

Development of the Learning Management Model of Morality Teaching Monks in the Northeast of Thailand

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Abstract

The aims of this research were 1) to study need conditions for developing the learning management model of the morality teaching monks in the schools in the northeast of Thailand, 2) to develop the model of learning management and 3) to evaluate the use of the model. The population used to in this study referred to those, who involved in the project ‘Morality Teaching Monksin Schools’ in Khon Kaen, Kalasin, Roi-et and Maha Sarakham provinces, including 5 experts, 20 educational administrators, 10 project officials, 200 students, 200 morality teaching monks (total 435). The tools used were a questionnaire and an interview form. The statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation were used to analyze the quantitative data. For the qualitative data, the contents and contexts from the interview were primarily investigated.

The research results were as follows:

1. According to the need of the model for managing Buddhist learning, it was suggested that the model which has the contents related to the Buddhism learning standards in each learning level was needed because this would result in understanding

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of the students on the history and importance of Buddhist principles in each level. This also causes them to follow the morality of good conducts, esteem and faith in Buddhism and behave according to Dhamma, Buddhist rituals and apply them to self development, social and environmental benefits and peaceful co-existence.

2. The model of learning management of the morality teaching monks was very accurate and was appropriated in use. It was composed of four models: 2.1) the model of Buddhism learning management for the primary school class 01 (years 1-3), 2.2) the model of Buddhism learning management for the primary school class 02 (years 4-6), 2.3) the model of Buddhism learning management for the secondary school class 03 (years 1-3) and 2.4) the model of Buddhism learning management for the primary school class 04 (years 4-6).

3. The results of the model evaluation indicated that for the informants' agreement evaluation based on the Likert scale, the overall statistic scores of all classes were at a high level (agree). Based on the consideration of each aspect, it was found that the score of the aspect that the morality teaching monks have managed the learning in terms Dhamma was higher than those of other aspects, followed by that of the aspect of Buddhism learning management and Sangha learning management. The overall satisfaction score of those who involved in the project was a high level (satisfied). Based on consideration of each group of the population, it was found that the students were most satisfied with the model, followed the officials and the educational administrators respectively.

4. The outcomes of this study revealed that the morality teaching monks in the schools have managed Buddhism learning at a high level (satisfied) based on statistic score consideration and the score of the satisfaction of those involved was the same. This reflects the view of the schools showing that the morality teaching monks have played an important role in Buddhism learning management. Therefore, the project director and those who involved should continue the project in Thailand.

Keywords: Learning management, morality teaching monks



1. Background

In Thailand, the morality has been taught approximately since the arrival of Buddhism around 236 B.E. The morality has effectively been delivered by the followers (monks) of the Buddha from generations to generations in the society. This creates peace within the community and builds badness protection. The project of ‘Morality Teaching Monks in Schools’ is the mission for teaching Buddhist morality and ethics to students. The teaching contents include Buddhist theories (Pāli: *pariyatti*), insertion of the theories into practices (Pāli: *patipatti*) and realization of the truth (Pāli: *paññavedha*). This is what the Thai government expects to see from the project. Besides, such expectation, the government also wants the morality teaching monks to train youths and children to be a good and intelligent person by using the doctrines of the Buddha. Therefore, the prominent point of this project is that the students are directly taught by Buddhist monks who have been intensively trained. Previously, they were taught by secular teachers who sometimes had obstacles in understanding the concepts of Buddhism.

Since Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, the largest Buddhist educational

institute of Thailand has been in charge of teaching and propagating Buddhist morality, the project has been run with the aim to provide a life-long morality learning method for the youth and children in order to achieve mental and physical perfection. This is consistent with the National Education Act, requiring students to have characteristics of being a smart, good and joyful person. Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, which is the educational Buddhist institute of the Thai Sangha Council under the administration of Thai government has promoted and supported Buddhist education in consistency with the goals and principles of National Education Act 1999. After, the government asked the university to manage the project for teaching morality in schools throughout the country, there have been 18,000 monks who joined the project and have been sent to different parts of the country.

From the project evaluation, its output relies on students’ effectiveness in applying Buddhist principles to solve their problems or use in their daily life. The students become more concentrated and creative in learning. However, the factors which have prevented the project to achieve the goal determined in some ar-



as include the conditions of the schools which are problematic for operating the project, differences of learning environments, learning media and qualifications of the moral teaching monks. Therefore, the learning management model needs to be developed for the effectiveness of the project 'Morality Teaching Monks in Schools'. This research thus aims 1) to study needs for developing the learning management model of the morality teaching monks in the schools in the Northeast of Thailand, 2) to develop the model of learning management and 3) to evaluate the use of the model.

2. Research Tools and Methodology

In this study, the mixed research methodology (qualitative and quantitative research) was employed. The population referred to the informants, who involved in the project from four main provinces: Khon Kaen, Kalasin, Roi-et and Maha Sarakham, including 5 experts, 20 educational administrators, 10 project officials, 200 students, 200 morality teaching monks (under the administration of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Khon Kaen Campus) (total 435). The tools used in this research were a questionnaire and an interview

form. The statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation were used to analyze the quantitative data. For the qualitative data, the contents and contexts from the interview were primarily investigated.

3. Results

The research results revealed that according to the need of the model for managing Buddhist learning, the model which has the contents related to the Buddhism learning standards in each learning level was needed because this would result in understanding of the students on the history and importance of Buddhist principles in each level. This also causes them to follow the morality of good conducts, esteem and faith in Buddhism and behave according to Dhamma, Buddhist rituals and apply them to self development, social and environmental benefits and peaceful co-existence.

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The outcomes of this study revealed that the morality teaching monks in the schools have managed Buddhism learning at a high level (satisfied) based on statistic score consideration and the score of the satisfaction of those involved was

the same. This reflects the view of the schools showing that the morality teaching monks have played an important role in Buddhism learning management. Therefore, the project director and those who involved should continue the project in Thailand.

4. Discussion

Based on the information above, it revealed that the stockholders of the project were satisfied with the model. This was based on the effective performance of the morality teaching monks in the areas. Even their monthly income is not high and they are working with volunteer hearts and have paid attention on collaboration with the project or the events that Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Khon Kaen Campus organized. This causes the overall evaluation score of the project is high.

The educational administrators were very satisfied with the model of learning management for the morality teaching monks in schools because they have paid attention to the importance of Buddhism, application of Buddhist principles in daily life of the students or youth, and mission of Buddhist monks. The most important feedback from the educational administrators on the project is that the



students were given an opportunity to get first-hand experience in learning with the monks through various Buddhist activities. Consequently, more monks have been invited to teach at schools. This is consistent with the former research of Phrakru Suwathanabanditkhun and his research fellows (2014) 'Following up and Evaluation of Morality Teaching Monks in Schools under Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University 2015' which revealed that the statistic score of the satisfaction of the educational administrators with the project was at a high level (satisfied).

Social studies, religion and culture teachers were very satisfied with the learning management particularly when they were supported by the morality teaching monks who provided clarity and better understanding to their students. The arrangement of the learning contents begins with the easiest one to the most difficult one. The hardest lesson was taught at the high school level. Therefore, it can be said that social studies, religion and culture teachers directly gained benefits from this project. This again is consistent with the former research of Phrakru Suwathanabanditkhun (2014) which revealed that the statistic score of the satisfaction of the teacher

mentors of the morality teaching monks towards Buddhism teaching in overall was at a high level (satisfied). The most agreed aspect was the willingness to deliver knowledge of the morality teaching monks, followed by relationship with the executives, teachers and students and punctuality. This also is consistent with the study of Phrakru Waradittathanuyut (2011) 'Opinions of Teachers and Students towards Roles of Morality Teaching Monks in High Schools, Sam-Phra District, Nakhonpathom province, Thailand.

The satisfaction score of the staff in the project of morality teaching monks at schools with the learning management in overall was at a high level because they follow the policy of the Sangha Supreme Council directly and take it into practices. That is, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University was given the project and has been financially supported by the Sangha Supreme Council; this leads to effectiveness of the project operation in terms of training the morality teaching monks. The project has been operated systematically in collaboration with the Sangha, schools and related agencies. The project advertisement was made and dhamma training of the morality teaching monks were done for



increasing their performance capacity. The project was undertaken in the following stages: 1) organizing the meeting of the morality teaching monks, 2) establishing the operation centers throughout the country, 3) organizing orientation to the morality teaching monks, 4) organizing the seminar of the heads of the morality teaching monks, 5) organizing the training for increasing the performance effectiveness of the morality teaching monks, 6) creating the teaching manual and books on Buddhism teaching 2010 and website of the morality teaching monks, 7) conducting research on the project, 8) informing and monitoring the operation outcomes, 9) provide wage to the monks and 10) recruiting the morality teaching monks.

The satisfaction score of the students with the project in overall was at a high level (satisfied) because the students directly gain benefits from the project. Since the Department of Religious Affairs has operated the project since 2005 with the budget, 10 million Baht, the project positively affect those who involved. This is consistent with the research of Phrakru Waradittathanuyut (2011) 'Opinions of Teachers and Students towards Roles of Morality Teaching Monks in High Schools,

Sam-Phra District, Nakhonpathom province, Thailand', indicating the same score of the student satisfaction towards the project.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

1. Suggestions in the policy level

Based on the research, the need of the morality teaching monks at schools was very high. Therefore, the project should be continued in response.

2. Suggestion for further development of the project

The learning management in the aspects of Buddha and Dhamma learning achieved lower scores than those of other aspects. So, the learning activities in these aspects should be added more for the students.

3. Suggestion for future research

3.1 There should be a comparative study of the outcomes of the project between the regions.

3.2 There should be a study of the integration of Buddhadhamma daily life application for children and youth.

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