

# The Buddhist Chanting in Strengthening Emotional Intelligence for Executives in the Era of Change

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## ABSTRACT

*In an era marked by rapid and uncertain changes, executives face challenges in decision-making and the need for quick adaptation. Therefore, developing Emotional Intelligence (EI) becomes an essential tool that helps executives manage their emotions and communicate effectively in difficult situations. Buddhist chanting and mindfulness practices offer valuable methods for enhancing Emotional Intelligence. The principles embedded in Buddhist rituals help executives develop emotional regulation, self-awareness, and foster better relationships within their organizations. This article aims to examine the role of Buddhist chanting in enhancing EI for executives in an era of change. It reviews the theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence and mindfulness practices in Buddhism. Buddhist chanting helps improve focus, reduce stress, and enhance relationships through chanting and simple mindfulness practices. By cultivating mindfulness through chanting, executives are better equipped to make informed decisions in challenging situations and to adapt more effectively to change. Case study results show that mindfulness training through Buddhist chanting plays a significant role in strengthening EI, particularly in emotional regulation and self-awareness—both of which are key components for effective leadership in today's ever-changing environment. Additionally, the integration of mindfulness practices within organizations can help develop executives who are better prepared to handle challenges with resilience and long-term effectiveness.*

**Keywords:** Buddhist Chanting, Emotional Intelligence, Mindfulness, Executive, Era of Change

## I. INTRODUCTION

Rapid and uncertain change (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity: VUCA) requires executives to face complex decision-making and adaptation challenges, whether it is managing a crisis situation, making decisions related to incomplete information, or dealing with future uncertainties. (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014) [1] Developing emotional intelligence (EI) has therefore become an important skill for executives to effectively deal with these challenges (Goleman, 1995, Nattaporn Singhasorn et al.) [2][3] Fostering emotional intelligence can help executives better regulate their emotions and cope with stress. And developing good emotional intelligence skills can help executives make better decisions in difficult situations, communicate clearly and effectively, and build better relationships with their teams. (Goleman, 1998) [4] It also helps executives to better manage uncertainty, better assess the impact of each decision, and adjust strategies accordingly. Executives with high emotional intelligence are able to create an atmosphere that fosters trust and confidence in their teams, which is a key factor in developing and building collaboration in an organization. (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004; Bar-On, 1997) [5][6] Having emotional intelligence enables leaders to create balance in challenging situations and promote organizational adaptation in the right direction, both in terms of making decisions with long-term impact and creating long-term sustainability in the organization. (Mayer et al., 2004) [7] In the context of highly dynamic society and culture and constant change, uncertainty has become a prominent feature

that executives and individuals in general have to face in all aspects. Therefore, developing emotional intelligence (EI) is an important factor that helps executives better manage their emotions, cope with challenging situations, and make conscious and effective decisions. Under such uncertainty, Buddhism plays an important role in developing emotional intelligence of individuals through the practice of mindfulness, meditation, and self-awareness, which are processes that help enhance the ability to manage emotions of both oneself and others. Mindfulness practice, which is an important principle in Buddhism, is a guideline that helps individuals to be aware of the emotions that arise at that time and to not let those feelings dominate their decisions or actions. Mindfulness practice not only helps individuals to recognize and understand their emotions, but also promotes mindful and balanced decision-making in various challenging situations. (Oncharon Kraijak, 2017) [8] In addition, meditation, an important tool in Buddhism, helps develop concentration and mind control to reduce stress and increase flexibility in dealing with life's challenges. (Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacharya (P. A. Payutto, 2020) [9] Developing self-awareness is also an important element that helps individuals to know and understand their emotions better and to be able to adapt to different situations effectively (Thitiwas Sukpom et al., 2019). [10]

Developing emotional intelligence according to Buddhist principles not only helps to enhance personal quality of life, but also helps to increase work efficiency and promotes the sustainable creation of good relationships with

others in the organization. The application of Buddhist principles in developing emotional intelligence is a valuable tool for improving the ability to manage stress, creating a suitable environment, and developing personnel in the organization to be effective in all aspects of work and life in today's society.

Given the importance and origin, the study of emotional intelligence and the role of Buddhism in developing emotional intelligence is important in an era of high change and uncertainty, especially for executives who have to deal with challenging situations. The practice of mindfulness and meditation in Buddhism helps enhance the ability to control emotions and increases flexibility in decision-making and adaptation. The results of the presentation of this article will be knowledge to promote the development of emotional intelligence using the principles of Buddhism for executives and those interested in applying it.

## II. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: BASIC CONCEPTS AND CONNECTIONS

In 1995, Daniel Goleman [11] introduced the theory of emotional intelligence (EI), which divided EI into five main dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills. The ability to control emotions and make good decisions under stress and uncertainty is therefore an increasingly important skill for leaders and individuals at all levels, especially in an era of rapid global change (Goleman, 1998); Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso (2004) [12] found that emotional intelligence plays a role in enhancing decision-making efficiency, especially when individuals face challenges or high-risk situations. Those with high emotional intelligence are better able to control their emotions and reduce stress, allowing them to make better decisions in complex situations and adapt better (Bar-On, 1997). [13] Nattaporn Singhasorn et al. (2024) [14] found that emotional intelligence is an important element in organizational management in today's uncertain environment. As a skill that human resources need in a changing world, it will help create effective motivation for work and result in a happy atmosphere in the organization. Happiness is an important factor in emotional intelligence, which affects the management of the organization, both at the individual level and the organization as a whole. Creating a culture of happiness in the organization takes time to change attitudes that have accumulated for a long time. It requires patience and determination to solve various problems along with making continuous efforts to create happiness in the workplace. Buddhism also has guidelines for developing the mind and potential of individuals, which can be applied to develop emotional intelligence. Buddhism emphasizes developing the mind to be calm and balanced amidst various situations in life, and is consistent with Kunntee Phumsuang and Kalaya Phaiko (2014), [15] lack of understanding of oneself and the ability to manage emotions can lead to various problems both within oneself and with others. However, having emotional intelligence will help individuals achieve greater success in life by being able to recognize and manage their own emotions, as well as build good relationships with others. Emotional intelligence can be developed, and developing this skill will help individuals have good mental health and cope with stress better. For

nurses, emotional intelligence is important in understanding their own and patients' emotions for effective care and assistance. It also helps patients to be able to take care of themselves and manage their emotions appropriately.

Goleman (1995) [16] presented the concept of emotional intelligence, which consists of 5 main components, emphasizing the development of skills that enable individuals to be aware of and manage their own and others' emotions effectively, as follows:

1. Self-awareness is the understanding and awareness of changes in one's own emotions, including identifying feelings that occur at different times and situations, such as stress, happiness, or anger. Emotional awareness helps individuals make decisions and respond to situations appropriately.

2. Self-regulation is the ability to control and manage one's own emotions, both positive and negative. Having this ability will help individuals not be controlled by emotions, but can choose to respond according to the situation and the desired impact, such as controlling anger or dealing with stress in difficult situations.

3. Motivation is the ability to motivate and inspire oneself so that one can strive towards goals with determination, without being discouraged by obstacles or failures along the way. This ability will help individuals maintain their intentions and try to work hard in the long term.

4. Empathy is the ability to understand and sympathize with others, which enables individuals to recognize and respond to the feelings of others appropriately. This ability allows one to build good relationships and understand the needs of others, such as in communication and collaboration.

5. The ability to manage relationships with others (Social skills). The ability to build and maintain good and effective relationships, by being able to work with others in a cooperative manner and building trust, such as the ability to work in a team or be a leader who can inspire and support the team.

Bar-On (2006) [17] proposed the components of emotional intelligence, divided into five main dimensions and 15 characteristics, emphasizing the importance of developing emotional intelligence in multiple dimensions, such as understanding oneself and others, managing stress, and adapting to different situations, as follows:

### 1. Intrapersonal competence

- 1.1 Self-regard recognizing and accepting one's own identity correctly without being pressured by external standards

- 1.2 Emotional self-awareness; recognizing and understanding one's own emotions, which enables one to respond appropriately to events

- 1.3 Assertiveness; expressing emotions and feelings effectively and appropriately

- 1.4 Independence; self-confidence and the ability to make decisions without relying too much on others

- 1.5 Self-actualization; committing to developing one's potential to achieve set goals

### 2. Interpersonal skills

- 2.1 Empathy understanding and feeling the emotions of others, which helps to build good relationships

- 2.2 Social responsibility; the ability to know one's role in society and cooperate with others

2.3 Interpersonal relationship; building and maintaining good relationships between people, such as working together in a team

### **3. Stress management**

3.1 Stress tolerance; the ability to effectively manage emotions during stressful situations.

3.2 Impulse control; the ability to control emotions and uncontrollable actions in stressful situations.

### **4. Adaptability**

4.1 Reality-testing; thinking and perceiving what is happening in reality, which allows for good adaptation in changing situations

4.2 Flexibility; the ability to adjust thoughts and attitudes to suit changing environments

4.3 Problem-solving; the ability to solve everyday problems effectively and creatively

### **5. Motivation and mood (General mood)**

5.1 Optimism; having a positive attitude and seeing opportunities in various situations

5.2 Happiness; feeling satisfied with oneself and life, including having good mental health

These components help individuals develop multidimensional emotional intelligence, which has a positive impact on building healthy relationships, managing stress, adapting to challenging situations, and achieving success in both work and personal life.

## **III. BUDDHIST CHANTING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Prayer is an expression of the relationship between humans and the supernatural, and is an important part of the traditions, arts, and cultures related to the spirituality of humanity. Prayer can be performed anywhere and at any time, regardless of age or health. There are both individual and group prayers. People pray for various purposes, such as for the benefit of themselves and others. Prayer is a cultural tool found in all societies (Thepporn Mangthani, 2012). [18]

Chanting in Buddhism is a religious practice that is important both in terms of mind and ethics for Buddhists. Chanting is not only a way to remember the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha), but also a tool for training mindfulness and concentration, which helps to build peace of mind and develop virtues such as patience, good intentions, and serious practice of Dhamma. Chanting in Buddhism often consists of chants with profound meanings, such as chanting to praise the virtues of the Buddha, the virtues of the Dhamma, the virtues of the Sangha, or chanting chants that emphasize protection and asking for blessings from the Triple Gem, such as Pahung-Mahaka or chants related to remembering the Buddha to enhance happiness and peace in life. In addition, chanting also plays a role in strengthening relationships in the Buddhist community. Chanting together in temples or sacred places helps to create unity and mutual faith among Buddhists. Regular chanting also creates good habits and develops the mind to grow according to the principles of Buddhism (Natthaphong Malison et al., 2023). [19]

Chanting in Buddhism is a representation of the relationship between humans and the supernatural, and is an essential element of human spiritual traditions, arts, and cultures. Chanting can be done anywhere and anytime, without any health or age restrictions. Chanting comes in many forms,

both personal and group, with various purposes, such as chanting for the benefit of oneself and others. Chanting is a cultural tool found in all cultures. Somdej Phra Buddhacarya (To Bhramarangi) mentioned the benefits of chanting, saying that chanting is a way of expressing the virtues of the Triple Gem, and when chanting with intention until the mind is concentrated, it will lead to the attainment of enlightenment and becoming an arahant. He also said that chanting in the morning and evening is a tradition that has been practiced since the time of the Buddha, which helps the mind to be calm and focused (Liangchiang, 2566).[20]

In addition, chanting also has health benefits such as helping the lungs work better and relieving stress. Chanting is also favored by all gods and spirits. Hearing the chanting, one feels cool and relieved from suffering. Chanting also increases faith in the Triple Gem and enhances concentration and mindfulness. In addition, it helps to ward off dangers and brings good fortune to oneself and one's family. It can be said that chanting not only shows respect for the Triple Gem, but also enhances mental and physical health and brings good fortune to daily life.

### **Prayer and the Promotion of Emotional Intelligence in an Era of Change**

Prayer plays an important role in enhancing emotional intelligence, especially in a rapidly changing and challenging era, such as a society filled with information and stress from work or personal life. Prayer can be a tool to help enhance mindfulness, balance emotions, and develop better relationships. Prayer and the promotion of emotional intelligence in an era of change are as follows:

1. Enhance mindfulness and concentration; prayer helps to practice concentration and mindfulness, which are the foundations of emotional control in stressful situations. Being mindful allows us to be better aware of and understand our emotions, without letting our feelings or fleeting thoughts lead us in the wrong direction.

2. Increasing patience and emotional control; chanting during times of mental turmoil helps us learn to control our emotions and not let anger or stress influence our decisions or actions, which allows us to respond to situations mindfully and thoughtfully, enhancing understanding and compassion.

3. Chanting about reverence and respect for the Triple Gem, or chanting that focuses on meditation, can help us understand our own and others' suffering and pain. Connecting with the Dharma and teachings of the Buddha helps us appreciate the value of having compassion and helping others.

4. Enhancing a positive attitude; chanting helps to create a positive attitude, which can have a positive effect on our mental health and interpersonal relationships. Having a positive attitude allows us to cope with change and challenges with happiness and stability.

5. Restoration of the mind in an age of change in an age of uncertainty and rapid change, prayer allows our minds to rest and renew reflecting on teachings that bring peace and tranquility to the mind enables us to adapt and develop emotional resilience.





**Figure 1** Dhamma activities to welcome the morning, Chandrakasem Rajabhat University, Bangkok

Prayer can be an important tool in developing emotional intelligence by helping us to regulate our emotions, understand our own and others' feelings, and maintain a positive attitude during times of change. Practicing mindfulness and meditation through prayer can help us to cope with life's challenges and create peace of mind in any situation.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Buddhist chanting to enhance emotional intelligence (EI) for executives in an era of rapid change and uncertainty is an essential skill, as developing emotional intelligence is a key tool for executives to control their emotions and communicate effectively in challenging situations. Practicing mindfulness through Buddhist chanting has been hailed as an effective way to enhance emotional control and self-awareness skills, which are important qualities for managing under changing organizational circumstances.

##### A. Recommendation from the study

Mindfulness practice through Buddhist chanting can help enhance emotional intelligence in many ways, including increasing concentration, reducing stress, and building better relationships in organizations. Buddhist chanting is a useful tool in developing leaders' skills in managing emotions and coping with challenges in an ever-changing environment. Therefore, implementing Buddhist mindfulness practices in organizations can not only help develop executives' decision-making flexibility, but also promote their adaptability in challenging environments.

##### B. Recommendation for future studies

It should present best practices from case studies or insights on the practical application of prayer in organizations to give readers a clearer picture of how to apply it in real organizations. In addition, and should present other tools or practices that can enhance emotional intelligence in executives, such as using meditation in daily life, practicing mindful listening, or working in teams that focus on developing better relationships within the organization. The link between theory and practice in the article will result in practical knowledge that encourages students to apply it more effectively in real practice.

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