



THE ROLE OF BUDDHIST PRACTICES IN PROMOTING HAPPINESS AMONG YOUNG WORKERS POPULATION IN THAILAND

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Abstract

Background and Objectives: Thailand, where Buddhism was the predominant religion, deeply incorporated its spiritual practices and traditions into the country's social and cultural systems. Buddhist teachings played a significant role in shaping individual values, promoting emotional well-being, and supporting coping strategies throughout different phases of life. For young workers aged 30-40, this stage marked a crucial period of personal and professional development, often accompanied by challenges such as career progression, work-life balance, and self-identity formation. During this stage, religiosity and participation in Buddhist practices provided emotional support, fostered resilience, and enhanced life satisfaction. This study investigated the role of Buddhist practices in promoting happiness among young workers (Aged 30-40) in Thailand, with an emphasis on understanding how religiosity and religious activities contributed to their overall happiness.

Methodology: The study utilized secondary data from the 2018 Survey on Conditions of Society, Culture, and Mental Health, conducted by Thailand's National Statistical Office, a government agency. This nationwide dataset was based on proportional stratification by population size, with households surveyed through face-to-face interviews using a structured questionnaire. A subset of 3,526 individuals aged 30-40 years, representing young workers, was analyzed to examine the relationship between Buddhist practices and happiness.

Main Results: The findings highlighted two critical perspectives: 1) Religiosity significantly enhanced psychological well-being through practices such as praying, meditating, listening to sermons, observing the Five Precepts, and participating in cultural and religious events. These practices fostered mindfulness, emotional stability, and mental resilience, equipping young workers better to navigate the complexities of professional and personal life; and 2) Engaging in religious activities,



such as applying Buddhist teachings to daily life, addressing workplace challenges with moral principles, and practicing according to religious precepts, promoted emotional resilience, a sense of purpose, and a strong sense of community belonging. These factors were vital for cultivating positivity and collaborative relationships in the workplace.

Involvement to Buddhadhamma: These findings aligned with the framework of "Buddhism and the development of wisdom and morality," emphasizing the integration of Buddhist principles with modern or contemporary knowledge. The study applied research on religious principles from a new perspective, such as the impact on societal well-being. The study highlighted the significant role of Buddhist practices, such as meditation, prayer, and sermons, in fostering psychological happiness, emotional resilience, and spiritual growth among young workers in Thailand. These practices reaffirmed the core Buddhist principles of virtue, concentration, and wisdom as essential foundations for achieving happiness. Policymakers and mental health professionals could utilize these insights to develop workshops, community programs, and stress-relief initiatives grounded in Buddhist teachings. Moreover, incorporating Buddhist principles into coping strategies enhanced young workers' capacity to navigate challenges, demonstrating the practical application of Buddhism in promoting mental well-being and sustainable societal development. This aligned with the "Buddhism and the development of wisdom and morality" category by illustrating how Buddhist teachings contributed to societal well-being and happiness.

Conclusions: Buddhist practices played a pivotal role in fostering happiness among young workers in Thailand. Religiosity, through practices like prayer, meditation, and cultural celebrations, and participation in religious activities, such as adhering to moral precepts and applying Buddhist teachings to daily life, significantly contributed to emotional and psychological well-being. These findings offered valuable insights for developing culturally aligned mental health initiatives and public health policy strategies aimed at enhancing the happiness and resilience of young workers. To support this, workplace policies could provide meditation spaces and mindfulness programs; Public health campaigns could promote Buddhist practices for mental well-being, and community religious institutions could offer group meditation and discussions. These initiatives could help integrate Buddhist teachings into daily life, fostering greater happiness among young workers.

Keywords: Happiness, Buddhist Practices, Young Workers, Thailand

Introduction

The values, beliefs, and lifestyles of Thai people are heavily influenced by Buddhism, which forms the basis of both individual and group identity in Thailand. As the most common religion, Buddhism significantly impacts social standards and individual beliefs. It provides a moral and spiritual framework that directs interpersonal interactions and decision-making. Buddhism is more than just a religion for workers; It offers guidance on how to deal with the difficulties of juggling jobs, personal obligations, and social expectations (Robinson, 2010). Buddhist teachings, which are deeply ingrained in Thai society, serve as a calming influence and foster inner serenity and resilience, which are two qualities that are crucial for managing the demands of the contemporary



workplace. Buddhism provides methods for problem-solving, mindfulness, and self-reflection, all of which enhance emotional stability and personal well-being (Koenig et al., 2012); (Cranney, 2013). Buddhism helps employees find balance and meaning in their lives by highlighting virtues like compassion, mindfulness, and moral integrity, especially in the hectic and frequently stressful workplace. Buddhism encourages employees to contribute to the general well-being of society by fostering a feeling of community and shared responsibility in the larger social environment. Its lessons foster a positive, cooperative work environment in addition to improving personal happiness. Buddhism maintains its relevance in the contemporary world by continuing to affect the goals and contentment of Thai workers through its enduring influence.

Buddhist beliefs in Thailand play a vital role in fostering harmony and well-being among young workers, guiding their behavior, and promoting inner peace. These principles provide tools for mindfulness, self-reflection, and ethical living, helping young workers navigate professional and personal challenges. By aligning their lives with Buddhist teachings, young workers can cultivate personal happiness while contributing to a positive and harmonious workplace environment. This study explores the relationship between Buddhist practices and happiness among young workers, emphasizing how Buddhist teachings and rituals impact their emotional well-being and daily lives (Estrada et al., 2019). By examining the role of Buddhism in enhancing subjective happiness, the study highlights its importance in supporting the mental and emotional health of young workers in Thailand. Understanding how Buddhist values influence happiness provides valuable insights for developing workplace policies, interventions, and support systems that align with this cultural context (Zotti et al., 2016); (O'Sullivan & Lindsay, 2023). This research underscores the significance of Buddhism as a key factor in promoting happiness and overall well-being among young workers in Thailand.

In Thailand's rapidly changing societal landscape, young workers face significant challenges as traditional values and cultural norms are increasingly disrupted by technological advancements, the spread of Western influences, and evolving career dynamics (Ratanakul, 2012). This demographic, which forms a vital part of the workforce, is particularly vulnerable to these societal shifts. The growing prevalence of digital media, fast-paced work environments, and the pressures of modern life are reshaping the way young workers engage with traditional Thai values, including religious practices (Ratanakul, 2012). Many young workers are experiencing a decline in religious interest, especially in Buddhism, which has historically served as a moral and ethical foundation for the Thai population (Ratanakul, 2012); (Jitapunkul et al., 1993). Additionally, the rise of social media and online platforms often spreads negative portrayals of Buddhist practices and institutions, distorting perceptions and weakening faith in a religion that has been a cornerstone of moral guidance for generations (Thanissaro, 2014); (Anders, 2022). As a result, young workers are facing a crisis of faith, leading to a weakening of cultural and ethical foundations. This erosion of values contributes to a broader sense of social instability and diminished moral cohesion within society. Furthermore, young workers in Thailand are navigating the pressures of career advancement, maintaining work-life balance, and adapting to the demands of the modern workplace. These challenges, coupled with financial pressures and the stress of securing long-term career goals, significantly impact their



emotional well-being and engagement with spiritual practices. (Cunningham, 2014) Understanding these dynamics is crucial for addressing the unique needs of young workers in Thailand and exploring how Buddhist practices can provide support and resilience in the face of these societal changes.

There was limited research exploring the relationship between Buddhist practices and the happiness of young workers in Thailand, particularly those aged 30-40. Existing studies often focused on broader age groups or the elderly as a homogenous category, overlooking the unique experiences and challenges faced by young workers navigating the complexities of professional life and societal expectations (Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2018); (Singh et al., 2020). Young workers in this demographic often contended with career pressures, evolving social roles, and the need to balance personal development with professional responsibilities, all of which impacted their happiness and well-being (Lewis et al., 2000). Understanding the role of Buddhism in promoting happiness amidst these challenges was essential. This research addressed this gap by investigating how Buddhist practices, specifically religiosity and participation in religious activities, contributed to the subjective happiness of young workers. The study aimed to analyze levels of happiness in relation to spiritual practices such as praying, meditating, and participating in cultural and religious events, as well as applying Buddhist teachings to navigate workplace challenges. By examining the influence of Buddhist beliefs and practices on the well-being of young workers, this research sought to provide insights that could inform policymakers and workplace policy. Workplace policies, public health campaigns, and community religious institutions could promote Buddhist practices, helping integrate them into daily life and enhancing young workers' happiness. To support mental well-being among young workers, workplace policies could include meditation spaces and mindfulness programs. Additionally, public health campaigns might promote Buddhist practices to enhance mental health, while community religious institutions could offer group meditation sessions and discussions. These initiatives would help incorporate Buddhist teachings into everyday life, ultimately fostering greater happiness.

Objectives

The objective of this study was to investigate the role of Buddhist practices in promoting happiness among young workers (Aged 30-40) in Thailand, with an emphasis on understanding how religiosity and religious activities contributed to their overall happiness.

Methodology

Participants and procedure

This study utilized secondary data from the 2018 Survey on Conditions of Society, Culture, and Mental Health conducted by Thailand's National Statistical Office, a government agency. The data were collected from provinces across Thailand and were selected using stratified sampling based on population size. Population size was determined through proportional allocation, with data collected from households in each province. The survey employed face-to-face interviews using a structured questionnaire. From this government dataset, a subset of 3,526 individuals was



manually extracted to represent the target demographic of young workers aged 30-40 years. This subset was analyzed to examine the relationship between Buddhist practices and happiness within this specific group.

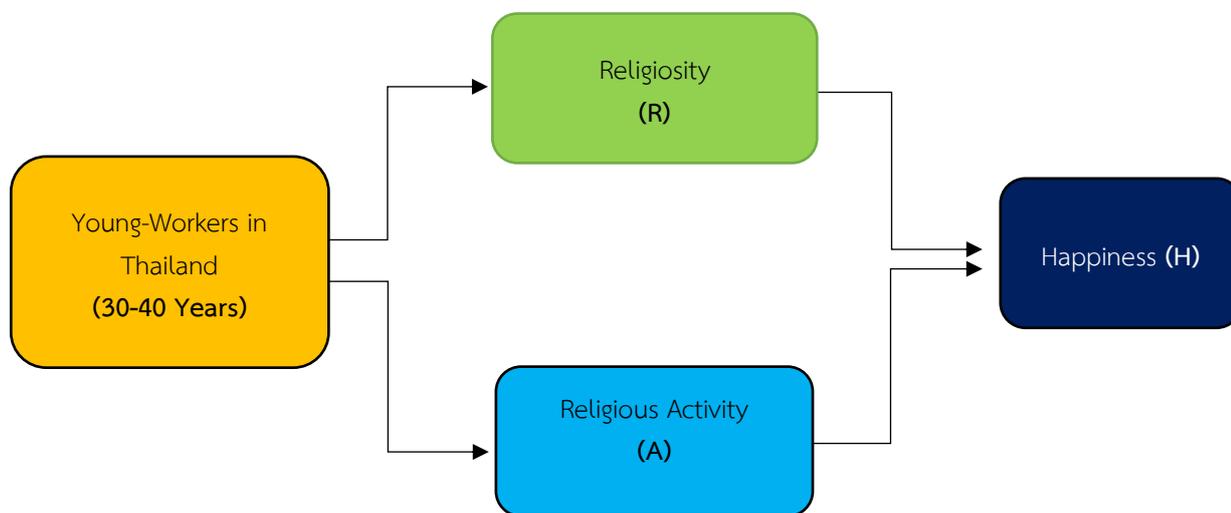


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of the study on young workers' happiness through Buddhist practices

In the Figure 1, the relationship between two variables was represented: Independent variables, including religiosity and religious activities, and the dependent variable, happiness, among young workers (Aged 30-40) in Thailand. Religiosity encompassed personal religious practices such as praying, listening to sermons, observing precepts, meditating, and participating in cultural celebrations like New Year's festivals. Religious activities focused on the application of Buddhist teachings in daily life, using religious principles for problem-solving and adhering to moral precepts. The study hypothesized that both religiosity and religious activities significantly contributed to enhancing happiness among young workers in Thailand.

Variables and Measurements

All of the variables were demographic characteristics, including sex, age, education, marital status, occupation, and nationality, and independent variables, including religiosity factors (R), which consisted of R1: Praying, R2: Offering food to the monks, R3: Listening to sermons, R4: Five Precepts, R5: Meditation, R6: Ordination, R7: Nun (Becoming a Nun), R8: Usefulness of praying, R9: Praying for New Year's Eve celebration, and R10: Place of New Year prayer. Religious activity factors (A) included A1: Importance of teachings for living, A2: Teaching for life problem-solving, A3: Belief in religious teachings, and A4: Practice of religious teachings. The dependent variable was happiness (H), illustrated in the Table 1 and Table 2.



Table 1 Measurement of the valuables

| Variables | Definition | Measurements | Options |
|---------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Young Workers | Participant's characteristics | 1. Sex | 1) Male 2) Female |
| | | 2. Age | Age 30-40 years old |
| | | 3. Education | 1) Non-educated 2) Pre-primary 3) Primary 4) Pre-secondary 5) Secondary (General) 6) Secondary (Vocational) 7) Diploma 8) Bachelor degree 9) Master and Ph.D. |
| | | 4. Marital status | 1) Single 2) Married 3) Widowed 4) Divorced 5) Separated |
| | | 5. Occupation | 1) Officers 2) Professional 3) Technical 4) Clerk 5) Sales 6) Agriculture and Fishery 7) Secretary 8) Factory 9) Basic general |
| | | 6. Nationality | Thai |

Table 2 Measurement of the valuables

| Variables | Definition | Measurements | Options |
|--------------------|------------------------|---|--|
| Buddhist practices | Religiosity (R) | R1: Praying R2: Offering food to the monks R3: Listening to sermon R4: Five Precepts R5: Meditation R6: Ordination R7: Nun (Become a Nun) R8: Usefulness of praying R9: Praying for New Year's Eve celebration R10: Place of New Year prayer | 0 = Never 1 = Rare 2 = Sometimes 3 = Frequently |
| | Religious activity (A) | A1: Importance of teaching for living A2: Teaching for life problem-solving A3: Belief in religious teachings A4: Practice of religious teachings | |
| | | Happiness | 0 = Less 1 = More |



Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS software, and the research hypotheses were tested using an independent samples t-test. The analysis aimed to determine whether religiosity (R) and religious activity (A) significantly influenced happiness among young workers (Aged 30-40) in Thailand. The grouping variables in the analysis were the levels of religiosity and religious activity, while the dependent variable was the level of happiness.

Results and Discussion

The research findings were presented in three sections as follow,

1. Summary of demographic characteristics

The demographic and socioeconomic analysis of the respondents (N = 3,526) revealed that the majority were female (60.6%), with males comprising 39.4%. All respondents were aged 30-40 years, representing 100% of the sample. Education levels showed notable diversity: 22.3% had completed primary education, 20.2% held a bachelor's degree, 19.7% had secondary general education, 19.6% had pre-secondary education, 8.2% had a vocational diploma, 5.2% had secondary vocational education, 3.3% had postgraduate degrees (Master's or Ph.D.), 1.2% were non-educated, and 0.3% had pre-primary education. Marital status showed that 69.8% of respondents were married, followed by 21.9% who were single, 4.0% who were separated, 3.4% who were divorced, and 0.9% who were widowed. The distribution of occupational roles was as follows: 60% were engaged in agriculture, 10% in basic general work, 5% in sales, 5% as clerks, 3% as technical staff, 3% as professionals, 2% as officers, 2% as secretaries, and 10% in factory work. All respondents were Thai nationals (100%). This demographic profile provides an insightful view into the socioeconomic characteristics of the participants, emphasizing the importance of understanding their mental health and well-being in the context of Buddhist practices and cultural influences in Thailand, illustrated in the Table 3.

Table 3 Demographic characteristics

| Demographic characteristics | | (N = 3,526) | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Sex | 1. Male | 1,389 | 39.4% |
| | 2. Female | 2,137 | 60.6% |
| Age | age 30-40 years old | 3,526 | 100% |
| Education | 1. Non-educated | 44 | 1.2% |
| | 2. Pre-primary | 12 | 0.3% |
| | 3. Primary | 787 | 22.3% |
| | 4. Pre-secondary | 692 | 19.6% |
| | 5. Secondary (General) | 693 | 19.7% |
| | 6. Secondary (Vocational) | 182 | 5.2% |
| | 7. Diploma | 288 | 8.2% |
| | 8. Bachelor degree | 711 | 20.2% |
| | 9. Master and Ph.D. | 116 | 3.3% |

**Table 3** Demographic characteristics (Continued)

| Demographic characteristics | | (N = 3,526) | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Marital status | 1. Single | 771 | 21.9% |
| | 2. Married | 2,461 | 69.8% |
| | 3. Widowed | 32 | 0.9% |
| | 4. Divorced | 121 | 3.4% |
| | 5. Separated | 141 | 4.0% |
| Occupation | 1. Officers | 70 | 2% |
| | 2. Professional | 176 | 5% |
| | 3. Technical | 105 | 3% |
| | 4. Clerk | 105 | 3% |
| | 5. Sales | 176 | 5% |
| | 6. Agriculture | 2,115 | 60% |
| | 7. Secretary | 70 | 2% |
| | 8. Factory | 352 | 10% |
| | 9. Basic general | 352 | 10% |
| Nationality | Thai | 3,526 | 100% |

Discussion

The findings highlight that the sample predominantly consisted of individuals aged 30-40 years, with a majority being female and married. The respondents were primarily engaged in agricultural work, followed by general work and occupations. Education levels showed considerable variation, with notable proportions having completed primary education and holding bachelor's degrees. This demographic profile reflects the diversity and complexity of Thailand's workforce, emphasizing the intersection of traditional and modern socioeconomic characteristics. The results align with prior research that underscores the importance of cultural and religious practices in fostering emotional well-being among Thai populations (Hanklang et al., 2018). Buddhist practices such as meditation, adherence to Buddhist principles, and participation in religious and cultural events may provide essential coping mechanisms for navigating life's challenges, particularly for individuals in the agricultural and general work sectors. These findings highlight the role of religiosity in enhancing mental health and resilience, as supported by studies like (Hanklang et al., 2018). Future research should explore how occupational stress, societal transformations, and traditional religious practices interact to influence well-being, particularly in the context of Thailand's aging society and shifting cultural values. Further investigation into the effects of Buddhist practices across various socioeconomic and occupational settings could offer deeper insights into the adaptive role of religion in maintaining mental health and happiness (Sumngern et al., 2010).

2. The role of religiosity (R) in promoting happiness among young workers

The role of religiosity (R) in enhancing happiness among young workers in Thailand was significant. The analysis revealed that individuals with higher religiosity reported greater happiness levels (Mean = 3.254, S.D. = 1.036) compared to those with lower religiosity (Mean = 1.038,



S.D. = 1.110). The t-value of 6.161 was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that higher levels of religiosity were strongly associated with enhanced happiness among young workers in Thailand, illustrated in the Table 4.

Table 4 Results for religiosity (R) in promoting happiness among young workers

| | More (Happiness) | | Less (Happiness) | | t | Sig. |
|--|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | Mean | S.D. | Mean | S.D. | | |
| R1: Praying | 4.92 | 3.32 | 5.23 | 3.22 | 2.904** | 0.004 |
| R2: Offering food to the monks | 6.83 | 2.81 | 6.56 | 2.83 | -2.552* | 0.011 |
| R3: Listening to sermon | 6.45 | 3.26 | 6.19 | 3.43 | 3.282*** | 0.001 |
| R4: Five Precepts | 3.39 | 3.08 | 4.26 | 3.32 | 7.085*** | 0.000 |
| R5: Meditation | 3.10 | 3.11 | 4.02 | 3.40 | 7.300*** | 0.000 |
| R6: Ordination | 1.09 | 0.80 | 1.28 | 1.36 | 3.985*** | 0.000 |
| R7: Nun (Become a Nun) | 1.27 | 1.36 | 1.54 | 1.89 | 3.968*** | 0.000 |
| R8: Usefulness of praying | 2.98 | 1.50 | 2.80 | 1.53 | -3.128** | 0.002 |
| R9: Praying for New Year's Eve celebration | 1.87 | 0.33 | 1.83 | 0.37 | -2.603** | 0.009 |
| R10: Place of New Year prayer | 1.04 | 0.19 | 1.05 | 0.23 | 1.470 | 0.142 |
| Overall | 3.254 | 1.036 | 1.038 | 1.110 | 6.161*** | 0.000 |

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 4 presents a summary of the results highlighting the role of religiosity (R) in enhancing happiness among young workers in Thailand. The analysis revealed significant findings, indicating that varying levels of religiosity have a substantial impact on happiness among young workers in Thailand.

Significant results

The analysis identified several significant associations between specific Buddhist practices and happiness among young workers in Thailand. R1: Praying, individuals with greater happiness had a mean score of 4.92 (S.D. = 3.32), compared to 5.23 (S.D. = 3.22) for those with less happiness, showing a significant difference ($t = 2.904^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). R2: Offering food to the monks, a significant relationship was found, with individuals reporting more happiness, scoring 6.83 (S.D. = 2.81), while those with less happiness scored 6.56 (S.D. = 2.83) ($t = -2.552^{*}$, $p < 0.05$). R3: Listening to the sermons, those with more happiness had a mean score of 6.45 (S.D. = 3.26) compared to 6.19 (S.D. = 3.43) for those with less happiness, with a significant t-value of 3.282^{***} ($p < 0.001$). R4: Five Precepts, a strong relationship was observed, with individuals experiencing more happiness scoring 3.39 (S.D. = 3.08), while those with less happiness scored 4.26 (S.D. = 3.32) ($t = 7.085^{***}$, $p < 0.001$). R5: Meditation, a significant association was found, as those with more happiness had a mean score of 3.10 (S.D. = 3.11) compared to 4.02 (S.D. = 3.40) for those with less happiness ($t = 7.300^{***}$, $p < 0.001$). R6: Ordination showed a significant relationship with happiness, with a t-value of 3.985^{***} ($p < 0.001$). R7: Nun (Become a Nun) Also demonstrated a significant relationship, with a t-value of 3.968^{***} ($p < 0.001$). R8: Usefulness of praying, a significant



negative association was found, with a t-value of -3.128^{**} ($p < 0.01$). R9: Praying for New Year's Eve celebration also showed a significant negative association ($t = -2.603^{**}$, $p < 0.01$).

Not significant results

Conversely, some religious activities did not demonstrate a statistically significant association with happiness among young workers in Thailand. R10: Place of New Year prayer had mean scores of 1.04 (S.D. = 0.19) for individuals with more happiness and 1.05 (S.D. = 0.23) for those with less happiness, with a t-value of 1.470 ($p = 0.142$), indicating no significant difference. These findings highlight those certain practices, such as the location of New Year prayers, may be regarded more as cultural traditions rather than deeply spiritual acts directly linked to personal happiness. This lack of significant association underscores the potential variability in how young workers interpret and engage with religious practices, with some being more closely tied to routine or habit rather than meaningful personal reflection or emotional well-being.

Discussion

The findings highlight the vital role of Buddhist practices in enhancing happiness among young workers in Thailand. Individuals who actively engage in these practices and maintain a higher level of religiosity tend to experience greater levels of happiness. These results underscore the importance of Buddhist practices as a key factor contributing to well-being in this demographic. Notably, activities such as Praying, Offering Food to the Monks, Listening to Sermons, Five Precepts, Meditation, Ordination, Nun (Becoming a Nun), Usefulness of Praying, and Praying for New Year's Eve Celebration were significantly associated with higher happiness levels (Maheshwari & Singh, 2009); (Lewis & Cruise, 2006). For example, meditation showed a particularly strong correlation with happiness, highlighting its effectiveness in fostering mindfulness, reducing stress, and cultivating inner peace. Five Precepts also demonstrated a significant impact, suggesting that adherence to these ethical principles provides young workers with a framework for moral integrity and emotional balance. Listening to the Sermon reflected a meaningful connection to spiritual teachings, fostering reflection and personal growth. Participation in the Praying for New Year's Eve Celebration further emphasized the role of cultural and communal values, enhancing happiness through shared spiritual experiences. However, some Buddhist practices, such as the Place of New Year prayer, did not show statistically significant associations with happiness. For example, while the act of praying overall demonstrated significance, the specific location of the New Year prayer had no notable impact on happiness. This lack of significance may suggest that certain practices are perceived more as routine cultural traditions rather than deeply spiritual acts that enhance personal well-being. These findings highlight the variability in how young workers interpret and engage with religious practices. Practices that involve active reflection, mindfulness, or ethical adherence, such as meditation and the Five Precepts, are more closely associated with happiness. In contrast, routine activities or those perceived as cultural obligations, such as specific prayer locations, may have a weaker connection to personal happiness. The results align with prior research emphasizing the role of religiosity in fostering well-being. Studies across various religious contexts consistently highlight that those practices encouraging mindfulness, ethical living, and



communal connection positively affect happiness and mental health (Lim et al., 2015); (Holt & Dellmann Jenkins, 1992). Encouraging young workers to engage in meaningful and reflective Buddhist practices can help them derive greater personal and spiritual benefits, contributing to their overall well-being.

3. The role of religious activities (A) in promoting happiness among young workers

The analysis showed that religious activities (A) significantly enhance happiness among young workers in Thailand. Frequent participation correlated with higher happiness levels. While not all aspects reached statistical significance, three key aspects demonstrated highly significant associations, illustrated in the Table 5.

Table 5 Result of religious activities (A) in promoting happiness among young workers

| | More (Happiness) | | Less (Happiness) | | t | Sig. |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| | Mean | S.D. | Mean | S.D. | | |
| A1: Importance of teaching for living | 1.06 | 0.321 | 1.02 | 0.201 | -4.320*** | 0.000 |
| A2: Teaching for life problem-solving | 2.75 | 1.064 | 2.41 | 0.967 | -8.754*** | 0.000 |
| A3: Belief in religious teachings | 8.17 | 1.509 | 8.16 | 1.364 | -0.213 | 0.831 |
| A4: Practice of religious teachings | 7.15 | 1.479 | 7.47 | 1.332 | 6.205*** | 0.000 |
| Overall | 4.783 | 0.596 | 4.765 | 0.554 | -0.839 | 0.401 |

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

Table 5 presents a summary of the results highlighting the role of religious activities (A) in enhancing happiness among young workers in Thailand. The analysis revealed significant findings, indicating that varying levels of engagement in religious activities have a substantial impact on happiness among young workers in Thailand.

Significant and Non-Significant Results

The analysis revealed several significant findings regarding the role of religious activity in promoting happiness among young workers in Thailand. For A1: Importance of teachings for living, individuals with higher happiness reported a mean score of 1.06 (S.D. = 0.321) compared to 1.02 (S.D. = 0.201) for those with less happiness, with a t-value of -4.320*** (p < 0.001). Similarly, A2: Teaching for life problem-solving showed a strong association with happiness, as individuals with higher happiness had a mean score of 2.75 (S.D. = 1.064), while those with less happiness scored 2.41 (S.D. = 0.967), reflected in a t-value of -8.754*** (p < 0.001). For A4: Practice of religious teachings, individuals with less happiness reported a slightly higher mean score of 7.47 (S.D. = 1.332) compared to 7.15 (S.D. = 1.479) for those with more happiness, resulting in a significant t-value of 6.205*** (p < 0.001). Conversely, A3: Belief in religious teachings did not show a statistically significant difference, with nearly identical mean scores of 8.17 (S.D. = 1.509) for individuals with more happiness and 8.16 (S.D. = 1.364) for those with less happiness (t = -0.213, p = 0.831).

Discussion

The analysis underscores the significant role of religious activities in promoting happiness among young workers in Thailand. Those who engaged more frequently in religious practices



reported higher levels of happiness, emphasizing the importance of these activities for enhancing well-being. This study highlights how various dimensions of religiosity contribute to happiness, particularly the importance of teaching for living, teaching for life problem-solving, and practicing religious teachings. Notably, the findings indicate that applying religious teachings to life problem-solving and practice of religious teachings showed strong associations with happiness. These aspects of religiosity highlight its practical and ethical dimensions, providing young workers with a framework for emotional stability and resilience. For instance, the necessity of religious teachings for daily living demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with happiness, emphasizing its role in fostering a sense of purpose and moral guidance. These results align with previous studies that emphasize the positive correlation between religiosity and happiness across different demographics and cultural contexts (Fave et al., 2013); (Abdel-Khalek, 2007). However, Belief in religious teachings did not show a significant association with happiness, suggesting that intrinsic faith alone may not suffice to enhance well-being without active engagement in practical and reflective religious activities. This variability underscores the nuanced ways in which young workers interact with religious teachings, highlighting the importance of tangible practices over abstract beliefs in promoting happiness. For young workers in Thailand, the integration of religious teachings into daily life and problem-solving fosters a sense of emotional balance and resilience, significantly enhancing their overall happiness. These findings echo prior research suggesting that religious principles provide both spiritual and practical guidance, contributing to mental health and well-being (Phillips et al., 2009); (Ngamaba & Soni, 2018). Unlike younger individuals who may view religious participation as a social or familial obligation, young workers appear to derive happiness from the intrinsic value of religious practices and their applicability to navigating life's challenges (Xu et al., 2020); (Leelavanichkul et al., 2018).

Originality and Body of Knowledge

The study's conclusion offered two important viewpoints on how Buddhist practices could increase young workers' happiness in Thailand, with practical ramifications for practice and policy

- 1) Religiosity and happiness (R): The study confirmed that religiosity significantly enhanced psychological happiness among young workers. Contributing factors included praying, offering food to the monks, listening to sermons, observing the Five Precepts, meditation, ordination, becoming a nun, the usefulness of praying, and praying for the New Year's Eve celebration; and
- 2) Religious activities and happiness (A): Engagement in religious activities played a pivotal role in fostering psychological happiness among young workers. Key factors included the importance of teachings for living, using teachings for life problem-solving, and practicing religious teachings. These findings underscored the importance of integrating religious teachings and activities into workplace policies to promote psychological well-being among young workers. Specifically, emphasizing religiosity (R), such as listening to sermons, the Five Precepts, meditation, and engaging in prayer-related activities, significantly enhanced happiness. Similarly, promoting religious activities (A), like incorporating religious teachings into daily life, using them for life



problem-solving, and practicing religious teachings, fostered a sense of purpose, emotional stability, and resilience. Practical initiatives could have included creating designated spaces for prayer or meditation within the workplace, offering workshops or lectures on applying Buddhist teachings to real-life challenges, and facilitating group discussions on ethical living and mindfulness practices. Organizations could have also encouraged employees to participate in culturally significant religious activities, such as almsgiving or celebrating spiritual milestones like New Year prayers, to strengthen communal bonds and foster a supportive environment. Such policies not only reduced stress and improved mental health but also enhanced job satisfaction, built emotional resilience, and promoted ethical behavior among employees. Furthermore, fostering an empathetic and collaborative workplace culture rooted in Buddhist principles could have improved organizational efficiency, employee retention, and overall happiness, contributing to long-term success for both employees and employers. Future research could have examined the long-term impact of Buddhist practices on workplace well-being, assessed digital tools for mindfulness, and explored policy effects on job satisfaction. Public health campaigns could have integrated Buddhist principles to enhance resilience, illustrated in the Figure 2.

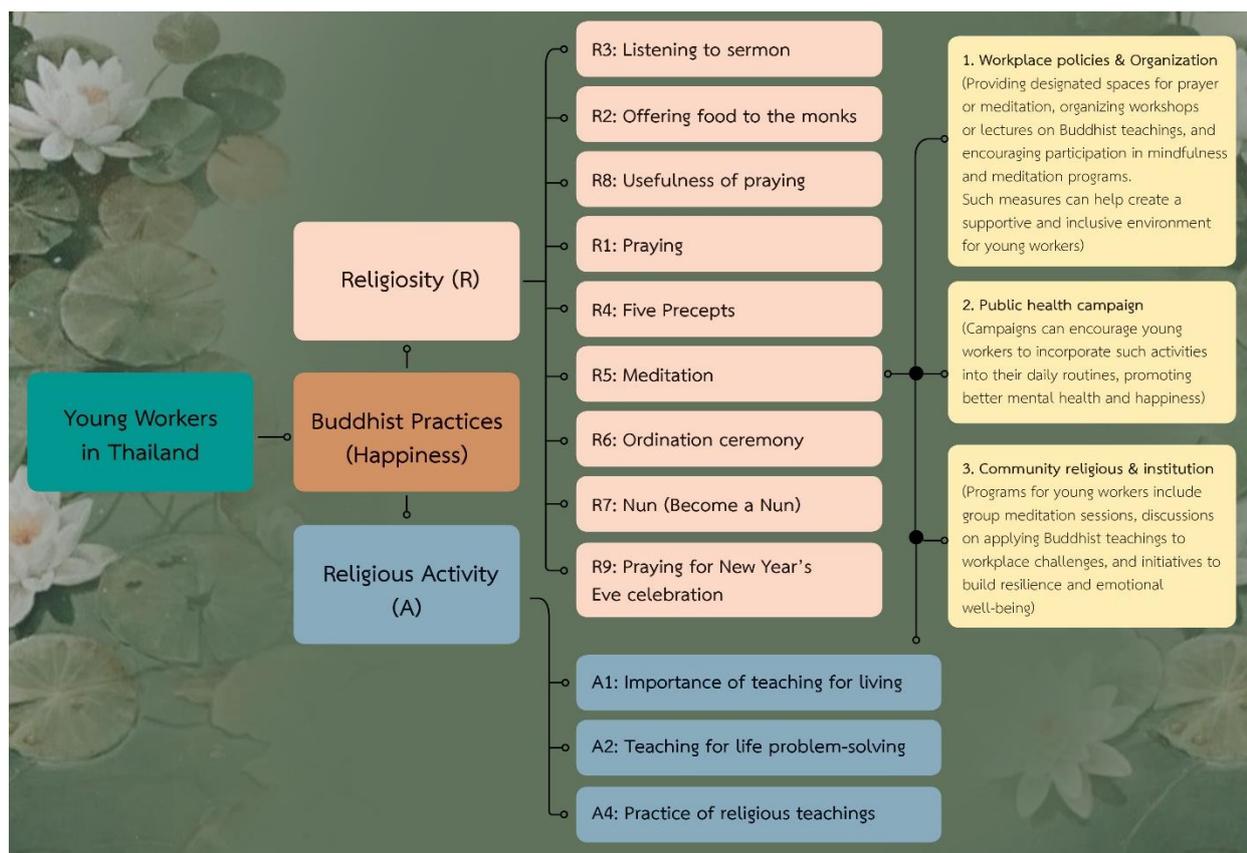


Figure 2 Guideline for Promoting Young Workers' Happiness Through Buddhist Practices

The figure illustrates a conceptual framework that underscores how Buddhist practices, through the dual dimensions of religiosity and religious activities, contributed to happiness among



young workers in Thailand. The model highlighted the profound influence of these practices on mental well-being, emotional stability, and overall happiness, particularly within the workplace context. **Religiosity:** This dimension encompassed personal spiritual practices such as praying, offering food to the monks, listening to sermons, observing the Five Precepts, meditation, ordination, becoming a nun, the usefulness of praying, and praying for New Year's Eve celebration. These practices fostered mindfulness, reduced stress, and instilled a strong sense of ethical grounding, which was vital for young workers navigating professional and personal challenges. Additionally, activities like offering food to the monks and understanding the usefulness of praying contributed to a more profound sense of connection and purpose. **Religious activities:** This dimension emphasizes the application of teachings for life problem-solving to daily life and workplace challenges, fostering moral principles, emotional resilience, and a sense of purpose. Key activities included integrating religious teachings into life problem-solving, practicing religious teachings, and finding meaning through community-oriented practices. These activities not only built emotional stability but also strengthened communal bonds and promoted positive relationships among colleagues. The framework advocated for the integration of these spiritual dimensions into workplace practices. Organizations could have aligned culturally sensitive policies with the needs of young workers by implementing practical initiatives such as providing spaces for prayer or meditation, hosting workshops on Buddhist teachings, and encouraging mindfulness programs to foster an inclusive environment. Public health campaigns could have highlighted the psychological benefits of practices like meditation, prayer, and ethical living, encouraging workers to incorporate these into their daily routines. Additionally, community and religious institutions could have offered tailored programs, including group meditation, discussions on applying Buddhist principles to workplace challenges, and activities that build resilience and emotional well-being, bridging cultural traditions with the needs of the modern workforce.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, both religiosity and religious activities served as critical drivers of psychological happiness among young workers in Thailand. These findings emphasized integrating spiritual practices into workplace policies and mental health initiatives. The study highlighted two key perspectives: 1) Religiosity and happiness, where religiosity significantly enhanced psychological well-being through practices such as praying, meditating, listening to sermons, observing the Five Precepts, and participating in cultural and religious events. These practices fostered mindfulness, emotional stability, and mental resilience, equipping young workers to better navigate the complexities of professional and personal life; and 2) Religious activities and happiness, where engaging in religious activities such as applying Buddhist teachings to daily life, addressing workplace challenges with moral principles, and practicing according to religious precepts promoted emotional resilience, a sense of purpose, and a strong sense of community belonging. These factors were vital for cultivating positivity and collaborative relationships in the workplace. Recommendations included: 1) Workplace policies, where organizations should implement



culturally sensitive policies that support religiosity and religious activities. These might include providing designated spaces for prayer or meditation, organizing workshops or lectures on Buddhist teachings, and encouraging participation in mindfulness and meditation programs. Such measures could help create a supportive and inclusive environment for young workers; 2) Public health campaigns, where awareness campaigns could emphasize the psychological benefits of religious practices, such as meditation, prayer, and adherence to ethical principles. By highlighting these benefits, campaigns could encourage young workers to incorporate such activities into their daily routines, promoting better mental health and overall happiness; and 3) Community and Religious Institutions, where religious institutions and community centers could offer tailored programs for young workers, such as group meditation sessions, discussions on applying Buddhist teachings to workplace challenges, and initiatives to build resilience and emotional well-being. These programs could serve as a bridge between cultural traditions and modern workplace needs. Future research could explore the long-term impact of Buddhist practices on workplace well-being, conduct cross-cultural comparisons, and test interventions integrating mindfulness and ethical teachings. Digital tools, such as meditation apps, could be studied for their effectiveness in promoting well-being. Workplace policies supporting religiosity should be assessed for their impact on job satisfaction. Additionally, public health campaigns could incorporate Buddhist principles to enhance mental resilience among young workers.

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