

Application of 5 Mental Powers of Buddhism in Learning Development for Grade 12 of Demonstration School of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University in 21st Century Learning

Sombat Utawan

Demonstration School of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand

E-Mail: sombat.ut@ssru.ac.th

Abstract.

21st century learning emphasizes critical thinking, analysis, and inspiring students to seek knowledge for problem-solving and teamwork according to Thailand 4.0 education policy. This aligns with Buddhist epistemology which aims to develop wisdom (Paññā) through practice or Bhāvanāmayapaññā, representing the highest level of wisdom beyond wisdom from listening and reading (Sutamayapaññā) as basic level, and wisdom from analytical thinking (Cintāmayapaññā) as intermediate level. The development of wisdom must occur alongside the development of faith (Saddhā), effort (Viriya), mindfulness (Sati), and concentration (Samādhi) according to the Five Mental Powers principle to achieve positive results. Currently, students face problems in: 1) analytical thinking processes, 2) mindfulness in learning, 3) deep understanding of their own roles, 4) self-regulation, and 5) faith and goals to integrate educational learning outcomes.

Recommendations for applying the Five Mental Powers in developing learning management include: 1) Faith (Saddhā): Select/develop learning media to build deep faith in learning leading to self-regulation ability; 2) Effort (Viriya): Develop tools and learning procedures leading to mindfulness and concentration, perseverance in seeking knowledge through both deductive and inductive methods; 3) Mindfulness (Sati): Set, supervise, and review learning outcomes by students to develop mindfulness and self-awareness through meaningful critical thinking; 4) Concentration (Samādhi): Create dialogue and conversation between teachers and students promoting learning that emphasizes communication skills, helps students avoid distraction, maintain focused attention during learning, promotes learning inspiration, and uses questioning approaches that stimulate thinking processes and knowledge connection; 5) Wisdom (Paññā): Provide authentic experiences for students leading to learning from practice in real situations, which is wisdom at a higher level.

Keywords: Application of Five Mental Powers, Learning Development, 21st Century Learning

1. Introduction

Thailand 4.0 policy aims to transform Thailand into a high-income country using innovation in economy, society, and quality human resource development to drive the nation forward. Education is a crucial tool for improving human resource quality in the country to prepare the workforce for economic and social development according to the "Thailand Education 4.0"

policy. This involves managing education through creative integration to meet society's needs as we enter the digital age that emphasizes innovation and increasing competition (National Institute for Child and Family Development, Mahidol University, 2015). Additionally, essential skills for individuals in the Economy 4.0 era include complex problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, emotional intelligence, assessment and decision-making abilities, and cognitive flexibility (Kraiyod Pattarawat, 2016). Therefore, the education system should emphasize students having diverse skills in both cognitive and communication aspects, not just focusing on being knowledgeable and clever individuals, but also being good people with emotional intelligence and morality, which requires incorporating Buddhist principles as guidance in learning.

Currently, it is found that the education system focuses on learning subject content, while students cannot yet apply the knowledge they have gained to real life. Learning in the 21st century must be teaching to develop students to acquire various necessary skills, especially critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities, self-awareness, and self-regulation. The goal is holistic student development in all aspects and multiple intelligences (Vicharn Panich, 2015). Furthermore, in studying learning problems of Grade 12 students at Demonstration School of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, it was found that students still lack various skills such as analytical thinking processes for problem-solving, self-regulation with mindfulness and determination, creativity for new things, as well as having faith and goals to integrate various things toward educational achievement. Therefore, it is necessary to adjust the learning paradigm through self-learning through actual practice, which aligns with the concept of Buddhist principles regarding the Five Mental Powers (Bala Pañca), which is the power of success that will lead individuals to truly discover and develop their potential (Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 1996). This is an approach that promotes learning focused on actual practice, helping to encourage students to become aware and stimulate their own thinking processes.

1.1 Research Objectives

1. To present approaches for applying the Five Mental Powers principle in developing learning management.
2. To enable students to develop learning skills and have the ability to connect knowledge in the 21st century and apply it in various situations.

2. Methodology

This study employed a documentary research approach with conceptual analysis and synthesis. The purpose of the study was to examine and synthesize the application of the Five Mental Powers in Buddhism—namely Faith (Saddhā), Effort (Viriya), Mindfulness (Sati), Concentration (Samādhi), and Wisdom (Paññā)—for learning development of Grade 12 students at the Demonstration School of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University in accordance with 21st century learning principles. The research process consisted of three main stages. First, relevant documents, academic literature, theories, and previous research related to 21st century learning, Thailand 4.0 education policy, Buddhist epistemology, and wisdom development were systematically reviewed. Second, current learning problems of students were analyzed, including deficiencies in analytical thinking processes, mindfulness in learning, self-awareness of roles and responsibilities, self-regulation, and faith and goal orientation in learning. Third,

the concepts obtained from the literature review and problem analysis were synthesized to propose guidelines for learning management based on the Five Mental Powers, integrating Buddhist principles with learner-centered and active learning approaches. The findings from the analysis and synthesis were presented in the form of conceptual frameworks and practical recommendations for learning development at the secondary education level.

3. Related Literature

3.1 Thailand 4.0 Concept and 21st Century Learning

Education in the Thailand 4.0 era, besides providing academic knowledge, must also promote individuals to have a love of learning, morality and ethics, and the ability to live with others. Education should accelerate concrete learning reform that emphasizes learner-centered approaches, promoting the development of competencies that can be actually practiced by emphasizing students as seekers of knowledge themselves, including the production of knowledge and innovation in the future (Kriengsak Chareonwongsak, 2016). The development of thinking systems in the 21st century also emphasizes morality and ethics because being merely smart is not enough, but one must also have ethics as reinforcement to be a successful person in life. Additionally, students should have characteristics of being systematic critical thinkers, creative problem solvers, collaborative, able to use information, self-learners, capable of communicating, exchanging information and various experiences beneficial for self-development and society, as well as negotiating to eliminate and reduce various conflicts, to lead to creating knowledge or information for decision-making about oneself and society.

3.2 Buddhist Principles: Five Mental Powers Related to Learning Development

The Five Mental Powers (Bala Pañca) are principles that serve as strength or are dominant in one's own work, dominant in performing one's duties, making a person have faith, not be lazy, not be heedless, not be distracted, and not be deluded. It is the power that creates stability, consisting of: 1) Faith (Saddhā) or Confidence – belief in good things, confidence that people who do good deeds will receive good results, confidence that good learning is discovering knowledge by oneself through logical critical thinking, and it is something that can be actually done by relying on internal inspiration; 2) Effort (Viriya) or Energy – perseverance, if one desires to accomplish something, one perseveres without giving up, having perseverance in learning and consistently developing one's knowledge; 3) Mindfulness (Sati) or Mindfulness – not being distracted, controlling the mind, always being aware of oneself and what one is doing, being someone with a stable mind who can easily control the mind into concentration; 4) Concentration (Samādhi) or Concentration – calming the mind to be steady and not distracted, having the mind firmly fixed on one specific thing, having attention focused on that particular work; 5) Wisdom (Paññā) or Understanding – knowledge, intelligence, ability to understand various situations. When the Five Mental Powers are practiced, they will result in a person having a confident personality, high perseverance, always being mindful, having concentration in work, having good intelligence and rapid learning ability, having strong mental power, self-control, good decision-making, being someone with discernment and correctly understanding various situations (Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 1996).

3.3 Five Mental Powers Principle in Wisdom Aspect Leading to Transformative Learning

Regarding wisdom, there are three types: *Sutamayapaññā* (wisdom gained from listening and reading), *Cintāmayapaññā* (wisdom from analytical thinking), and *Bhāvanāmayapaññā* (wisdom from practice). Wisdom means being clever and knowledgeable, having clear understanding of various things, being knowledge that thoroughly understands reasons, knows clearly, knows appropriately. The development of wisdom consists of: 1) *Sutamayapaññā* is wisdom arising from listening, reading, learning about others' stories, is the first wisdom creation of humans, wisdom arising from beliefs heard or taught repeatedly; 2) *Cintāmayapaññā* is wisdom arising from taking learned *Sutamayapaññā* to consider whether it is reasonable and trustworthy, wisdom accomplished through thinking and consideration, wisdom gained from contemplation; 3) *Bhāvanāmayapaññā* is wisdom arising from practice until truly knowing and seeing by oneself, is true wisdom that extends from *Sutamayapaññā* and *Cintāmayapaññā*. *Bhāvanāmayapaññā* in worldly terms is putting something into practice until becoming expert and proficient, which wisdom development must develop both mind and wisdom together and use all three wisdoms correctly and in balance.

4. Results

The results of the study indicated that the application of the Five Mental Powers provides a comprehensive and appropriate conceptual framework for enhancing learning management in 21st century education. The integration of Buddhist principles into learning development addresses students' learning problems in a holistic manner.

Faith (*Saddhā*) was found to play a crucial role in fostering positive attitudes toward learning, enhancing students' confidence, goal orientation, and sense of purpose. This contributes to the development of self-regulation and responsibility for learning. Effort (*Viriya*) supports perseverance and determination in the pursuit of knowledge, encouraging students to engage actively in analytical thinking and problem-solving through both deductive and inductive reasoning processes. Mindfulness (*Sati*) enhances students' awareness of their own learning processes, enabling them to monitor, evaluate, and reflect on learning outcomes effectively, which leads to meaningful critical thinking. Concentration (*Samādhi*) promotes focused attention, reduces distraction, and increases active participation in learning activities through dialogue and constructive interaction between teachers and students. This also supports the development of communication skills and sustained engagement in learning. Wisdom (*Paññā*) emerges from experiential and practice-based learning in authentic situations. Such learning enables students to internalize knowledge deeply and apply it to real-life contexts, representing a higher level of wisdom in accordance with Buddhist epistemology.

In conclusion, the integration of the Five Mental Powers into learning management contributes to balanced development in cognitive, affective, and skill domains, aligning effectively with the goals of 21st century learning and sustainable educational development.

5. Discussion and Recommendations

From reviewing concepts and theories related to the Five Mental Powers principle and knowledge related to learning, this leads to practical approaches for developing learning

management to add educational value for students and apply knowledge at progressively higher developmental levels as follows:

5.1 Faith (Saddhā): Selecting/Developing Learning Media

Select/develop learning media to build deep faith in learning subjects, leading to self-regulation ability, creating wisdom and complete mindfulness. Learning media has several types (Siripat Jessasaviroj, 2007) including: printed media, personal media that serves to convey knowledge content (role models), material media, equipment media, contextual media that supports learning, and activity media or processes arranged to enhance learning experiences. All six types of media can be adapted by teachers to suit their subjects to create faith in learning, especially media that creates learning inspiration. For teaching demonstration school students, personal media as good role models, contextual media, and activity media such as worksheets or projects can be used, which will help build better faith in learning.

5.2 Effort (Viriyā): Developing Learning Tools and Procedures

Develop tools and learning procedures to help students develop effort, attempt to find answers, persevere in seeking knowledge through both deductive and inductive methods. Teachers should not teach with emphasis only on memorization but should emphasize knowing how to find answers through both inference and analogy methods: 1) Deductive Method – teaching that starts from laws or various principles, then has students find evidence and reasons to verify, is research to test existing theories whether they are applicable through using current data to test and confirm through research; 2) Inductive Method – teaching from small details to find rules, that is, teaching from parts to whole or teaching from examples to find rules, principles, facts, or conclusions by having students study, observe, experiment, compare, then consider finding components that are the same or similar from various examples to bring as conclusions, similar to research to develop new theories, create new knowledge, create new things to improve existing theories. From both teaching methods, teachers should have the role of: 1) providing meaningful learning contexts to support students' internal motivation and self-regulated learning; 2) creating learning formats for students to learn from what they already know to what they don't know; 3) creating balance between deductive and inductive learning; 4) emphasizing the benefits of mistakes; 5) having students seek learning experiences according to environments or situations that facilitate.

5.3 Mindfulness (Sati): Setting, Supervising, and Reviewing Learning Outcomes

Set, supervise, and review learning outcomes by students to develop mindfulness and self-awareness through meaningful critical thinking. The Buddhist principle of the Five Mental Powers regarding mindfulness helps stimulate students to have systematic analytical thinking processes, mindfulness in learning, deep understanding of their own roles in learning, as well as self-regulation. The application of the Five Mental Powers will help promote students to have correct faith and have confident self-regulation ability to achieve wisdom and lead to complete mindfulness, which means self-awareness to lead to learning from practice in real situations until wisdom occurs, self-thinking system adjustment occurs, learning connection occurs to apply in various situations. For setting, supervising, and reviewing learning outcomes by students to create mindfulness, teachers must initially set what the learning outcomes should be according to objectives so students know what the final goal of learning should achieve in terms of standards, indicators, and learning outcomes such as morality, knowledge in cognitive

skills, interpersonal relationship skills and responsibility, numerical analysis skills, communication and information technology use, as well as professional skills.

5.4 Concentration (Samādhi): Creating Dialogue Between Teachers and Students

Create dialogue and conversation between teachers and students to promote learning (Communicative Didactic Dialogues) that emphasizes communication skills, promotes helping students not be distracted, having focused attention during learning communication, promotes creating learning inspiration, as well as using questioning approaches (Questioning Method) that stimulate thinking processes and knowledge connection leading to reflective thinking. Using questions in teaching is integration to develop toward reflective thinking and thinking process structure, helps students contemplate their understanding, can lead to change and learning improvement. Good questions can develop students' rational thinking, analysis, criticism, synthesis, or evaluation to answer questions, which is extremely important in the learning process. Additionally, Socratic questioning (Socratic Method) uses question setting to have students think to find answers or solve problems by themselves, with teachers stimulating students to think about various subjects they have already learned. Students will learn by careful consideration to find correct answers and this enhances intelligence for students to know how to express opinions, discuss and conclude.

5.5 Wisdom (Paññā): Providing Authentic Experiences

Provide authentic experiences for students leading to learning from practice in real situations, which is wisdom at a higher level. Providing authentic experiences is important, consistent with macro research evaluation findings that learning management strategies emphasizing faith and effort development (self-concept strategies) can increase knowledge most highly (Marzano & Kendall, 2007). Actual practice will result in connection to standard indicators and learning outcomes according to the Basic Education Core Curriculum framework from the Ministry of Education. Teaching innovation includes learning center-based teaching, using group relations processes, collaborative learning teaching, and learning through computer and internet networks or online, as well as designing teaching that emphasizes active learning processes. The ideal of teachers in the 21st century (Teacher As Coach And Facilitator) must not act as "the knower" but emphasize setting questions for students to research or experiment to find answers themselves, and create challenges, stimulate students to become curious and strive patiently to find answers, because in real life teachers cannot teach everything to students completely.

6. Conclusion

21st century learning is a future skill that emphasizes students' learning by using problems or real situations to stimulate and promote students to have actual practice, emphasizing students as decision-makers in what they want to seek knowledge and knowing how to work together as a team, so that students achieve true learning and can live in constantly changing society. This is promoting learning alongside actual practice, making students good people, smart people, and happy in society effectively, consistent with Thailand Education 4.0 policy that emphasizes human resource development to have high quality through the education system. Therefore, adjusting students' thinking systems using Buddhist principles, especially the Five Mental Powers principle that promotes self-regulation, self-awareness, learning by discovery by themselves through analytical thinking, synthesis, and creative thinking, as well

as changing teaching systems emphasizing teachers' role in stimulating students' knowledge and thinking processes is important.

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