



## THE INFLUENCE OF BUDDHIST LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS ON EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF WORKPLACE MINDFULNESS

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### Abstract

**Background and Objectives:** In organizational environments characterized by rapid change, intensifying competition, and psychological demands, employee well-being has become a critical determinant of sustainable organizational performance. Conventional leadership approaches often emphasize efficiency and control while neglecting employees' emotional, ethical, and cognitive development. In response to these limitations, Buddhist leadership offers a holistic paradigm grounded in mindfulness, compassion, moral integrity, and wisdom. Rooted in the Four Brahmavihāras; Loving-kindness (Mettā), compassion (Karuṇā), sympathetic joy (Muditā), and equanimity (Upekkhā) and the Four Iddhipāda; Zeal (Chanda), effort (Viriya), concentration (Citta), and wisdom or investigation (Vīmaṃsā). Buddhist leadership conceptualizes leadership as a process of cultivation and ethical responsibility. However, existing studies have largely treated Buddhist or mindful leadership as a unidimensional construct, limiting theoretical precision and empirical depth. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the influence of eight doctrinally grounded Buddhist leadership dimensions on employee well-being within Thai organizational contexts, with workplace mindfulness functioning as a mediating mechanism.

**Methodology:** A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was employed to examine the relationships among Buddhist leadership dimensions, workplace mindfulness, and employee well-being. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed both online and in paper format to 400 employees across educational institutions, public organizations, healthcare facilities, and private enterprises in Thailand. Participants were selected using purposive and stratified sampling techniques to ensure representation across organizational levels. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis to assess direct and mediating relationships among the variables.

**Main Results:** The findings indicate that Buddhist leadership functions as a multidimensional construct with differentiated effects on workplace outcomes. Wisdom (Vīmaṃsā), Equanimity (Upekkhā), Effort (Viriya), and Concentration (Citta) significantly enhanced workplace mindfulness, suggesting that leaders who demonstrate cognitive discernment, emotional balance, perseverance, and focused attention foster a mindful organizational climate. In terms of direct effects on employee well-being, Loving-kindness (Mettā), Compassion (Karuṇā), and Equanimity (Upekkhā) emerged as significant



predictors, highlighting the importance of moral-emotional leadership behaviors in promoting psychological satisfaction and emotional stability. Furthermore, workplace mindfulness was identified as a strong predictor of employee well-being and was found to partially mediate the effects of Wisdom and Equanimity, underscoring its pivotal role as a psychological mechanism linking leadership practices to employee outcomes.

**Involvement to Buddhadhamma:** This study operationalizes the Four Brahmavihāras and the Four Iddhipāda into empirically measurable leadership dimensions and aligns them with the Threefold Training (Tisikkhā) framework of morality (Sīla), concentration (Samādhi), and wisdom (Paññā). In accordance with the journal's classification, this research is situated within Applied Buddhism, as it applies fundamental Buddhist doctrinal principles to contemporary organizational leadership and employee well-being. By integrating Buddhist ethical teachings with modern organizational behavior and mindfulness theory, the study demonstrates how Buddhadhamma can be systematically translated into practical leadership practices in modern management contexts. The findings reaffirm that leadership grounded in compassion, equanimity, mindful awareness, and wisdom reflects core Buddhist teachings aimed at reducing suffering (Dukkha) and promoting collective well-being (Sukha) within organizational life.

**Conclusions:** The findings provide empirical support for Buddhist leadership as a multidimensional model associated with employee well-being. The final regression model explained 68% of the variance in employee well-being ( $R^2 = .68$ ), with Workplace Mindfulness demonstrating a substantial effect ( $\beta = .41$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Wisdom ( $\beta = .22$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and Equanimity ( $\beta = .19$ ,  $p < .01$ ) showed meaningful associations with workplace mindfulness, which partially mediated several leadership-well-being relationships. These results highlight the practical relevance of integrating wisdom, equanimity, and compassion into leadership development and human resource practices. Overall, the study suggests that Buddhist leadership dimensions are statistically and practically associated with improved psychological outcomes and sustainable organizational functioning in Thai work contexts.

**Keywords:** Buddhist Leadership, Workplace Mindfulness, Employee Well-Being, Four Brahmavihāras, Four Iddhipāda

## Introduction

In contemporary organizational contexts, where rapid change and psychological strain increasingly challenge employees' well-being, leadership that fosters mindfulness, compassion, and ethical integrity has become an essential foundation for sustainable performance. Traditional management models often emphasize productivity and control, whereas Buddhist-oriented leadership offers a holistic paradigm centered on awareness (Sati), compassion (Karuṇā), and wisdom (Paññā). This orientation not only supports organizational success but also nurtures human flourishing, a growing priority in both organizational behavior and positive psychology research.

An expanding body of evidence confirms that mindfulness enhances psychological resilience and employee well-being. Sentin et al. (2025) demonstrated that mindfulness reduces perceived



stress and improves well-being, while Kumprang & Suriyankietkaew (2024) found that organizational mindfulness strengthens psychological capital and engagement at multiple levels. Likewise, Choi et al. (2022) and Kuo et al. (2025) provide evidence that mindfulness promotes intrinsic motivation, attention regulation, and collective well-being. Together, these findings emphasize mindfulness as both a personal and organizational capability essential to employee welfare. Leadership mindfulness has also been recognized as a crucial determinant of employee outcomes. Mohammed et al. (2023) showed that leadership mindfulness positively affects employee well-being through ethical leadership, while Cawthorn (2025) highlighted mindful leadership as a competitive advantage that fosters emotional intelligence and engagement. Pinck & Sonnentag (2018) further suggest that mindfulness-oriented leadership behaviors cultivate psychological resources that buffer against stress and burnout. These studies collectively point to mindfulness-based leadership as a potent force in creating emotionally healthy and productive workplaces.

In the Thai context, where Buddhist philosophy is deeply embedded in cultural, educational, and organizational life, leadership practices are often implicitly shaped by Buddhist values. However, despite this cultural foundation, contemporary Thai organizations are increasingly confronted with challenges such as rising work-related stress, employee burnout, role ambiguity, and psychological strain driven by rapid digital transformation and competitive pressures. Reports from Thai labor and public health agencies indicate growing concerns regarding employee mental well-being, particularly in public institutions, healthcare settings, and service-oriented sectors. Although Buddhist principles are widely recognized at a cultural level, their systematic integration into formal leadership frameworks remains limited and largely conceptual rather than empirically examined. This gap highlights a critical need to investigate whether and how doctrinally grounded Buddhist leadership dimensions can meaningfully contribute to psychological resilience and well-being in modern Thai workplaces. By situating the present study within Thai organizational contexts, this research responds to both theoretical and practical imperatives: It addresses the underdevelopment of empirically validated Buddhist leadership models. It responds to pressing well-being challenges faced by employees in a Buddhist-majority society undergoing socio-economic transition.

Despite the growing scholarly interest in Buddhist-informed leadership, the theoretical foundation underpinning the selection of specific doctrinal constructs remains underexplored. A critical issue concerns the justification for adopting the Four Brahmavihāras (Four Divine Abodes or Sublime Attitudes) and the Four Iddhipāda (Bases of Success or Foundations of Mental Power) as the conceptual basis of Buddhist leadership, rather than other central Buddhist frameworks such as the Four Noble Truths (Ariyasacca 4), the Noble Eightfold Path, or the Pāramī (Perfections). To enhance conceptual rigor, it is therefore necessary to clarify the theoretical criteria guiding this selection. The present study prioritizes the Four Brahmavihāras and the Four Iddhipāda based on three interrelated theoretical considerations: Relational applicability, behavioral operationalizability, and psychological-process relevance. First, leadership is inherently relational and interpersonal in nature, loving-kindness (Mettā), compassion (Karunā), sympathetic joy (Muditā), and equanimity (Upekkhā). The Four Brahmavihāras constitute an explicitly relational



ethical framework that governs how individuals orient themselves toward others. These virtues prescribe prosocial emotional dispositions directly aligned with leadership functions such as care, fairness, empathy, and impartiality. Unlike the Four Noble Truths, which primarily address existential suffering and its cessation at a philosophical level, the Brahmavihāras articulate observable moral-emotional orientations that can manifest concretely in leader-follower interactions. Second, the Four Iddhipāda: Zeal (Chanda), effort (Viriya), concentration (Citta), and wisdom or investigation (Vīmaṃsā), provide a motivational-cognitive architecture that explains how intentional action is sustained and directed. Whereas the Noble Eightfold Path presents a comprehensive spiritual training system encompassing morality, concentration, and wisdom, it is structured as a holistic path of liberation rather than a differentiated behavioral framework tailored to organizational roles. Similarly, the Pāramī (Spiritual Perfections) emphasize long-term spiritual perfections cultivated across lifetimes and are less readily translatable into measurable leadership behaviors within contemporary organizational contexts. In contrast, the Iddhipāda delineate actionable psychological drivers: Motivation, persistence, attentional focus, and reflective discernment, that can be operationalized as leadership capacities influencing workplace climate and employee outcomes. Third, the integration of the Brahmavihāras and the Iddhipāda yields a balanced multidimensional construct encompassing moral-emotional, motivational, and cognitive domains. This integration aligns conceptually with contemporary leadership and organizational behavior theories that emphasize ethical influence, self-regulation, and resource activation. By combining relational ethics (Brahmavihāras) with volitional and attentional mechanisms (Iddhipāda), the framework captures both the affective orientation of leaders toward followers and the inner psychological processes that sustain mindful and purposeful action. Such a structure is theoretically compatible with the Job Demands-Resources model, in which leadership behaviors function as social and psychological resources that foster employee resilience and well-being. Importantly, the selected constructs meet the criterion of empirical operationalizability. Each of the eight dimensions can be translated into observable behaviors and measurable psychological tendencies, thereby allowing quantitative validation through established statistical techniques. This characteristic distinguishes them from broader soteriological doctrines whose abstraction may hinder empirical assessment in organizational research. By explicitly grounding the construct selection in relational relevance, psychological mechanism, and empirical measurability, this study strengthens the conceptual foundation of Buddhist leadership theory. Rather than treating Buddhist leadership as a diffuse spiritual metaphor, the present framework offers a theoretically justified and empirically testable multidimensional model suitable for examining how specific Buddhist virtues influence workplace mindfulness and employee well-being.

### Objectives

This study aimed to examine the influence of eight doctrinally grounded Buddhist leadership dimensions on employee well-being within Thai organizational contexts, with workplace mindfulness functioning as a mediating mechanism.



## Methodology

This study aimed to examine the relationship between Buddhist leadership dimensions and employee well-being, with workplace mindfulness functioning as a mediating variable. A quantitative research approach was employed using a cross-sectional survey design. This design was appropriate for assessing relationships among variables occurring in natural organizational settings without experimental manipulation. Multiple regression analysis was utilized as the primary analytical technique, enabling the examination of both direct and indirect effects among the variables in alignment with the proposed hypotheses.

### Sample

The target population comprised employees working in Buddhist-oriented organizations located in Thailand, specifically in Ubon Ratchathani Province in the northeastern region. The participating organizations included public universities, government agencies, regional hospitals, and ethically oriented private enterprises that explicitly incorporated Buddhist values and mindfulness-based management practices into their leadership frameworks. A purposive sampling technique was employed to identify organizations that demonstrated explicit alignment with Buddhist leadership principles, as reflected in their organizational mission statements, leadership development programs, or institutional culture. Within these selected organizations, stratified sampling was applied to ensure proportional representation across hierarchical levels, including operational staff, middle management, and senior management positions. The final sample consisted of 400 respondents, which met the recommended sample size for multiple regression analysis to achieve adequate statistical power (Hair et al., 2019). Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity in accordance with research ethics guidelines.

### Measurement Instruments

Data were collected through a self-administered structured questionnaire consisting of four main sections. All items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 7 ("Strongly Agree"). A seven-point Likert scale was employed to enhance measurement sensitivity and capture greater response variability. Prior methodological research has suggested that seven-point scales provide higher reliability, improved discriminatory power, and better approximation to interval-level measurement compared with shorter formats (e.g., Five-point Scales), thereby supporting parametric statistical analyses such as multiple regression (Hair et al., 2019); (Lozano et al., 2008). The questionnaire consisted of the following sections: Demographic Information: This section included respondents' gender, age, education, position level, and years of work experience.

Buddhist Leadership Dimensions: The construct was developed based on Buddhist doctrinal principles, namely the Four Brahmavihāras: loving-kindness (Mettā), compassion (Karūṇā), sympathetic joy (Muditā), and equanimity (Upekkhā), and the Four Iddhipāda: Zeal (Chanda), effort (Viriya), concentration (Citta), and wisdom or investigation (Vīmaṃsā). Sample items included statements such as: "My Leader Demonstrates Compassion and Understanding Toward Employees" and "My Leader Performs Duties with Wise Effort and Determination."



**Workplace Mindfulness:** This construct was measured using the scale developed by Reb et al. (2014), which assessed awareness and attention in workplace activities. Sample items included: "I am Aware of My Thoughts and Emotions While Working" and "I Stay Focused on My Tasks Without Unnecessary Distraction."

**Employee Well-being:** Employee well-being was measured using the scale developed by Zheng et al. (2015), which evaluated both psychological and subjective well-being in the workplace. Sample items included: "I Feel Happy and Satisfied with My Working Life" and "I Maintain a Healthy Balance Between Work and Personal Life."

The questionnaire was translated into Thai using a translation and back-translation process (Brislin, 1980) to ensure semantic equivalence and cultural appropriateness. Expert reviewers in organizational behavior and Buddhist studies evaluated the items to confirm their contextual relevance.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection was conducted over a two-month period through both paper-based and online surveys. Permission was obtained from each participating organization prior to distribution. Respondents were informed of the research objectives and were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential. Participation was entirely voluntary. Each respondent completed the questionnaire within approximately 10-15 minutes. All completed questionnaires were screened for completeness and accuracy before statistical analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis was performed in several stages.

**Descriptive Statistics:** These statistics were used to describe respondents' demographic characteristics, including mean, standard deviation, and percentage. **Reliability Analysis:** Internal consistency of each measurement scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, with a minimum acceptable value of 0.70. **Correlation Analysis:** Pearson's correlation coefficients were computed to assess the strength and direction of relationships among the study variables. **Multiple Regression Analysis:** Multiple regression was employed to test the study's hypotheses and determine both the direct and indirect effects among the variables. The hypotheses were as follows: H1: Buddhist leadership positively influences workplace mindfulness; H2: Buddhist leadership positively influences employee well-being, and H3: Workplace mindfulness mediates the relationships between individual Buddhist leadership dimensions and employee well-being.

The results were presented in tables reporting regression coefficients, t-values, and significance levels (p-values). The selected research methodology allowed for the systematic examination of relationships among the variables within a real organizational context. The use of multiple regression analysis provided a robust approach for testing the mediating role of workplace mindfulness and understanding how Buddhist leadership behaviors were associated with employees' psychological and emotional well-being. This methodological design also ensured alignment with the theoretical foundations of Applied Buddhism and organizational behavior, offering insights into how Buddhist virtues, such as compassion, effort, and mindfulness, may be integrated into



contemporary leadership practices to enhance well-being and sustainability in organizational life.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of this study is grounded in the integration of Buddhist leadership theory, mindfulness research, and organizational well-being literature. It proposes that Buddhist leadership, anchored in core Buddhist doctrines such as the Four Brahmavihāras: Loving-kindness (Mettā), compassion (Karuṇā), sympathetic joy (Muditā), and equanimity (Upekkhā), and the Four Iddhipāda: Zeal (Chanda), effort (Viriya), concentration (Citta), and wisdom or investigation (Vīmaṃsā) positively influences employees' psychological and emotional states, thereby enhancing their overall well-being.

Buddhist leadership emphasizes moral conduct (Sīla), mental cultivation (Samādhi), and wisdom (Paññā), three dimensions that align with the Threefold Training (Tisikkhā) in Buddhist teachings. These principles translate into leadership behaviors characterized by compassion, ethical mindfulness, empathy, and purposeful effort. Such leadership is not only directed toward achieving organizational goals but also toward reducing suffering (Dukkha) and promoting collective happiness (Sukha) within the workplace. This conceptualization aligns with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti et al., 2001), which posits that leadership behaviors act as resources that reduce job demands and enhance motivational states. Within this model, workplace mindfulness functions as a psychological resource that helps employees regulate attention and emotions, mitigating stress and fostering resilience. Empirical studies have shown that mindfulness facilitates well-being by reducing perceived stress (Sentin et al., 2025), increasing psychological capital and emotional intelligence (Kumprang & Suriyankietkaew, 2024), and promoting engagement and motivation (Choi et al., 2022).

The model proposes three main relationships:

Direct Effect of Buddhist Leadership on Workplace Mindfulness (H1): Leaders who embody Buddhist virtues, such as compassion (Karuṇā), equanimity (Upekkhā), and wise effort (Vīriya), create organizational climates that nurture awareness and reflective thinking. By modeling mindfulness and empathy, such leaders encourage followers to remain calm, attentive, and emotionally balanced in their work. Prior studies on mindful and ethical leadership (Mohammed et al., 2023); (Cawthorn, 2025) support the idea that leadership mindfulness cascades to followers, enhancing their own mindfulness at work.

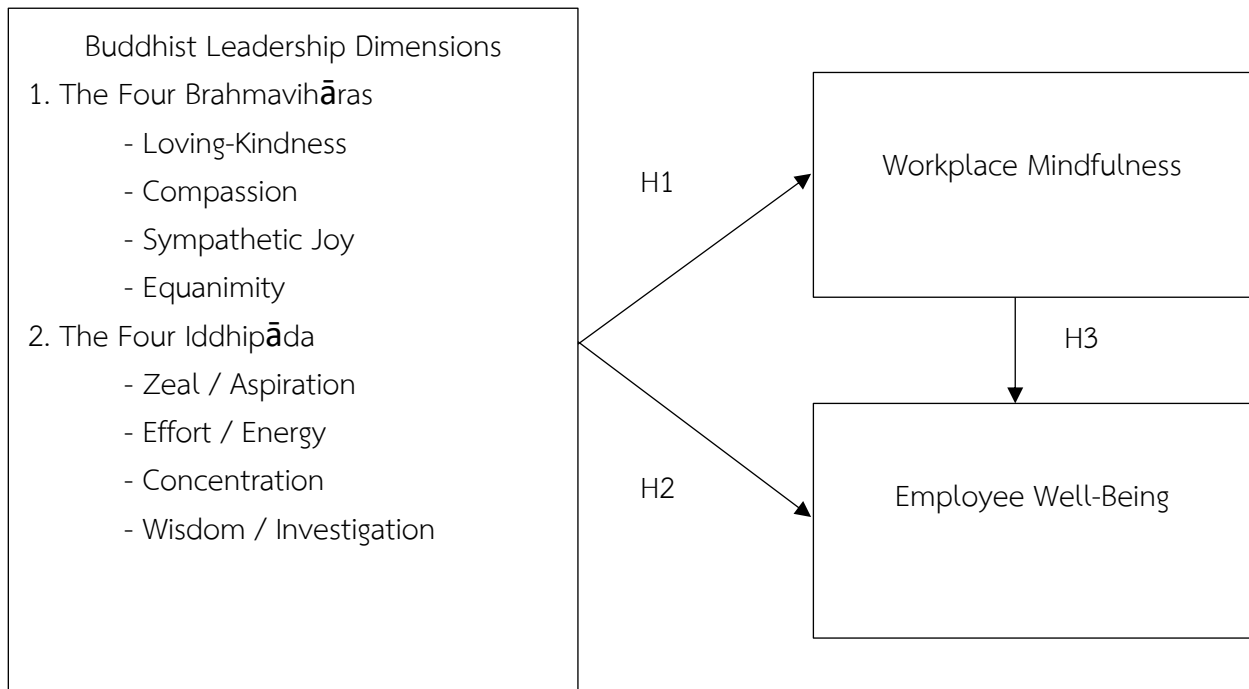
Direct Effect of Buddhist Leadership on Employee Well-Being (H2): Buddhist leaders promote fairness, compassion, and moral clarity, which foster psychological safety and meaningful work. Such behaviors enhance employee satisfaction, reduce burnout, and strengthen well-being. This relationship is supported by evidence that ethical and mindful leadership styles positively influence well-being and engagement (Cawthorn, 2025); (Mohammed et al., 2023).

Mediating Role of Workplace Mindfulness (H3): Workplace mindfulness is theorized to mediate the relationship between Buddhist leadership and employee well-being. When employees experience mindful awareness, they develop self-regulation and emotional balance, allowing them to transform leadership influence into positive psychological outcomes. This mechanism



aligns with the findings of Sentin et al. (2025) and Kumprang & Suriyankietkaew (2024), who demonstrated that mindfulness serves as an internal pathway linking external leadership practices with well-being.

Through this mediational process, Buddhist leadership is expected to foster both inner transformation (Mindfulness, Clarity, and Compassion) and outer flourishing (Well-being, Engagement, and Moral Purpose).



**Figure 1** Conceptual framework

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the present study, which integrates Buddhist leadership theory, mindfulness research, and organizational well-being models. The framework posits that Buddhist leadership dimensions rooted in both the Four Brahmavihāras (Brahmavihāra 4) and the Four Iddhipāda (Iddhipāda 4) serve as the independent variables influencing two key employee outcomes: Workplace Mindfulness and Employee Well-Being.

The left side of the framework details the eight core dimensions of Buddhist Leadership that form the theoretical foundation of this study. The Four Brahmavihāras represent the moral and emotional virtues of Buddhist leadership: Loving-Kindness (Mettā): The leader's intention to promote the happiness and welfare of others; Compassion (Karuṇā): Empathy and concern for followers' suffering; Sympathetic Joy (Muditā): Appreciation and joy in the success of others, and Equanimity (Upekkhā): Calm impartiality and fairness in decision-making.

The Four Iddhipāda represent the cognitive, motivational, and wisdom-based dimensions of Buddhist leadership: Zeal / Aspiration (Chanda): Genuine intention to achieve goals beneficial to the collective; Effort / Energy (Viriya): Perseverance and consistent moral action despite



obstacles; Concentration (Citta): Focused attention and presence in action, and Wisdom or Investigation (Vīmaṃsā): Critical reflection, discernment, and insight in leadership judgment.

Collectively, these eight dimensions encapsulate the holistic nature of Buddhist leadership, combining moral virtue, emotional intelligence, mindful awareness, and wisdom. According to the proposed model, these leadership dimensions are hypothesized to exert two main effects. First, H1 suggests that Buddhist Leadership Dimensions positively influence Workplace Mindfulness, meaning that leaders who embody Buddhist virtues can cultivate a mindful organizational climate by modeling awareness, balance, and compassion. Second, H2 posits a direct positive effect of Buddhist Leadership Dimensions on Employee Well-Being, indicating that moral and compassionate leadership directly enhances followers' happiness, satisfaction, and psychological health. Furthermore, H3 specifies that Workplace Mindfulness acts as a mediating variable between Buddhist Leadership Dimensions and Employee Well-Being. This mediating pathway suggests that the beneficial effects of Buddhist leadership on employee well-being occur not only directly but also indirectly, through the cultivation of mindfulness among employees. When leaders demonstrate awareness, focus, and equanimity, they encourage employees to engage mindfully in their work, leading to improved emotional regulation, resilience, and holistic well-being.

In summary, Figure 1 presents a multidimensional and integrative model that explains how Buddhist leadership, through eight doctrinal dimensions, translates into employee well-being both directly and via workplace mindfulness. This framework extends prior leadership and mindfulness research by decomposing Buddhist leadership into its doctrinal components and empirically testing their unique influences in an organizational setting, particularly within the Thai cultural context, where Buddhist principles are deeply embedded.

## Results and Discussion

The research findings were presented in two major sections as follows:

1. Descriptive results summarizing the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the reliability of measurement instruments, and
2. Inferential statistical analyses testing the hypothesized relationships among the study variables, specifically, the direct and mediating effects of Buddhist leadership dimensions on employee well-being through workplace mindfulness.

### 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

**Table 1** Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n = 400)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	192	48.0
	Female	208	52.0
Age	20-30 years	96	24.0
	31-45 years	188	47.0



**Table 1** Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n = 400) (Continued)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Education	46-60 years	116	29.0
	Bachelor's degree	256	64.0
	Master's degree or higher	144	28.0
Position	Operational	92	23.0
	Middle management	232	58.0
	Senior management	76	19.0
Tenure	Mean = 8.6 years	SD = 4.2	—

Table 1 presented the demographic profile of the 400 employees who participated in the study. The purpose of this table was to provide contextual information about the respondents' gender, age, education, job position, and tenure, variables that established the representativeness and diversity of the sample. The data indicated a balanced gender distribution (52% Female, 48% Male), ensuring gender inclusivity in perceptions of leadership and well-being. Most participants were between 31-45 years old (47%), representing a mature working demographic likely to have significant exposure to organizational leadership practices. Regarding education, 64% of respondents held a bachelor's degree, and 28% had postgraduate qualifications, suggesting a well-educated workforce. The distribution across job levels, 23% operational, 58% middle management, and 19% senior management, reflected adequate stratification consistent with the sampling design. The mean organizational tenure was 8.6 years (SD = 4.2), suggesting that participants had sufficient experience to evaluate leadership behaviors and workplace culture meaningfully. Overall, the demographic characteristics confirmed that the sample adequately represented Thai organizational contexts in which Buddhist-oriented leadership practices were observable. The diversity in age, education, and hierarchical positions strengthened the generalizability of the findings and the reliability of the regression outcomes.

## 2. Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Bivariate Correlations

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics, internal reliability coefficients, and bivariate correlations among all major constructs used in this study, including the eight Buddhist Leadership Dimensions (Derived from The Four Brahmavihāras and Four Iddhipāda), Workplace Mindfulness (WM), and Employee Well-being (EWB). The table provided a comprehensive overview of the relationships between each leadership dimension and the dependent variables. The inclusion of Cronbach's alpha, mean, and Standard Deviation (SD) ensured that the scales met acceptable psychometric standards and offered insights into the respondents' general perceptions. This table also served as a preliminary diagnostic step before regression analysis, confirming the direction and strength of associations hypothesized in H1-H3.



**Table 2** Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Bivariate Correlations

Correla*	Met	Karu	Mudi	Upek	Chan	Viri	Cit	Vīma	WM	EWB
Mettā	—	.68*	.63*	.59*	.52*	.55*	.50*	.57*	.54*	.56*
Karuṇā		—	.71*	.65*	.56*	.60*	.55*	.59*	.58*	.61*
Muditā			—	.67*	.54*	.59*	.53*	.56*	.57*	.55*
Upekkhā				—	.58*	.63*	.61*	.65*	.64*	.66*
Chanda					—	.70*	.68*	.69*	.61*	.59*
Viriya						—	.71*	.68*	.63*	.60*
Citta							—	.72*	.67*	.62*
Vīmaṃsā								—	.69*	.65*
Workplace Mindfulness (WM)									—	.65*
Employee Well- being (EWB)										—
Cronbach's Alpha	.83	.85	.81	.8	.87	.84	.86	.88	.89	.91
Mean	5.91	5.86	5.78	5.82	5.95	5.89	5.84	5.92	5.76	5.88
Standard Deviation	.74	.7	.79	.68	.72	.76	.7	.69	.73	.71

**Note:** \* All correlations are significant at  $p < .001$ .

The results presented in Table 2 indicated three key patterns of association among the study variables.

**Internal Consistency Reliability:** All constructs demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .80 to .91, surpassing the recommended threshold of .70 (Hair et al., 2019). This indicated that the items measuring Buddhist leadership dimensions, workplace mindfulness, and employee well-being were statistically reliable and conceptually cohesive. Among the subdimensions, wisdom or investigation (Vīmaṃsā) and effort (Viriya) yielded the highest reliability scores (.88 and .84, Respectively), reflecting their consistent conceptual alignment within Buddhist leadership theory.

**Descriptive Statistics:** The mean scores for all variables ranged from 5.76 to 5.95 (On a 7-Point Scale), indicating that respondents generally perceived high levels of Buddhist leadership behaviors, mindfulness, and well-being within their organizations. The relatively low standard deviations (0.68-0.79) suggested moderate variability and consistent perceptions across participants.

**Bivariate Correlations:** All eight Buddhist Leadership Dimensions exhibited strong positive intercorrelations ( $r = .50-.72$ ,  $p < .001$ ), confirming that the moral, emotional, and wisdom-based aspects of Buddhist leadership were interconnected yet distinct. Significant correlations were also observed between each leadership dimension and the outcome variables.



With Workplace Mindfulness (WM) ( $r = .54-.69, p < .001$ ), the results indicated that leaders who embodied Buddhist virtues fostered mindfulness among employees.

With Employee Well-being (EWB) ( $r = .55-.66, p < .001$ ), the findings demonstrated significant positive correlations between leadership dimensions and well-being outcomes. These associations provided preliminary support for the proposed conceptual relationships, although causal inferences required further regression analysis.

Notably, equanimity (Upekkhā) and wisdom or investigation (Vīmaṃsā) displayed the strongest associations with both mindfulness and well-being, underscoring their pivotal role as leadership virtues that bridged internal awareness with outer harmony, consistent with Buddhist teachings on sati (Mindfulness) and paññā (Wisdom).

Table 2 reports reliability indices and bivariate correlations that demonstrate statistically significant associations among the constructs. The results indicated internal consistency of the measures and positive relationships between Buddhist leadership dimensions, workplace mindfulness, and employee well-being. These findings provided initial empirical support for the proposed relationships, while more definitive conclusions were examined through subsequent regression analyses.

### 3. Multiple Regression Results

Table 3 presents the results of the multiple regression analyses used to test the three hypotheses (H1-H3). Model 1 examined how the eight Buddhist Leadership Dimensions predicted Workplace Mindfulness. Model 2 assessed the direct effects of those dimensions on Employee Well-being, while Model 3 introduced Workplace Mindfulness as a mediating variable to evaluate indirect effects. The results collectively revealed which dimensions exerted significant influence, the strength of their predictive power, and whether Workplace Mindfulness mediated these relationships.

Table 3 Multiple Regression Results

	1) Workplace Mindfulness		2) Employee Well-being		3) Employee Well-being	
	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value
Mettā	0.07	1.42	.15**	3.02	0.06	1.12
Karuṇā	.13*	2.28	.18**	3.54	0.09	1.68
Muditā	.06	1.21	.05	0.97	.04	0.76
Upekkhā	.19**	3.67	.21***	4.32	.12*	2.48
Chanda	0.09	1.83	0.08	1.65	0.05	1.01
Viriya	.15**	3.12	0.1	1.94	0.07	1.46
Citta	.11*	2.06	0.09	1.73	0.06	1.22
Vīmaṃsā	.22***	4.51	.19**	3.89	.13*	2.66
Workplace Mindfulness	—	—	—	—	.41***	8.62
F-value	—	—	—	—	—	—



**Table 3** Multiple Regression Results (Continued)

	1) Workplace Mindfulness		2) Employee Well-being		3) Employee Well-being	
	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value	$\beta$	t-value
R <sup>2</sup>	45.32***		37.85***		46.12***	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.61		0.56		0.68	

**Note:** \*: p<.05; \*\*: p<.01; \*\*\*: p<.001 (Two-tailed)

N = 400

Model 1 - Predicting Workplace Mindfulness (H1)

The regression model was statistically significant ( $F = 45.32, p < .001$ ) and explained 61% of the variance in Workplace Mindfulness ( $R^2 = .61$ ), indicating substantial explanatory power. Among the eight dimensions, *Vīmaṃsā* (Wisdom or Investigation) ( $\beta = .22, p < .001$ ) and *Upekkhā* (Equanimity) ( $\beta = .19, p < .01$ ) demonstrated moderate effect sizes, while *Viriya* (Effort) ( $\beta = .15, p < .01$ ) and *Citta* (Concentration) ( $\beta = .11, p < .05$ ) exhibited smaller but statistically significant effects. These coefficients indicated that cognitive and attentional leadership dimensions were more strongly associated with workplace mindfulness than affective dimensions. In contrast, *Muditā* (Sympathetic Joy) and *Chanda* (Zeal) were not statistically significant predictors in this model.

Model 2 - Predicting Employee Well-being (H2)

The direct-effect model was statistically significant ( $F = 37.85, p < .001$ ) and explained 56% of the variance in Employee Well-being ( $R^2 = .56$ ). *Upekkhā* ( $\beta = .21, p < .001$ ), *Karuṇā* ( $\beta = .18, p < .01$ ), and *Mettā* ( $\beta = .15, p < .01$ ) showed moderate effect sizes, indicating meaningful practical associations with employee well-being. These findings suggested that moral-emotional dimensions of leadership were more strongly related to well-being outcomes than motivational-cognitive dimensions in the absence of the mediator. Other dimensions did not reach statistical significance in this model.

Model 3 - Testing Mediation through Workplace Mindfulness (H3)

When Workplace Mindfulness was introduced into the model, the explained variance increased to  $R^2 = .68$  (Adjusted  $R^2 = .66$ ), indicating improved model fit. Workplace Mindfulness emerged as a substantial predictor of Employee Well-being ( $\beta = .41, t = 8.62, p < .001$ ), representing a moderate-to-strong effect size and suggesting considerable practical importance. Following the inclusion of the mediator, the standardized coefficients for *Upekkhā* decreased from  $\beta = .21$  to  $\beta = .12$  and for *Vīmaṃsā* decreased from  $\beta = .19$  to  $\beta = .13$ , although both remained statistically significant. This pattern was consistent with partial mediation. In contrast, *Mettā*, *Karuṇā*, and *Viriya* became non-significant after the inclusion of Workplace Mindfulness, indicating that their associations with well-being may have operated indirectly through mindfulness. However, given the cross-sectional design, these findings should be interpreted as evidence of statistical mediation rather than definitive causal pathways.



## Discussion

### Theoretical Interpretation and Conceptual Implications

The regression results provided differentiated empirical evidence regarding how specific Buddhist leadership dimensions were related to workplace mindfulness and employee well-being. Model 1 explained 61% of the variance in workplace mindfulness ( $R^2 = .61$ ), with wisdom ( $\beta = .22$ ) and equanimity ( $\beta = .19$ ) demonstrating moderate effect sizes, while Effort ( $\beta = .15$ ) and Concentration ( $\beta = .11$ ) showed smaller but statistically significant associations. These findings suggest that cognitive-discerning and attentional dimensions of leadership are more strongly associated with collective mindfulness processes than purely affective dimensions.

In Model 2, 56% of the variance in employee well-being was explained ( $R^2 = .56$ ), with Equanimity ( $\beta = .21$ ), Compassion ( $\beta = .18$ ), and Loving-kindness ( $\beta = .15$ ) demonstrating meaningful effect sizes. When workplace mindfulness was introduced (Model 3), the explained variance increased to 68% ( $R^2 = .68$ ), and workplace mindfulness exhibited a substantial effect ( $\beta = .41$ ), indicating moderate-to-strong practical importance. The reduction of coefficients for Equanimity and Wisdom after inclusion of the mediator was consistent with partial mediation, while other dimensions became non-significant, suggesting indirect statistical associations.

Importantly, the findings are consistent with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Demerouti et al., 2001); (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), which posits that leadership behaviors function as job resources that enhance employees' psychological capacities. Leaders who embody mindfulness-oriented virtues may contribute to the development of psychological resources, such as attention regulation, emotional stability, and resilience, thereby buffering job demands and supporting well-being. In this way, the study integrates Buddhist ethical principles with established organizational psychology frameworks, offering a spiritually grounded yet empirically informed perspective on sustainable leadership.

Conceptually, the differential effect sizes across dimensions indicate that Buddhist leadership should not be treated as a unidimensional construct. Cognitive-reflective virtues (Wisdom and Equanimity) appear more closely associated with mindfulness processes, whereas moral-emotional virtues (Compassion and Loving-kindness) show stronger direct associations with well-being outcomes. This multidimensional interpretation refines the theoretical understanding of how distinct doctrinal components operate through different psychological pathways.

### Comparison with Prior Research

The present findings are broadly consistent with prior quantitative research linking mindfulness-oriented leadership to employee outcomes. Reb et al. (2014) reported significant associations between supervisor mindfulness and employee well-being, while Mohammed et al. (2023) identified indirect pathways connecting leadership mindfulness to well-being outcomes. Similarly, Kumprang & Suriyankietkaew (2024) found that organizational mindfulness significantly predicted psychological capital and engagement. However, the current study extends these findings by disaggregating leadership into eight doctrinal dimensions and reporting differential effect sizes. Whereas prior research typically operationalized mindful leadership as a composite



construct, the present analysis demonstrates that not all dimensions exert equivalent statistical influence. In particular, the relatively strong coefficient for workplace mindfulness ( $\beta = .41$ ) is comparable to effect magnitudes reported in mindfulness-well-being studies, suggesting that collective mindfulness may function as a central explanatory mechanism in leadership-well-being relationships.

### **Strengths, Novelty, and Theoretical Contributions**

This study contributes theoretically by operationalizing the Four Brahmavihāras and the Four Iddhipāda as measurable leadership dimensions and empirically examining their distinct statistical associations with organizational outcomes. The relatively high explanatory power of the final model ( $R^2 = .68$ ) indicates that the multidimensional framework accounts for substantial variance in employee well-being within the sampled Thai organizations. The differentiation between cognitive, moral-emotional, and motivational dimensions provides greater conceptual precision than prior aggregate models of spiritual or mindful leadership. By demonstrating partial mediation effects and varying coefficient magnitudes, the study advances a more nuanced understanding of how doctrinal virtues may translate into psychological processes within organizational settings.

### **Practical Implications**

From a practical standpoint, the substantial effect size of workplace mindfulness ( $\beta = .41$ ) suggests that organizational initiatives aimed at strengthening collective attentional awareness and emotional regulation may have meaningful implications for employee well-being. Leadership development programs that emphasize wisdom or investigation (*Vīmaṃsā*) and Equanimity (*Upekkhā*) may be particularly relevant for fostering mindfulness processes, while Compassion (*Karuṇā*) and Loving-kindness (*Mettā*) appear more directly associated with well-being outcomes. However, given the cross-sectional design, these findings should be interpreted as statistical associations rather than definitive causal relationships. Organizations considering the integration of Buddhist-informed leadership principles should combine developmental interventions with ongoing evaluation to assess practical effectiveness.

### **Originality and Body of Knowledge**

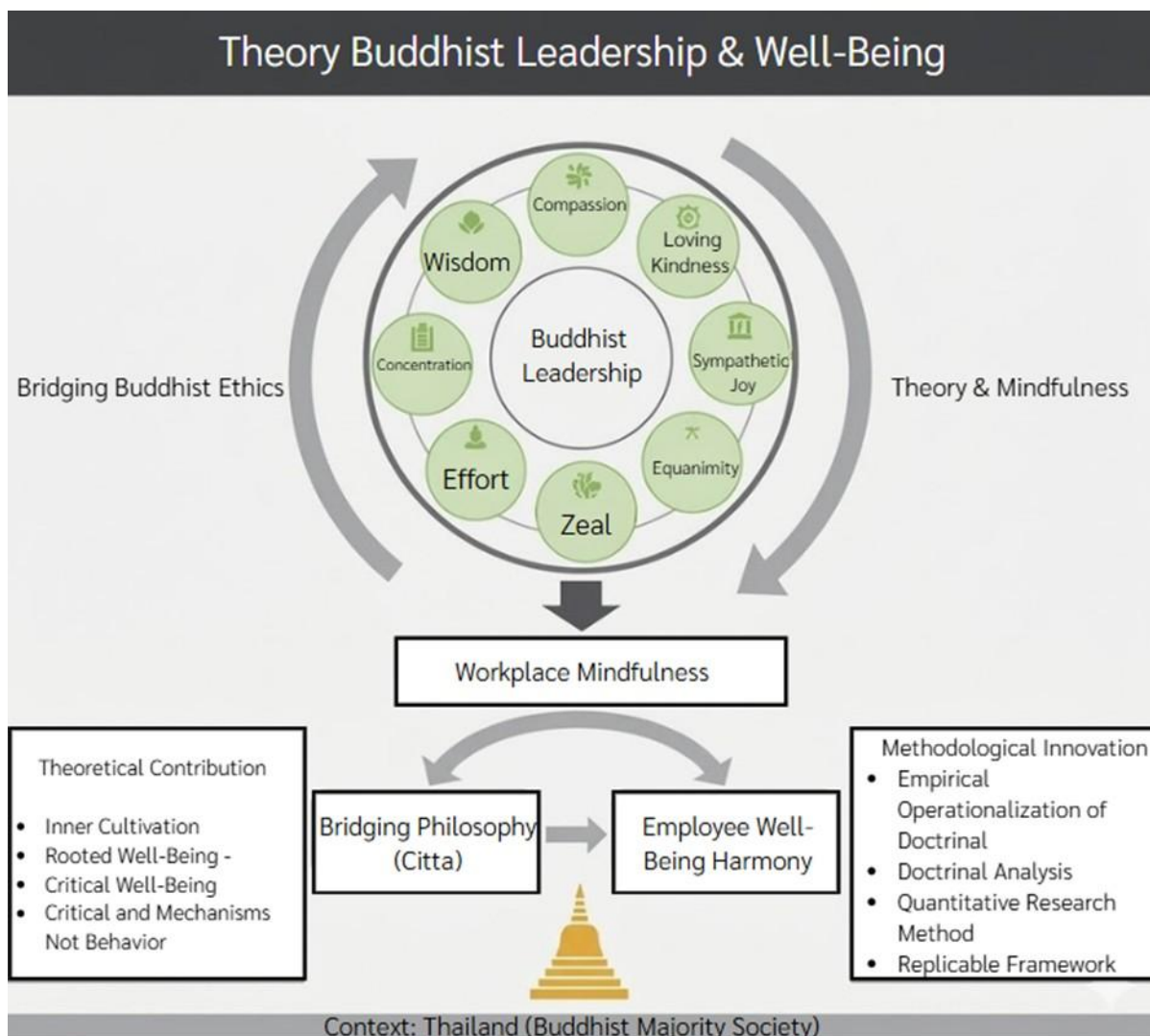
This study makes an original and substantive contribution to the scholarly discourse on leadership, mindfulness, and well-being by integrating Buddhist doctrinal principles with contemporary organizational behavior theory. While prior studies have explored mindful or ethical leadership as broad, unified constructs, this research advances the field by deconstructing Buddhist leadership into eight doctrinally grounded dimensions: The Four Brahmavihāras: Loving-kindness (*Mettā*), compassion (*Karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*Muditā*), and equanimity (*Upekkhā*), and the Four Iddhipāda: Zeal (*Chanda*), Effort (*Viriya*), concentration (*Citta*), and wisdom or investigation (*Vīmaṃsā*). This multidimensional approach represents the first empirical operationalization of Buddhist leadership that captures its full moral, emotional, and cognitive scope. By examining these dimensions individually rather than collectively, the study introduces a novel analytical lens that



deepens understanding of how specific Buddhist virtues shape employee well-being both directly and through workplace mindfulness.

This study makes theoretical, methodological, and contextual contributions to the leadership literature. Theoretically, it connects Buddhist ethics with mindfulness-based leadership perspectives and interprets the findings through the lens of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) perspective, offering a spiritually grounded and empirically supported account of sustainable leadership. Although the study does not explicitly test the full JD-R model, it draws on its core logic by treating Buddhist leadership dimensions as leadership-related resources that foster workplace mindfulness and, in turn, enhance employee well-being. The findings particularly underscore wisdom or investigation (*Vīmaṃsā*) and equanimity (*Upekkhā*) as key mechanisms through which inner cultivation is translated into positive well-being outcomes. In doing so, the study reframes leadership not merely as interpersonal influence, but as a process of inner development expressed through mindful action and moral integrity. Methodologically, the study advances prior research by operationalizing canonical Buddhist constructs as measurable organizational variables and validating them through rigorous quantitative analysis. The use of multiple regression to examine both direct and mediating relationships among Buddhist leadership dimensions, workplace mindfulness, and employee well-being further provides a replicable framework for future research in both Eastern and Western contexts. Contextually, the study contributes evidence from Thailand, a Buddhist-majority society in which Buddhist values remain deeply embedded in social and organizational life. By grounding the analysis in a setting of lived Buddhist practice, the study broadens leadership scholarship beyond predominantly Western paradigms and highlights the wider relevance of mindfulness-based ethics for promoting sustainable employee well-being.

In sum, this study enriches the global body of knowledge by positioning Buddhist leadership as a multidimensional and empirically verifiable framework that connects inner moral consciousness, workplace mindfulness, and employee well-being. It challenges existing leadership theories dominated by transactional and transformational models, proposing instead a paradigm of mindfulness-centered ethical leadership grounded in ancient wisdom yet highly relevant to contemporary organizational realities. This research thus opens a new frontier in Applied Buddhism and organizational psychology, providing both a theoretical foundation and empirical evidence for how leadership rooted in compassion, wisdom, and balance can enhance human well-being and organizational harmony in an era of accelerating change. (As Illustrated in Figure 2).



**Figure 2** Analytical Model of Buddhist Leadership Dimensions and Their Effects on Workplace Mindfulness and Employee Well-Being

### Conclusions and Recommendations

This study achieved its objective by examining the multidimensional nature of Buddhist leadership and its relationship with employee well-being through the mediating role of workplace mindfulness in Thai organizational contexts. The findings showed that the model explained a substantial proportion of variance in employee well-being ( $R^2 = .68$ ). Workplace mindfulness was a strong predictor of employee well-being, while Wisdom and Equanimity were significantly associated with workplace mindfulness. Equanimity, Compassion, and Loving-kindness were also positively associated with employee well-being. The reduced coefficients of some leadership dimensions after the inclusion of workplace mindfulness provide evidence consistent with partial mediation, suggesting that Buddhist leadership operates through distinct psychological pathways rather than as a single undifferentiated construct. These findings suggest that organizations may strengthen employee well-being by incorporating Buddhist leadership dimensions into leadership



development and well-being programs, particularly through reflective practice and mindfulness-based training. Although the results can be interpreted through the lens of the Job Demands-Resources perspective, the cross-sectional design does not permit causal inference. Future research should apply longitudinal, experimental, or multilevel designs and use structural equation modeling to further validate the proposed relationships. Overall, the study contributes empirical evidence linking Buddhist leadership to measurable organizational outcomes and offers context-sensitive implications for organizations in Buddhist-majority settings.

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