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The Role of Buddhist Education in Monastic Primary Schools: A Case Study of Wat Prey Speu, Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

Cambodia's educational system is deeply rooted in Buddhist tradition, with monasteries historically serving as learning centers that prioritize moral development and cultural preservation alongside academic subjects. This qualitative case study investigates the role of Buddhist education at Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School, exploring how it integrates traditional precepts within the national curriculum. Thematic analysis was used to interpret data from in-depth interviews with 59 stakeholders, including students, teachers, and administrators. The findings reveal the school's primary strength is its holistic approach, which develops students' moral conduct (Sīla), concentration (Samādhi), and wisdom (Paññā). The institution also plays a vital role in preserving Khmer culture and providing affordable education to underserved communities. Key recommendations include formalizing the curriculum, addressing a significant gender imbalance, and seeking formal recognition and support from the Ministry of Education to promote this valuable educational model.

Keywords: *Buddhist Education, Holistic Education, Moral Development*

INTRODUCTION

Cambodia's educational system is heavily entrenched in the Buddhist tradition, with monasteries functioning as primary study sites. Buddhist education focuses on moral development, ethical behavior, cultural preservation, reading, and numeracy (Chanthoun, 2024; Lau & Tse, 2024). Buddhism-based education allows us to notice issues, discover root causes, analyze problems, and provide problem-solving solutions in order to live a more enlightened life (Sapardi, 2023).

The school, part of a Cambodian Buddhist educational network, attempts to address the relevance of spiritual education in fostering social and ethical principles, despite the modern world's emphasis on material values (Son, 2021). Wat Prey Speu's educational system mixes Buddhist principles with traditional education, teaching pupils Khmer, mathematics, physics, social sciences, Pali language, Dhamma teachings, meditation techniques, and Buddhism. The school's distinctive monastery environment promotes Buddhist principles, and reforms include moral, life, contemplative, sustainable, and experiential learning (Lau & Tse, 2024; Run et al., 2025).

Buddhist teachings are implemented in school curriculum administration using three Threefold Training ideas. The practice is founded on three Buddhist learning principles: *sila sikkha* (moral behavior); *samadhi sikkha* (mind training); and *panna sikkha* (knowledge development). In this holistic approach, the concepts are performed concurrently and can be applied to multiple dimensions, including the personal, family, school, and communal levels, to establish responsive sustainable living habits for student (Chansomsak & Vale, 2008). The many experiences associated with merit-making activities reflect the varying histories of the individuals and groups that have formed in postwar Cambodia (O'Lemmon, 2014).

The study investigates the impact of Buddhist education at Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School on novice monks' personal and academic growth, focusing on character education and heart-centered care in Cambodia (Ly, 1976). Understanding the integration of Buddhist teachings in a Buddhist primary school context allows us to see how religious education can be a strong tool in molding a community's destiny.

This study analyzes the relationship between monarchical symbols and liberal-democratic citizenship conceptions in Cambodia's Buddhist education, using political philosophy, cultural anthropology, and historical analytic methodologies (No et al., 2025). The institution struggles to blend ancient Buddhist teachings with present educational demands due to a lack of documentation and stakeholder perspectives. The movement emphasises technology-based learning methodologies, curricular reform, and reinforcing Buddhist ethical values to build a morally upright, wise generation (Nyanabhadrā et al., 2025). Both official and informal curricula have been reformed using student-centered techniques such as experiential learning, contemplative education, sustainable education, and moral and life education (Lau & Tse, 2024). This lack of comprehensive understanding stifles efforts to expand and promote Buddhist education at Wat Prey Speu and other institutions, potentially limiting their contribution to Cambodian educational and cultural development.

Previous research on Buddhist education in Cambodia has primarily focused on historical perspectives, monastic education for monks, and broad policy studies. Morals and values are as important to life as a peaceful mind and environment.

However, all of these aspects are currently eroding. Nonetheless, in 21st-century education, students should be taught values, morality, and peace. This can be accomplished by combining courses from the official and Buddhist education systems. There is a significant paucity of empirical study on the implementation and impact of Buddhist education in primary schools like Wat Prey Speu. Limited research has specifically investigated: (1) how Buddhist principles are translated into pedagogical practices in the classroom; (2) the perceived effects of Buddhist education on students' academic performance, moral development, and well-being; and (3) the challenges educators face when integrating Buddhist and secular curricula. (4) perspectives from diverse stakeholders on the significance and future of Buddhist education. Furthermore, most studies have been conducted at the national or regional level, with few focusing on individual institutions like Wat Prey Speu, which may have unique contextual factors influencing their educational approach and outcomes.

This research seeks to provide a comprehensive knowledge of Buddhist education at Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School by evaluating its curriculum, teaching practices, and everyday activities to determine how Buddhist teachings are integrated into the school's framework. The research will analyze the perceived effects of this education on student development from the perspectives of numerous stakeholders, notably evaluating the benefits for moral character building and the value of these courses to novice monks. Finally, the study will assess stakeholder comments to determine the obstacles and opportunities in blending Buddhist and secular training, as well as their thoughts on the importance, problems, and future direction of this educational paradigm.

The goal of this research is to look into the role of Buddhist education in Cambodia's Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School, as well as its impact on the community and students. This study is significant in several ways because Buddhist education in Cambodia is directly related to the country's cultural and religious identity. First and foremost, it highlights the importance of Buddhist teachings in sustaining Cambodian cultures and values. Buddhist education at Prey Speu develops a sense of community and helps students connect with their cultural heritage. Given the centrality of Buddhism in Cambodian society, understanding its educational role can give light on how religious teachings affect the development of future generations.

Second, the study investigates how moral and ethical principles are fostered through Buddhist instruction. Buddhist ideals such as mindfulness, compassion, and respect are commonly included into ordinary educational activities. This study may help to produce a more compassionate and socially conscious generation by illustrating how these principles influence students' character development and interpersonal connections.

Finally, this study has broad implications for educational improvement. The study's understanding of the benefits of Buddhist instruction in elementary schools

may inspire other institutions to adopt similar programs that combine spiritual and intellectual instruction. Furthermore, it contains useful material for educators and politicians who seek to introduce moral and ethical training into public school systems, particularly in countries where Buddhism has a strong cultural influence.

This study focuses on Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School's importance in Buddhist education. A Phenomenological Study on Buddhists and its Importance for Monks, Officials, Teachers, and Students at Wat Prey Speu, Prey Speu Village, Chaom Chao II, Posen Chey, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The research will take place over a one-year period beginning in January 2025 and ending in January 2026. During this time, qualitative and quantitative data can be collected and analysed. The administration, instructors, and students in grades 4, 5, and 6 of Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School will provide the data.

A main weakness of this study is the considerable gender disparity in the sample, with males accounting for 84.5% of respondents. This gap most likely reflects the historic demographics of monastic education in Cambodia, but it also implies that the conclusions are primarily based on male opinions. The experiences and perspectives of female students and staff are underrepresented, so the study's conclusions may not adequately convey the relevance of Buddhist education for all members of the school community. This identifies a vital topic for further investigation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides vital study-related information. It clarifies the role of Buddhist education in the development of human capital in Buddhist schools, such as Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School. The report includes data from interviews with the principal, deputy, teachers, and students. Students benefit much from Buddhist education. Teaching children how to act responsibly, achieve better, and cohabit peacefully in society promotes healthier attitudes and behaviors.

Role relates to an individual's attitude toward their position and responsibility, which is clear and accepted. It entails carrying out acts for a specified aim in accordance with society expectations. The structure of a role is unique to each individual, comprising particular attributes, habits, and position (Kumar, 2019).

Education is a crucial tool for personal and social change, fostering knowledge, skills, and critical thinking, and building human capital for socioeconomic growth and national development (Kimkong & Koemhong, 2022). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was introduced in 2015 under the title Transforming our World. SDG 4's call for inclusive, equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities has raised hopes for a bigger role of adult education in global education agendas and policies (Elfert, 2019). Education is the cornerstone of a nation. With quality education, any country can build the human capital required to fuel socioeconomic growth and national development (Kimkong & Koemhong, 2022).

Buddhist education emphasizes morality, with main features including mastery of comprehensive knowledge, practice into the Code of Conduct, and attainment of truth (*pativedha*) (Yana et al., 2022). Buddhist education focuses on learning knowledge, skills, human behavior, body, speech, and mind, aiming for individual and societal development. It is based on Buddha's teachings and focuses on moral and spiritual growth, impacting society (Medhacitto, 2025). This study proposes the construction of microlearning training facilities for Buddhist educators to boost quality, promote student engagement, and better teaching methods by merging technology, pedagogy, and understanding student needs (Ismoyo et al., 2024).

Buddhist primary schools integrate Buddhist philosophy, beliefs, and practices into their academic curricula, emphasizing information acquisition, ethical behavior, and mental discipline. These holistic institutions can be found in Buddhist majority nations including Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Myanmar, Taiwan, and Western countries with Buddhist populations (Selderhuis, 2024). In addition to traditional academic subjects, Buddhist elementary schools frequently teach Buddhist studies, meditation, ethics, and the Pali language (in certain lineages). Teachers at these institutions typically include Buddhist ideals such as mindfulness, compassion, interconnectedness, and non-harming into daily classroom activities and school culture (Tilakaratne, 2021).

The Buddhist education provided by the Buddhist Elementary School of Prey Speu has a significant impact on student growth and community participation because it promotes moral ideals and social responsibility. Holistic education theory, closely linked to Buddhist educational philosophy, emphasizes the holistic development of the full person in intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative, and spiritual dimensions (Mahmoudi et al., 2012). Prey Speu Elementary School's Buddhist curriculum exemplifies this strategy by emphasizing moral and spiritual growth in addition to academic success.

A thorough analysis of Buddhist education that sets it apart from other formal educational systems is provided by Based on the findings, several key recommendations are proposed for Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School to build upon its success. The school should first address the significant gender imbalance by implementing targeted strategies to encourage and support the enrollment of female students and staff. Concurrently, it is crucial to invest in continuous professional development for teachers, focusing on blending modern, student-centered pedagogy with traditional Buddhist methods to enhance instructional quality. To ensure consistency and standardize learning outcomes, the development and formalization of a written curriculum guide is also essential.

On a national level, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS) formally recognize and support the school's successful integrated model through policy and funding, and facilitate platforms for sharing these best practices with other institutions. To build upon this study, future research

should conduct comparative analyses with secular schools, undertake longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact on alumni, and prioritize qualitative inquiry that focuses on the underrepresented perspectives of female students and staff to achieve a more balanced understanding (Zana, 2023). The idea put out by Thit Zana is consistent with the traditional Buddhist educational philosophy, which dates back to the early Buddhist era, when learning was based more on memorizing than on written materials. According to the scholar, the ultimate aim of Buddhist education is to achieve “wisdom” (paññā), which combines theory and practice, knowledge and wisdom, and moral and mental development. The triple training (tisikkhā) of discipline (sīla), meditation (samādhi), and wisdom (paññā) emphasised in traditional Buddhist education is reflected in this viewpoint.

A thorough analysis of Buddhist education is provided by Medhācitto (2024), which highlights its dual emphasis on academic and personal growth. The scholar's conceptualization is based on the etymological understanding of Buddhist education, which is derived from the Pāli terms sikkhā (training) and ajjhāpana (advising). This stresses the holistic nature of Buddhist education, which extends beyond the acquisition of knowledge to the cultivation of wisdom and good conduct.

Buddhist education aims to help people become responsible and ethical members of society through a process of learning, practice, and realization. This approach integrates theory and practice, emphasizing the Buddha's teachings on moral discipline (sīla), meditation (samādhi), and wisdom (paññā). It encourages learning from knowledgeable teachers, critical thinking, and applying what is learnt. Buddhist education instills qualities such as confidence, generosity, and mindfulness, which help both individuals and society by fostering inner and behavioral attributes that contribute to societal welfare and harmony.

The literature review examines the importance of Buddhist education at Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School in Cambodia. It emphasizes its resiliency, philosophical tradition, and diverse community services. Education is at the forefront of promoting social harmony. A nation's role and quality of life will increase as its education level rises. Education is a crucial prerequisite for every individual to solve and overcome the issues that arise in today's increasingly complex modern environment (Sapardi, 2023). Buddhist monasteries were important educational institutions, and many young people obtained their education there. Monks were highly valued as custodians of knowledge and wisdom (Chin et al., 2023).

Despite the valuable insights provided by existing literature, there are still significant research gaps. First, there has been little specific research on Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School, with most studies focusing on Buddhist education in Cambodia as a whole. Second, while the importance of Buddhist education for monks is widely accepted, there has been little phenomenological research into how monks perceive and understand their educational tasks. Third, the perspectives of

students, parents, and community members on Buddhist education at Wat Prey Speu are underexplored. Finally, there has been minimal investigation into how Buddhist education at Wat Prey Speu adapts to modern situations while adhering to traditional values.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative case study approach to investigate the role of Buddhist education at Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). A case study design is well-suited for this investigation because its primary goal is to provide an in-depth, multi-faceted exploration of a single, bounded system—in this instance, the school itself. This method allows for a comprehensive understanding of the school's curriculum, teaching practices, and perceived impact by gathering rich data from a variety of stakeholders within that specific context.

The researcher conducted interviews with 59 persons involved in at *Buddhist Primary School*. The researcher has taken five major steps to ensure that valid questionnaires are understood and answerable, including clearly defining interview questions, having questions reviewed by experts, selecting participants who are involved in at *Buddhist Primary School*, piloting the interviews, and modifying the modes (Paradise & Prak, 2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data, the demographic profile of the respondents reveals a sample primarily composed of young males from private institutions. A significant characteristic is the pronounced gender imbalance, with males constituting 84.5% of the participants. The respondents are predominantly in their early careers or studies, as the largest age groups are 21 to 26 years old (30.5%) and 15 to 20 years old (28.8%), which aligns with the finding that over half have only 1 to 2 years of experience (50.9%). The majority of participants are students (55.2%), followed by teachers (19.0%), and this is reflected in the salary distribution where nearly two-thirds earn between \$200 and \$300 (63.2%). The sample is drawn more heavily from private institutions (64.9%) than public ones (35.1%). The varying totals across categories indicate that not all participants answered every demographic question as shown in Table 1:

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Profile		Frequency	Valid Percent
Gender	Male	49	84,5
	Female	9	15,5
	Total	58	100,0
Age	15 to 20 years	17	28,8
	21 to 26 years	18	30,5
	27 to 32 years	8	13,6
	33 to 38 years	6	10,2
	39 and above	10	16,9
	Total	59	100,0
Experience	1 year to 2 years	29	50,9
	3 years to 4 years	15	26,3
	5 years and above	13	22,8
	Total	57	100,0
Position	Student	32	55,2
	Teacher	11	19,0
	Stuff	5	8,6
	Administrator	7	12,1
	Principle	3	5,2
	Total	58	100,0
Salary	200\$ to 300\$	36	63,2
	400\$ to 500\$	13	22,8
	600\$ to 700\$	4	7,0
	800\$ and above	4	7,0
	Total	57	100,0
Institution	Private	37	64,9
	Public	20	35,1
	Total	57	100,0

Source: Processed Data by Researchers (2025)

Note: Totals vary because some participants did not answer every demographic question

The demographic profile of responders indicates some noteworthy aspects. The sample's gender distribution was overwhelmingly male (84.5%), with females accounting for only 15.5% of respondents. This gender discrepancy may represent the underlying population characteristics of the field under investigation, or it may indicate a potential sample bias that should be considered when interpreting the findings.

In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents (32.2%) were between the ages of 21 and 26, with the 15-20 age group following closely behind (28.8%). These two younger age groups accounted for 61% of total respondents. The remaining respondents were divided into older age groups, with the 27-32, 33-38, and 39+ categories accounting for 13.6%, 10.2%, and 16.9% of the sample, respectively. This age distribution indicates that the study used a relatively young sample, which may have ramifications for the results.

Two of the 59 people did not provide any information about their level of experience. 50% of respondents (50.9%) said they had 1-2 years of experience, 26.3% had 3-4 years, and 22.8% had 5 or more years of experience. This distribution shows that the sample was primarily composed of persons with limited experience, which could explain the observed age distribution.

The sample consisted of 57 respondents, with 64.9% from private institutions and 35.1% from public institutions. The majority (64.9%) were from private institutions, indicating a significant preference for private institutions for evaluating the study's findings. This means that two of the 59 total participants did not respond to the question concerning the type of institution they were affiliated with.

Qualitative Finding

The analysis of interviews with 59 participants revealed four primary themes regarding the role and impact of education at Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School. These themes are: (1) Holistic Character Development through the Threefold Training, (2) Fostering Social Responsibility and Cultural Preservation, (3) The Integration of Spiritual Practice into Daily Life, and (4) Challenges in Pedagogical Implementation.

Theme 1: Holistic Character Development (*Sīla*, *Samādhi*, *Paññā*) A dominant theme was the school's focus on holistic education, which integrates moral conduct (*Sīla*), concentration (*Samādhi*), and wisdom (*Paññā*) with standard academic subjects. Participants universally agreed that this approach was the school's main strength, shaping students into responsible and compassionate citizens.

"We don't just teach Khmer and math; we teach how to be a good person. The goal is to cultivate Sīla (morality) so that wisdom (Paññā) can arise naturally." — Administrator, 5+ years' experience.

"The education here builds strong moral character. It teaches us mindfulness and discipline, which helps not only in our studies but in our entire lives." — Student, 15-20 years old.

Theme 2: Fostering Social Responsibility and Cultural Preservation Participants emphasized the school's vital role in preserving Khmer culture and providing accessible education, particularly for underserved children and young monks. This function was seen as a direct contribution to national goals and the strengthening of community identity.

"This school is important for Cambodia. It keeps our Buddhist traditions alive for the next generation and gives children from poor families a chance to learn." — Principal, 5+ years' experience.

"By studying here, young monks become good resources for society. They learn to contribute constructively to the future of our country." — Teacher, 3-4 years' experience.

Theme 3: The Integration of Spiritual Practice into Daily Life The findings indicated that Buddhist teachings profoundly influence the daily routines and spiritual growth of the students and young monks. This education promotes discipline in body, speech, and mind, enhancing students' concentration and enabling them to become role models.

"The teachings are not just for the classroom. They shape our daily life, how we speak to others, how we control our minds. It leads to mental tranquility and better focus." — Student, 21-26 years old.

"A monk who has been ordained must study diligently. The education here ensures they have the discipline to continue the legacy of Buddhism and serve as examples of integrity for the community." — Teacher, Male, 39+ years old.

Theme 4: Challenges in Pedagogical Implementation Despite the strong curriculum, a recurring theme was the challenge related to teaching methods. Participants noted a need for better teacher training, as many instructors, particularly monks, lack formal pedagogical skills to effectively engage students.

"The teaching methods are often traditional, like explanation and storytelling. While these are good, some teachers lack the necessary skills to blend them with modern, student-centered approaches." — Administrator, 1-2 years' experience.

"Many of our teachers have deep knowledge of Dhamma but have not received formal pedagogical training. We believe sending them to short-term courses would greatly improve their skills and help our students learn even more." — Principal, Male, 39+ years old.

The findings of this study substantially support and extend earlier research on Buddhist education's role in holistic character development. The qualitative data demonstrating that participants universally endorsed the integration of sila, samadhi, and panna with academic subjects aligns directly with Medhacitto's (2025) conceptualization of Buddhist education as encompassing both academic knowledge and wisdom cultivation. The thematic analysis revealing that students perceive direct connections between moral training and their daily lives validates Sapardi's (2023) assertion that Buddhist education enables individuals to discover root causes of problems and provide solutions for more enlightened living. Additionally, the administrator's statement that moral conduct allows wisdom to arise naturally reflects the traditional Buddhist educational philosophy emphasized

by Zana (2023), wherein the ultimate aim is achieving wisdom through the integration of theory and practice, knowledge and wisdom, and moral and mental development. However, this study extends beyond previous literature by providing empirical evidence from a specific institution demonstrating how the Threefold Training operates in contemporary pedagogical contexts. The participants' emphasis on how Buddhist teachings shape daily behavior, concentration, and mental tranquility provides concrete examples of the theoretical claims made in broader policy and historical studies, translating abstract Buddhist educational principles into observable student outcomes and lived experiences within the school community.

The study's findings regarding cultural preservation and social responsibility strongly support the conceptual framework established by Kimkong and Koemhong (2022) and the SDG 4 agenda for inclusive, equitable quality education. Participants' statements emphasizing the school's role in preserving Khmer Buddhist traditions for future generations and providing educational access to underserved children directly address the United Nations' call for quality education as a foundation for national development. The principal's observation that the school gives poor families' children educational opportunities and develops young monks into constructive societal contributors demonstrates how Buddhist education simultaneously fulfills cultural preservation and human capital development objectives. This finding extends previous research by illustrating that Buddhist primary schools like Wat Prey Speu function not merely as cultural repositories but as active agents in social equity and national development. The data reveals a more nuanced understanding of Buddhist education's role than historical studies have emphasized, showing how spiritual and secular educational goals converge in practice to serve marginalized populations while maintaining cultural continuity. This extends Chin et al's (2023) observation that Buddhist monasteries historically served as educational institutions where monks were valued as knowledge custodians, demonstrating that this role continues and evolves to address contemporary developmental and social justice concerns.

However, the findings reveal a critical gap between theoretical ideals and pedagogical implementation that both supports and challenges earlier research. The theme of challenges in pedagogical implementation, wherein participants acknowledged that traditional teaching methods require integration with modern, student-centered approaches and that many teachers lack formal pedagogical training, suggests that existing literature may have underestimated implementation obstacles. While Lau and Tse (2024) identified experiential learning, contemplative education, sustainable education, and moral and life education as reform initiatives, the qualitative data indicates these approaches remain aspirational rather than systematically realized. Teachers possessing deep Dhamma knowledge but lacking formal pedagogical training represent a structural challenge that policy-level studies and theoretical frameworks have not adequately addressed. This finding extends the

literature by highlighting that successful Buddhist education requires not only philosophical alignment and curriculum design but also sustained professional development and pedagogical capacity-building. The participants' recommendations for short-term pedagogical training courses suggest that previous research's emphasis on curriculum integration and institutional reform may have neglected the human capital development necessary among educators themselves. Additionally, the pronounced gender imbalance in the sample, with 84.5 percent male respondents, reveals a demographic reality that previous studies acknowledged abstractly but have not investigated thoroughly. This underrepresentation of female perspectives limits the study's ability to portray Buddhist education's complete impact on the school community, supporting recommendations for future research prioritizing qualitative inquiry into female students' and staff members' experiences. Overall, the study confirms Buddhist education's theoretical effectiveness in character development and cultural preservation while simultaneously revealing significant implementation challenges and demographic gaps that require targeted institutional and policy intervention to realize the full potential of this educational paradigm.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that holistic character development through the threefold training of *Sīla* (moral conduct), *Samādhi* (concentration), and *Paññā* (wisdom) operates effectively in a contemporary primary school setting. The qualitative data reveals that this traditional Buddhist educational framework translates into tangible outcomes, with students and educators reporting observable improvements in moral character, mental discipline, and overall well-being. The school's simultaneous achievement of cultural preservation and human capital development illustrates how a single institution can function as a crucial community hub, making Buddhist education a practical tool for social cohesion and national development.

The findings introduce an important perspective to discussions regarding modernization of Buddhist education. The challenges in pedagogical implementation identified in this study, particularly the gap in formal pedagogical training among educators, suggest that successful educational reform requires foundational investment in teacher capacity-building. The barrier encountered was not resistance to modernization but rather insufficient preparation of instructors to blend traditional Buddhist principles with contemporary teaching methodologies. This indicates that policy discussions must address not only curriculum content but also systematic support for educators to develop effective teaching skills within systems that integrate traditional and modern values.

This study reveals the practical mechanisms through which Buddhist principles generate concrete educational outcomes. Daily routines emphasizing discipline in body, speech, and mind serve as the bridge between theoretical

frameworks and observed character development. Students report direct benefits including enhanced concentration, improved interpersonal relationships, and greater mental tranquility. This demonstrates that Buddhist education functions as a lived experience embedded in daily practice rather than solely as academic subject matter. The integration of spiritual practice into everyday school life provides a clear pathway for understanding how holistic educational goals are achieved at the institutional level, contributing to the personal growth and community contribution of students and young monks alike.

SUGGESTION

Based on the findings, several key recommendations are proposed for Wat Prey Speu Buddhist Primary School to build upon its success. The school should first address the significant gender imbalance by implementing targeted strategies to encourage and support the enrollment of female students and staff. Concurrently, it is crucial to invest in continuous professional development for teachers, focusing on blending modern, student-centered pedagogy with traditional Buddhist methods to enhance instructional quality. To ensure consistency and standardize learning outcomes, the development and formalization of a written curriculum guide is also essential.

On a national level, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS) formally recognize and support the school's successful integrated model through policy and funding, and facilitate platforms for sharing these best practices with other institutions. To build upon this study, future research should conduct comparative analyses with secular schools, undertake longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact on alumni, and prioritize qualitative inquiry that focuses on the underrepresented perspectives of female students and staff to achieve a more balanced understanding.

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