration according to the Dhamma-Vinaya and the law or state power is the main support. The administration of the Thai Sangha according to the Sangha Act of 1962 and later amended to be more appropriate until the present, which is the Sangha Act (No. 3) of 2017, is considered a form of Sangha administration and is the principle of organizing the administration of the Sangha. It is determined that there must be a Sangha Council to issue regulations, orders, resolutions and announcements without conflicting with or contradicting the law and the Dhamma-Vinaya.

The administration of the Sangha is important in creating strength and maintaining the stability of Buddhism. It is a form of governance to control and supervise the subordinate Sangha to be in a good and orderly manner, in order to create faith in Buddhism. Good administration of the Sangha should adhere to the principle of Dharma governance, which is the core principle that the Buddha stated by using Dhamma as the main principle in administration (Phra Dhammakosajarn (Prayoon Dhammacitto, 2006)). [1] In addition, the administrators of the Sangha at various levels must have administrative skills, such as skills in thinking, skills in action, skills in motivation by using both administrative science (ideas, theories) and the art of administration (integrating various sciences, both worldly and spiritual) to be more effective. Therefore, the success of the administration of the Sangha depends on the administrative skills of the administrators of the Sangha at various levels. If there are little administrative skills, it will result in ineffectiveness and less efficiency while if the administrators of the Sangha at various levels of the Sangha have high administrative skills, it will result in the Sangha's affairs being more efficient and effective. Administrative skills are therefore an important factor that will drive the administration

of the Sangha's affairs to be smooth and good, with both efficiency and effectiveness.

Many temples nowadays focus on developing material aspects, buildings and places more than temple development, focusing on creating sacred objects, amulets to meet the needs of the people. This further encourages the people to be unable to rely on themselves. When they have the factors, they develop the temple to be bigger than necessary, causing pride that they have developed Buddhism very well. In fact, the heart of Buddhism is mainly the development of people. The administration of the temple is not in the form of a collective of monks, but is the matter of the abbot alone, which makes it difficult for them to have enough power to work in all aspects and can easily lead to deficiencies in the operations. The temple members and the people lack ownership of the temple. They are not fully dedicated to temple development. Administration is considered a very important factor in governance. For a temple to be prosperous, it must have a good management system in all aspects (Phramaha Somsong Sirindharo et al., 1982). [2]

Therefore, in order for the administration of the temple to proceed smoothly, the abbot has the duty to govern and manage the affairs of the Sangha to proceed smoothly, which is an important condition that will indicate success in promoting the activities of Buddhism to be sustainable and permanent.

## II. MEANING OF TEMPLE (WAT)

The temple (Wat) is a part of the religious institution. In addition to being a place for monks and novices to stay, it is also a spiritual center and a center of the community. Therefore, the temple has a great meaning and importance to Thai society from the past until the present. People have defined the temple as follows:

The Royal Institute Dictionary B.E. 2542 (2003) defines the word “temple” as a religious place, usually a church, a temple, and a residence for monks or clergy. [3]

The Department of Religious Affairs (2002) defines a temple as a place for monks and novices to reside, a place for ordination, a place for people to practice good deeds, a place for people in the surrounding area to receive moral inculcation, and a center for people to carry out social activities together.

In conclusion, a temple means an important place in Buddhism, which is a place for monks and novices to stay and practice the Dhamma and perform their duties. It is a place for performing rituals and making merit for all Buddhists and is a place for providing education and training to develop people to become good members of Thai society.

### III. MEANING OF ABBOT

In the administration of the Sangha, it can be said that the abbot is a person who represents the temple and leads the temple to progress. He is the head of the monks, novices and people who live in the temple. Whether the temple will grow or decline depends on the abbot, who has defined the abbot as follows:

Phaibun Siangkong (2001) defines the abbot as a temple-level Sangha leader who is the leader of the monks and laity residing in the temple. [4]

The Department of Religious Affairs (2002) [5] defines the abbot as a temple-level Sangha leader who is the leader of the monks, novices and laypeople in the temple. The abbot is therefore most important to the prosperity and stability of the temple. He performs duties as the administrator of various temple activities, governs and commands the monks and novices, advises and teaches the monks, novices and laypeople living in the temple to be orderly and good; to live in good morals and to unite and develop the temple to be prosperous.

In conclusion, the abbot is a temple-level Sangha leader who is the leader of the monks, novices and laypeople in the temple. He has the duty to manage the temple's affairs and to control and command the people in the temple to be orderly and to develop the temple to progress and continue the work of the religion to be more stable, prosperous and flourishing.

### IV. MEANING OF MANAGEMENT

Administration There are two commonly used terms: “Administration” and “Management”, which are often used interchangeably, making it difficult to clearly distinguish their meanings. However, in academic management, the term “Administration” is used because it has a broader meaning than “Management”, which is a term specific to a particular organization. The term “Administration” is used for high-level management, emphasizing the determination of important policies and the determination of plans by executives at various levels. In addition, administration is the work done through others (Harold, D. Koontz and Cyril, O'Donnell, 1972), [6] which is the ability to combine objects and two or more people to work together to achieve the specified goals (Herbert, A. Simon, 1947). [7] In addition, it also refers to the process of organizing. And the use of limited resources to achieve predetermined objectives,

including the process of command, control of the operations of members of the organization to achieve objectives (Ernest Del, 1973) [8] consists of: Planning, Organizing, Leading/directing or directing, and controlling, which will have a direct relationship with administrative factors (4Ms): People, Money, Materials, and Management to achieve the goals of the organization effectively and efficiently. Therefore, management is both a science and an art with a systematic organization; there are principles, rules, and reliable theories that come from scientific research. In this way, management is a science. But if we consider management in terms of practice, we must be able to apply knowledge, principles, and theories of management, including accumulated experience, to apply or integrate to create management that is consistent with the factors and environment of the organization. In this way, management is an art.

In conclusion, management means working to achieve results through other people in a process pattern. Initially, it consists of: Planning, Organizing, Leading/directing or directing, and controlling, which will drive the organization to achieve its objectives. Management is both a science that has principles, rules, and theories that are reliable, resulting from scientific research, and an art that is; applying existing principles, rules, and theories, including other sciences, to apply or integrate them, which must be appropriate for the context of that organization.

### V. THE ABBOT'S ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS

#### 1. Katz's Management Skills

The most effective administration of any organization or agency depends on the quality of administration. The Sangha administrators at various levels must demonstrate their roles in terms of knowledge, understanding, and ability in the duties of the governing abbot, administrative process ability, allocation and utilization of administrative resources, and the use of administrative skills, which are another important element that will support the Sangha's operations to achieve their objectives. Therefore, administrative skills are essential for the Sangha administrators at various levels to use for the benefit of administration. For the abbot to perform his duties successfully, he must have 3 skills, with the most thinking skills, which is the opposite of the general monks who have the most technical skills (Leonard R. Katz, 1964). [9] They include:

1.1 Human skills refer to the ability of the abbot to work effectively with the people, government agencies and the Sangha and to create participation as a leader to create unity, including understanding the needs of other people or the objectives of other organizations involved and to motivate personnel in the organization to participate in planning, implementing various processes to achieve goals effectively.

1.2 Technical Skills refer to knowledge, understanding, ability, and expertise in the administration of the Sangha in all 6 areas or any activity of the Sangha, especially regarding the methods, processes, or techniques necessary for the performance of the duties of the abbot to achieve the objectives effectively, even if not doing it himself with important technical skills, which include: planning and

project skills, group process skills, and management skills, the abbot must plan the administration of the Sangha by creating a strategic plan, annual action plan to be a guideline for the administration of the organization. Must prepare information of the Sangha within the temple to be current, accurate, clear, and easily accessible to facilitate use, etc.

1.3 Conceptual skills refer to the ability of the abbot to understand the organization in all aspects and every step in detail, to be able to clearly see the relationship between the 6 aspects of the Sangha's affairs, to understand the work to respond to the goals of the Sangha's affairs and to be able to plan the organization, assign tasks, control and monitor, follow up on the work, and coordinate effectively by relying on the ability to imagine in a rational, relevant, and interrelated way, which requires intelligence, experience, and training. A good leader must be able to truly understand the various problems that arise; to be able to distinguish the issues correctly: "What is the main issue? What is the secondary issue?"; to be able to systematically analyze what is the cause and what is the result of different causes; "Who caused it? Who is behind the occurrence of what kind of event?"

## 2. Buddhist management methods and Katz's management skills

While Katz's three management skills; Human Skills, Technical Skills, Conceptual Skills, are in line with the Buddhist way of management, which is the main principle of Buddhism that the Buddha stated in the Dutiyapapanika Sutta, consisting of having vision (Cakkhumā); managing work well (Vidhuro); and having human relations (Nissayasampanno) as follows:

The Dutiyapapanika Sutta is a sutta that appears in the Suttanta Pitaka, which is a Buddhist scripture. This sutta describes the principles of management in an interesting way. The Buddha said in this sutta: "Monks, a merchant has three qualities. It won't be long before he reaches greatness and wealth. What are the three qualities? A merchant in this world: 1) Good eyesight, 2) Good business, 3) Complete with shelter." (A.I. (Thai) 20/459/163). Scholars of Buddhism and even scholars in general who have studied management have applied these principles to management. A good administrator must be a person with vision and good management techniques, and have human relations with those involved, in this issue, Buddhist scholars have explained and elaborated that Dutiyapapanika means the principles of a merchant, the qualities of a merchant (qualities of a successful shopkeeper or businessman) consisting of 3 principles as follows:

Cakkhumā means good eyesight, which means having knowledge about the products to be traded, being able to see the characteristics of the products, such as whether they are genuine or counterfeit, whether they are of quality or not according to the standards, whether the products meet the needs of consumers or the market, being able to calculate the cost of the entire process until reaching the consumer, and being able to predict whether the products will be able to generate profit or not. In terms of management, when the Cakkhumā principle is applied, it means foresight or vision. For example, executives must be skilled in looking ahead to the future to develop their organization in which direction by analyzing internal and external factors that tend to have an impact on the organization, or being able to predict the

direction or future of organizational management from a careful and rational thought process, which may also use past experiences in making decisions and planning. This first characteristic corresponds to conceptual skills, which are expertise in using ideas or thinking skills.

Vidhuro means business intelligence; knowing the source of the desired product or the source of sale; knowing the demand and supply, the movement of market demand, the ability to purchase and distribute, including knowing and pleasing customers. In the management dimension, when the Vidhuro principle is applied, it means the strategy of setting goals and the process, techniques, methods of various operations to achieve the organization's objectives through the process of analyzing the overall picture, both internally and externally, all elements and variables involved in the operation to achieve the most effective efficiency, such as "Put the right man on the right job", assigning the right work to people with knowledge, skills, and expertise related to the work, increasing motivation for personnel to be enthusiastic about working to their full potential and efficiently, using technology to help in various processes to reduce costs, reduce the time of operations, etc. This second characteristic corresponds to technical skills, which are technical expertise or operational skills.

Nissayasampanno means having a source of capital to rely on; being able to easily find money to invest or operate a business; being trusted by supporters of large sources of capital along with supporting factors to successfully operate the business according to the objectives (Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Prayutto, 2015). [10] In the management dimension, when applying the principle of Nissayasampanno, it means the interaction between executives and personnel within the organization and the interaction between the organization and external related organizations to create mutual dependence by building good relationships and having good human relations; being able to contact and coordinate to complete the work within the specified time frame. Executives must be able to communicate to coordinate each department in the organization to follow the guidelines and directions that the organization wants to achieve or have the ability to win people's hearts and make them love them by making each personnel work according to orders willingly, etc. This third characteristic corresponds to human relations skills, which are expertise in human relations or human relations skills.

## VI. ANALYSIS OF THE TEMPLE MANAGEMENT SKILLS OF THE ABBOT

From the opinions of Buddhist scholars, we know the consistency between the Dutiyapāṇika Sutta and Katz's three administrative skills, namely: 1) Human skills, in line with "Nissayasampanno", being able to rely on others; 2) Technical skills, in line with "Vidhuro", managing business with expertise or techniques; 3) Conceptual skills, in line with "Cakkhumā", wisdom and foresight. The consistency is only the consistency in the dimensions of the characteristics of the administrators of the Sangha at various levels who will be successful in administration in achieving the objectives. However, the ultimate goals are still different. That is, the Dutiyapāṇika Sutta, the Buddha spoke in an integrated

way, citing the characteristics of a successful merchant in his career, in order to use a simile as a guideline for the monks to practice Dhamma in order to achieve the objectives of Buddhism, namely Nirvāṇa, which is to purify defilements. This is in the worldly aspect, but Katz's management skills are characteristic of Sangha administrators at various levels who focus only on the worldly level, that is, focusing primarily on achieving the organization's objectives.

These three management skills are characteristics of Sangha administrators at various levels who use them in following Harold D. Koontz's management process, which has five steps in management (POSDC), namely: 1) Planning, 2) Organization, 3) Staffing, 4) Directing, and 5) Controlling.

1. Conceptual Skills are in line with the Cakkhumā principle, which is having a vision; it is a skill that must be used in the planning process because planning is the main and important task in the administration of the Sangha at all levels by creating strategic plans, annual action plans as guidelines for administration. For good planning, the administrators of the Sangha at various levels must have a vision (Cakkhumā), which is a conceptual skill based on knowledge and understanding factors in 7 matters:

1.1 Know the principles and principles of management, what are the objectives of each mission.

1.2 Know the goals, which is to know the needs, objectives or desired results.

1.3 Know the strengths and weaknesses, which is to know your own knowledge and abilities, what you can and cannot manage.

1.4 Know the appropriateness, moderation, and appropriateness, and do not do things beyond your knowledge and abilities.

1.5 Know the time, which is to set a time frame for implementation that is consistent and appropriate for the implementation.

1.6 Know the differences in the culture and traditions of the various communities where the temple is located.

1.7 Know the capabilities of the personnel, which is to know the differences in knowledge, abilities, expertise, and potential of monks and novices in governance.

Therefore, planning with a vision leading to morality will be able to determine the direction, goals, and objectives that are desired in the future of the Sangha by selecting the best working methods; most efficient, to achieve the desired results within the specified time. And that planning will consider 3 important issues: 1) destination (what is it) 2) method of operation (how to do it) and 3) time period (when will it be completed) to make the agency operate efficiently, achieve the desired objectives within the specified time. The success of the operation depends on the planning. If the plan is good, it is considered that the operation is more than half done because the planning will cover the entire context of the remaining 4 management steps: 1) Organization, 2) Staffing, 3) Directing, 4) Controlling. Therefore, planning with a vision leading to morality will be able to determine the direction, goals, and objectives that are truly aimed at the benefit of the people.

2. Technical skills are consistent with the Vidhuro principle, which is; having strategies and techniques for management in the process of organizing, personnel management (Staffing) because technical skills are the ability

to use management methods to achieve the objectives of the Sangha. When the Sangha administrators at various levels have set a vision or received policies from the Sangha Supreme Council, they must use technical skills, which include: planning skills, project skills, group process skills, and management skills. They must plan the management of the Sangha at the level they supervise. In the organizing stage, the Sangha must currently comply with the Sangha Act (No. 3) B.E. 2560. As for personnel management (Staffing), the Sangha must currently comply with the Supreme Sangha Council Act No. 24 (B.E. 2541) on the appointment and removal of Sangha leaders as the main principle for compliance. At the same time, when considering the appointment and removal of Sangha leaders, it will be known that the process of obtaining Sangha leaders who are responsible for the administration of the Sangha at various levels uses a selection process; it is not a test of knowledge and ability to select and appoint Sangha leaders at various levels, which is different from the kingdom that requires an examination to measure the knowledge and ability of the examinee to see how suitable, consistent, or skilled the person is for that position. Because on the part of the church, it relies on the faith of both the monks themselves and the Buddhists as the foundation. Therefore, there are both advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, the abbot must have appropriate management skills.

3. Human skills are in line with the Nissayasampanno principle: This skill is used in the directing and controlling stages. Both processes require support from human skills, namely, knowing how to use group processes in management, being able to coordinate subordinates to work together effectively; being able to give advice and be an example to subordinates, being able to supervise and control the work of the Sangha to proceed according to the plan as stated in the Thai idiom "The lotus is not bruised, the water is not cloudy", resulting in smooth work. For the Sangha administrators at various levels to be able to use human skills to smoothly manage the organization, they must rely on one principle, namely, the Saṅgahavatthu 4 (A. II. (Thai) 21/32/42) as a means to bind the hearts of individuals and groups to unite and help each other, consisting of:

3.1 Kindness: giving, sacrificing, sharing to help each other with things with generosity, including giving knowledge and teaching with friendliness.

2 . Polite speech: speaking, communicating with reason, polite, sweet, and motivating to create unity with friendliness.

3. Helping people: actions that focus on the benefit of the community with sincerity.

4 . Appropriate behavior: being consistent, not biased towards any person with prejudice, including behavior appropriate to one's status and maturity towards events and environments in accordance with the moral principles in every case.

## CONCLUSION

For the abbot's temple management skills to be successful and effective, the abbot should have 3 skills: 1. Conceptual skills, which are in line with the principle of Chakkhumā (having vision). These skills must be used in the planning process, namely, having a vision leading the vision



in the planning process because planning is the main and important task in managing the affairs of the temple for the benefit of all monks. 2. Technical skills are in line with the principle of Vidhuro (good management). This skill is used in the process of organizing, personnel management (Staffing), that is, the operation of the business should manage the personnel within the temple to be consistent with the duties and have the knowledge and ability to truly manage that matter. 3. Human skills are consistent with Nissayasampanno (having human relations). This skill is used in the directing and controlling stages. That is, the successful and effective operation of the temple requires the participation and unity of all those involved. In order to create participation, it should be based on the principles of social welfare, which are the principles of winning hearts in order to lead to smooth operations, consisting of being kind, polite speech, helping people, and appropriate behavior.

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