หน้าแรก   เกี่ยวกับ TCI »   ฐานข้อมูล TCI »   ค่า TJIF   การประชุม/อบรม »   งานวิจัยของ TCI »   เกณฑ์คุณภาพวารสาร »   กระดานสนทนา   FAQ

<u>ผลการประเมินคุณภาพวารสารที่อยู่ในฐานข้อมูล **TCI** รอบที่ **3 ปี 2558**</u>

โปรดระบุหมายเลข ISSN หรือชื่อของวารสารที่ต้องการทราบผลประเมิน : [   ] [ค้นหา]

ลำดับ	ชื่อวารสาร	ISSN	เจ้าของ	จัดอยู่ในวารสาร กลุ่มที่	สาขา
1	Veridian E-Journal, Silpakorn University	1906-3431	บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัย ศิลปากร	1	มนุษยศาสตร์และ สังคมศาสตร์

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Buddhist Principles and Burnout Reduction: Is the Connection between Buddhism and Burnout Reduction Related to Increased Individual Work Performance?[*]

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Abstract

Burnout is related to all areas of the job and every level of the organization, all the way up to the managerial level. It is comprised of three aspects: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and diminished personal accomplishment, which is related to the reduction of individual work performance. Religions and faiths have influenced human attitude and personality and have been unconsciously absorbed by the young to adults and instinctively practiced in everyday life. Buddhist principles contain teachings that are related to work showing people how to think and behave with good deeds which have been described in these findings. The results were consistent with a view how of Buddhist principles affected the three dimensions of burnout which are related to the result of individual work performance increasing. The results are discussed in the context of a comprehensive approach to organizational management and can be used with HRM's tool development.

Introduction

Burnout is an extreme mental tension which will result in physical response syndrome (OK and Lee, 2012). Stress and frustration at work affect employees' psychological and physical response which results in burnout. Burnout is a multinational condition that is comprised of (1) emotional exhaustion, (2) depersonalization and (3) diminished personal accomplishment (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). Burnout has been studied in various job areas, especially in the area of frontline employees who directly meet customers and many times experienced dislike. However, both frontline employees and back office employee including managerial level face burnout. The causes of burnout are due to many reasons such as work

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overload, role conflict, role ambiguity and lack of autonomy etc. (Muhammad and Hamdy, 2005). The results affect the organization in many ways such as customer loss from frontline employee behavior (Babakus, Yavas, and Ashill 2009), employee absence, turnover and the reduction of employee job performance (H.M. Nafees, Kanwal, and Shoaib, 2015). Moreover, burnout causes strong mental and general health problems (Chen and Kao, 2011, Kwag and Kim, 2009). However, the causes of Burnout are from not only the working environment but also individual disposition and personality (Alarcon, Eschleman, and Bowling 2009).

Religion and faith are known as the basis of culture, economy, and behavior and plays a key role as an important decision-making driver for humans (Delener, 1994). It provides beliefs which are a major influence upon the believers' personal behaviors (Wellman & Tokuno, 2004). There is a diversity of global religions which are different in their doctrines, precepts, rules and commandments, causing differing results in all areas of life (Gebert, Boerner, and Chatterjee 2011). Therefore, people with different religious backgrounds will be different in their decision-making processes based upon religious principles. Buddhism is a religion that has no God because human beings are themselves god-like. Acting in the right manner will result in happiness and harming others will cause suffering (Harvey, 2007, p.23-24). The core Buddhist principle is cause and effect otherwise known as The Four Noble Truths. This core teaching of Buddhism states that suffering is caused by human acts and suffering's cessation can be accomplished by humans themselves. Buddhists principles cover all areas of life: the household, relationships, and problem solving including working. Buddhist principles which are concerned with working are in both individual practice and making relationships in the workplace such as The Principle of Success (Iddhipada), The Four Sublime States of Mind: Brahmavihira and Virtues for a good household life: Gharavasa.

With regard to burnout and Buddhist principles which cover all areas of life, this research is based on employees in managerial positions who might have been or have experienced burnout from work and determine whether Buddhist principles have affected them for the resolution or preventing them from burnout which will result in their individual work performance. If this is found to be the case, the study will identify how Buddhist principles have been influential and give a suggestion for managerial tools with the aim of using Buddhist principles in reducing burnout.

Conceptual background and hypotheses

Causes of burnout

The three syndromes of burnout are (1) emotional exhaustion, (2) depersonalization (3) diminished personal accomplishment which occurs from stress in the work environment

(Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Studies of burnout began with workers employed in the area of services such as nursing, psychotherapy and social work who faced negative emotions from customers and present themselves differently from their true feelings. The famous useful tool for burnout measurement, Maslach Burnout Inventory Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS; Maslach & Jackson, 1981), was developed in 1981, then continued to be developed and used for study by educational services with the developed tool (MBI-ES; Maslach, Jackson, & Schwab, 1986) after that, with the requirements of other fields, MBI General Survey, were made (MBI-GS; Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach & Jackson, 1996) (Alarcon, Eschleman, and Bowling 2009).

The cause of burnout can be defined by the job demands and job resources which cause it (Hobfoll 1989, 2001 in Babakus, Yavas, and Ashill 2009). The Job Demands-Resources Model defines that when the demands of quality and quantity of work are unable to be met by the organizational resources, burnout will occur (Demerouti & Baker 2007, Taylor & Millear, 2016). The job demands can be defined with the sustained physical or psychological effort of the employees that is required from the organization, while job resources are the employees' physical or psychological efforts themselves and the support from the organization such as supervisory support, training, rewards etc. (Chen and Kao, 2011; Babakus, Yavas, and Ashill 2009). Excessive job demands such as time pressure, high workload and increased direction regulations etc. contribute to strain if employees are not supported with appropriate resources (Babakus, Yavas, and Ashill 2009). Also The Job Demands-Control (JDC) Theory of Karasek (1979) originally defined that experiencing high workload demands with a low ability of control contributes to burnout (Wong and Laschinger, 2015).

However, personal characteristics have different effects related to burnout. Paleksic, Ubovic, and Popovic (2015) stated that the five factors model (FFM), locus of control and Cloninger's biosocial model of personality are connected to burnout and depression. The study of Alarcon, Eschleman, and Bowling (2009) used various personality types for the hypotheses to examine employee personality-burnout relationships regarding Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and found that employee personality based on the Five-Factor Model and positive & negative affectivity play significant roles in burnout. The study suggested not only to focus on changing the work environment for the organizations to reduce burnout but also to focus on the personality testing to find who are liable to burnout.

Personality and Religions

Religion's teaching plays a key role as an important decision-making driver for humans (Delener, 1994) and personal behaviors (Wellman & Tokuno, 2004). Religion is a

fundamental aspect of culture which impacts the community and individual behaviors, and does not frequently change. Therefore, people with different religious backgrounds may be different in their decision-making processes based upon religious principles. Fam, Waller, and Erdogan (2002) stated that religious beliefs play a significant part in sculpting social behavior, as well as influencing individual attitudes. Fernando (2005) concluded that a business leader's emotional and motivational features that have been influenced by religion are used in his/her business decisions. Moreover, the research by Kvedaravicius, and Edita (2007) concluded that students who studied religion make more morally based decisions than managers who do not.

Personality is implied to a person's thinking, feeling and behavior. The important term of personality is to represent motivation of an individual's goals and strivings reflecting personal values (Emmons, 1999, Stroink and DeCicco, 2010). Personality has been constructed by the inherited and biologically based related to the five-factors model of personality which is a stable temperament (Johnstone et al. 2012). Religions are systems of information which are resources for individuals to set up and to strive for certain goals (Emmons, R., 1999). Hafizi, Tabatabaei, and Koenig (2014) established that people who have a high level of religiosity and religious beliefs are associated with less suicidal ideation and attempts, less depression and have better outcomes in addiction treatment.

The significance of Buddhist principles in human attitude regarding work

Buddhism has no God because human beings are themselves god-like (Harvey, 2007, p.23-24). The Buddhist core principle is cause and effect, the present conditions which are experienced by humans whether happiness or suffering are the result of their previous activities. The cause is created in 3 deeds (3 Karma); bodily action, verbal action and mental action.

Therefore, regarding the law of Karma (Cause and Effect), to avoid suffering humans must follow the three admonitions of the Buddha;

Not to do any evil,

To cultivate what is wholesome,

To purify one's mind

(The discourse delivered by the Buddha in Dhammananda, 1994, p.41)

The Principle of Success (Iddhipada)

Teachings and principles of Buddhism are to achieve the Nirvana state which is no rebirth or no repayment for any bad deeds committed. However, living principles are given

which also act as working principles. The teaching of the Buddha that is a tool for working is the principle of success (Iddhipada).

1) Having a heart of zeal (Chanda): Chanda means to love what we are doing and always to develop until we achieve goals.

2) Doing with effort (Viriya): This is concerned with undertaking tasks with best effort, regardless of whether the task is easy or difficult.

3) Committing oneself to the task (Citta): Concentrate on what we are doing and do it with care.

4) Using wise investigation (Vimansa): Improving the task through planning, testing and re-evaluating. This means we must always evaluate our work and use setbacks to improve what we do in the future.

The Four Sublime States of Mind: Brahmavihira

Regarding to the individual work performance, there is not only task performance which concerning about how perform that employee can achieve the organization goal but also the contextual performance which concerning with their relationship with others or environment. Buddhist also has the principle that is boundless to each other and no exclusive and impartial, it creates peaceful and made humans are god-like, loving each other and free from anger, wrath, jealousy and righteous indignation which called The Four Sublime States of Mind: Brahmavihira (Thera Nyanaponika, 1999, p.7-8).

1) Loving-kindness (metta): Human should live a life based on loving kindness which wishes to help other beings to achieve happiness.

2) Compassion (karuna): Human beings should have compassion to others which will enable them to escape from suffering.

3) Sympathetic joy (mudhita): Human beings should live without envy and jealousy and cultivate sympathetic joy which means being happy when knowing that others, including competitors and rivals, are happy and successful.

4) Equanimity (upekkha): Human beings should be stable in mind and not inclined to bribery, greed, hatred and delusion. Human beings should show justice and fairness to anyone and use wisdom to judge all situations. (Snelling, 1987)

Virtues for a godly household life: Gharavasa

According to the fame in work, success can be achieved from task performance but sometimes without respect and perception from others because there are no good relationships in the workplace. On the other hand, someone is beloved of others but no

successful in job because without development and patience. Buddha teaches the Virtues for a godly household life: Gharavasa for the principle that bring fame, respect and success regarding the property building.

1) Truth and honesty (Sacca): Human beings should only think, say and do the truth.

2) Taming and training oneself (Dama): Humans beings should always practice self-development.

3) Perseverance (Khanti): Human beings should patient with problems and live with diligence.

4) Liberality (Caga): Human beings should live with sacrifice and generosity, helping others.

Individual Work Performance

The evaluation of job performance is based on the behavior of individual regarding the goals of the company. The evaluation is in different criteria regarding the different job types and positions included in the organization. However, they can be commonly categorized into three dimensions which are commonly found in literary examples. These are Task Performance, Contextual Performance and Counter Productive Work Behaviour. Task performance can be defined as the competency of one to perform job tasks which are directly involved in the core business of organization (Kahya, E., 2007). Contextual performance can be defined as the behaviors of one which supports the organization beyond the formal task such as organizational citizenship behavior, dealing with others and the public. Counter productive work are the behaviors of individuals that harm the organization such as downtime behaviors, hazardous behavior, unruliness, absenteeism etc. Moreover, there are also other dimensions developed regarding different jobs and tasks or the organizational goals i.e. adaptive performance and creative performance. It seems job performance study can be viewed as a socio-analytic study because jobs depend on social interactions (Hogan & Shelton, 1998, Blickle et al, 2008). Hogan & Shelton (1998) stated that people with job performance are motivated to get along and get ahead which get along is referred to as cooperate and be friendly with others in the workplace and get ahead is referred to as the responsibility of individuals and the need to be recognized for their abilities. With regard to the dimensions of job performance, heuristic framework of individual work performance has been created by Koopmans et, al., (2011); task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance

and counterproductive work behavior. The reason for this specific frame work is to indicate the behavior of employees in general.

With regard to the Buddhist principles which effect personality and are negatively associated with burnout and also positively associated with individual performance, the four principles which are directly regarding living and working; believing in the Law of Karma, virtues for a godly household life, the principle of success and the four sublime states of mind were chosen. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed with regard to the relationships between those four Buddhist principles and burnout to explore their correlation and influence. Moreover, with the reduction of burnout from the Buddhist principles that have effected on the individual personality and behaviour in work, the result of individual work performance is also hypothesized.

Hypothesis 1a.Buddhist principles have a negative effect on emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 1b.Buddhist principles have a negative effect on depersonalization.

Hypothesis 1c.Buddhist principles have a negative effect on diminished personal accomplishment.

Hypothesis 2. Buddhist principles have a positive effect on individual work performance.

Hypothesis 3. The three dimensions of burnout have a negative feedback on individual work performance.

Hypothesis 4a.Emotional exhaustion is the mediating variable between Buddhist principles in work and the Individual Work Performance.

Hypothesis 4b.Depersonalization is the mediating variable between Buddhist principles in work and the Individual Work Performance.

Hypothesis 4c.Diminished personal accomplishment is the mediating variable between Buddhist principles in work and the Individual Work Performance.

Methodology

Research Objectives

The research focused on the influence of Buddhist principles on personalities of operational managers, middle managers and top managers of the national oil company of Thailand, PTT PLC, which has more than 3,000 people who operate in the area of oil and gas from upstream to downstream all around Thailand and internationally. The aim of the study is to determine whether the factors behind their personalities are preventing them from burnout or helping them to overcome stress or burnout until success or achieve individual work

performance are related to Buddhist principles or not. Also, to consider to what extent it is possible to incorporate Buddhist principles into organizational practice for use even outside Buddhist countries.

Sample

Regarding the Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population of Krejcie and Morgan, 1970), a total of 300 questionnaires were distributed to Buddhist managerial levels of PTT Public Company Limited (Thailand) which contains 4 levels (CEO is not included).The limitation of distributor was the location of the respondents' workplaces, there are all around Thailand which some questionnaires were not reached and time consumed. Moreover, various positions and differences in job areas were difficult to know and reach. By the cut-off date for data collection, 176 questionnaires were retrieved for a response rate of 58.67 percent. The majority of respondents (75.6 percent) were male, 69.9 percent were division managers, 22.2 percent were department managers, 5.7 percent were business area executive vice presidents, 2.3 percent were business unit senior executive vice presidents and the majority were more than 46 year old (78.4 percent).

Measures

The study used a questionnaire which contains three parts to acquire the data.

Part 1 Demographic data questionnaire.

Part 2 Buddhist principles implementation in work questionnaire, using a 5-point scale (1 = Never, 5 = Always). This part contains 4 Buddhist principles; Believing in the Law of Karma, Virtues for a godly household life: Gharavasa, The Principle of Success: Iddhipada and The Four Sublime States of Mind: Brahmavihira for the sub topic questions and 8 questions per principles were practiced to measure the practice of Buddhist principles in job.

Part 3 Developed Maslach Burnout General Survey (MBI-GS) in Thai language, the standard tool for burnout measurement to measure burnout in of the respondents regarding the three dimensions of burnout. The survey contains 16 questions a 7-point scale (1 = Never, 7 = Everyday) and the result were described in 3 categories; Exhaustion (Emotional Exhaustion) (EX) , Cynicism (Depersonalization) (CY) and Professional Efficacy (Diminished Personal Accomplishment) (PE) with three levels high, moderate and low regarding the frequency.

Part 4 Individual work performance evaluation questionnaire were practiced to measure how individuals achieved in their job performance.The questionnaire contains 4 parts of questions related to Koopmans et, al., (2011)'s heuristic framework of individual work

performance; task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance and counterproductive work behavior. The reason to measure is to confirm the effect of burnout reduction on the individual's work performance.

Before collecting data, a pre-test to assess reliability was conducted by 30 PhD students from Faculty of Management Science, Silpakorn University Thailand. Then the data was tested again in Cronbach's ∝-Coefficient and Corrected Item Total Correlation; CITC with 95 percent (0.05) of reliability. The result shows high reliability (0.700 – 0.813) for all parts in Cronbach's ∝-The Coefficient confirmed that the questionnaires could be implemented.

Analyzing Method

1. Descriptive statistics such as Percentage, Mean, and Standard Deviation were utilized for the regular information regarding demographic data.

2. The Pearson correlation coefficients test was utilized to reflect some minimal and moderate correlation among items of the survey instrument in which this study reflects the inter-item correlations between the following three relationships: the implementation of Buddhist principles and the three dimensions of burnout. The implementation of Buddhist principles and individual work performance and the three dimensions of burnout and individual work performance.

3. The Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Test was utilized for analyzing the correlation among Buddhist principles & the three dimensions of burnout and individual work performance.

Research Model
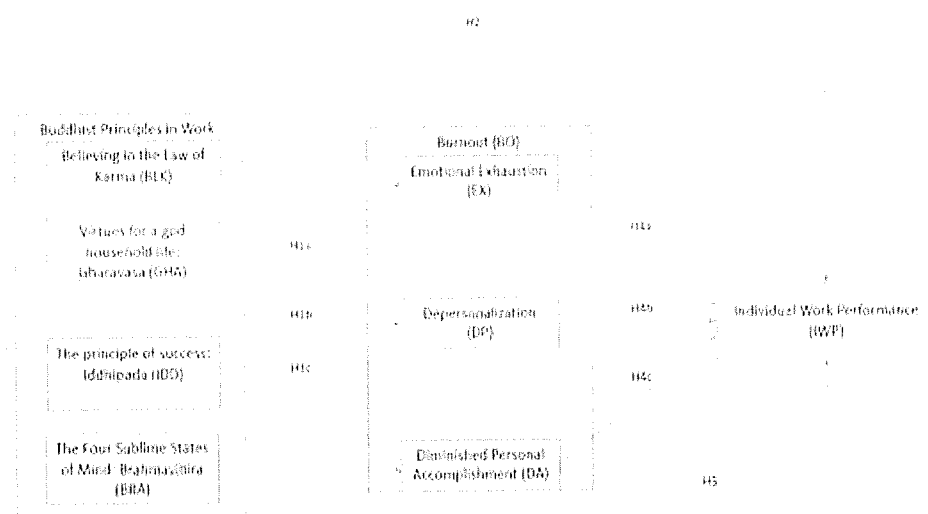
Results

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among the variables

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations among variables

Variables	BLK	GHA	IDD	BRA	EX	DP	DA	IWP
Mean	1.90	2.33	2.92	2.26	1.31	1.15	2.72	2.49
Standard Deviation (SD)	0.38	0.47	0.27	0.44	0.52	0.37	0.53	0.50
Believing in the law of karma (BLK)	-							
Virtues for a good household life: Gharavasa (GHA)	-0.002							
The principle of success: Iddhipadha (IDD)	0.140	0.072						
The four sublime states: Brahmavihira (BRA)	0.057	0.133	0.127					
Emotional Exhaustion: (EX)	-0.011	-0.142	-0.106	-0.208**				
Depersonalization: (DP)	-0.049	-0.158**	-0.048	-0.071	0.277**			
Diminished Personal Accomplishment: (DA)	-0.108	-0.011	-0.080	0.047	0.069	0.019		
Individual Work Performance: (IWP)	0.203**	0.129	0.123	0.317**	-0.157*	-0.101	-0.208**	-

$*p<0.05$, $**p<0.01$

According to Buddhist principles in work, the findings revealed that the principle of success: Iddhipada (IDD) was the most practiced by the respondents. With regard to the correlation, Believing in the law of karma (BLK) was only significantly negative correlated with Individual work performance: (IWP). Virtues for a godly household life: Gharavasa (GHA) was significantly negative correlated with depersonalization (DP). The principle of success: Iddhipada (IDD) was not significantly correlated with the three dimensions of burnout. The four sublime states: Brahmavihira (BRA) was significantly negative correlated with emotional exhaustion (EX) and was positive correlated with individual work performance (IWP).

According to the three dimensions of burnout, the results show that most of the respondents had low levels in all three dimensions of burnout; emotional exhaustion (71.6 percent), depersonalization (43.8 percent) and diminished personal accomplishment (48.9 percent) which indicated a low level of concern with burnout and high in work performance.

With regard to the correlation, emotional exhaustion was significantly negative correlated with individual work performance (IWP) and positive correlated with depersonalization (DP).

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 2 Multi Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable	Hypothesis/Independent Variable							
	1a	1b	1c	2	3	4a	4b	5c
	EX	DP	DA	IWP	IWP	IWP	IWP	IWP
Believing in the Law of Karma (BLK)				0.18**				
Virtues for a good household life: Gharavasa (GHA)		0.15*						
The principle of success: Iddhipadha (IDD)								
The four sublime states: Brahmavihira (BRA)	0.20**			0.30**				
Buddhist principles in work: (BPW)						0.26***	0.27***	0.26**
Emotional Exhaustion: (EX)						-0.11		
Depersonalization: (DP)							-0.04	
Diminished Personal Accomplishment: (DA)					0.20**			-0.17**
Adjusted R2	0.04	0.02		0.13	0.38	0.84	0.73	0.10
VIF	1.00	1.00		1.00	1.00	1.02	1.03	1.01
F	7.85**	4.42*		13.49**	7.83**	9.03**	7.86**	11.00**

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

According to table 2, two of four Buddhist principles in work had a negative effect on the two of three dimensions of burnout, virtues for a good household life: Gharavasa (GHA) and the four sublime states: Brahmavihira (BRA). However, not all three dimensions were effected in each principle, Virtues for a god household life: Gharavasa (GHA) did not had an effect on emotional exhaustion (EX) and diminished personal accomplishment: (DA) and the four sublime states: Brahmavihira (BRA) did not have an effect on depersonalization: (DP). Therefore, hypotheses 1a and 1b were partially accepted.

With regard to the effect of Buddhist principles on individual work performance, believing in the Law of Karma (BLK) and the four sublime states: Brahmavihira (BRA) had a positive effect on individual work performance (IWP). It can be implied that Buddhist principles in work had a positive effect on individual work performance and hypothesis 2 was partially accepted.

According to the effect of burnout on individual work performance, the results show that only diminished personal Accomplishment: (DA) had a negative effect on individual work performance (IWP). Therefore, hypothesis 3 was partially accepted.

Moreover, when the three dimensions of burnout as the mediate variables were controlled to test the operating function, the results show that only diminished personal accomplishment: (DA) was the partial mediators between Buddhist principles and individual work performance. Therefore the hypothesis 4c were accepted but rejected hypotheses 4a and 4b.

Discussion

Buddhist principles and burnout

With regard to the results of the findings explored, Buddhist principles in work had a negative effect on burnout. However, when deeply considered through the chosen four principles, only two principals were significant. This implied that Buddhist principles can be used as a practical tool to prevent employees from burnout but with the proper principles and combined with mix and match principles because only one might not cover the three dimensions of burnout. However, both principles, virtues for a good household life: Gharavasa (GHA) and the four sublime states: Brahmavihira (BRA), had a significantly negative effect on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization which are the two key aspects of burnout. According to Leiter and Maslach (1988), stress from interactions between workers and supervisors increase emotional exhaustion then a high level of emotional exhaustion leads to depersonalization and diminished personal accomplishment. Thus, it seems both Buddhist

principles can be a burnout-preventing tool. According to the four sublime states: Brahmavihira (BRA), it related to the forgiveness which helps practitioner far from stress and conflict in work (Boonyarit et al., 2012) which are the causes of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. The results referred to the study of Purada, Mookda, and Rangsima (2014), which stated that perceiving and practicing the Three Practices of Buddhist (Sila-Samadhi-Panya) had a negative relationship with burnout. Moreover, the results also related to the study of Litchty (2009) which found that Buddhist tradition, the views of impermanence, and practice of mindfulness-awareness meditation help psychotherapists to cope with burnout and vicarious trauma from their work.

Buddhist principles and individual work performance

According to the effect of Buddhist principles on individual work performance, the results show that believing in the Law of Karma (BLK) and the virtues for a good household life: Gharavasa (GHA) had a positive effect on individual work performance (IWP). Practicing Buddhist principles helps employees to achieve their individual work performance. Individual work performance is a socio-analytic study (Hogan & Shelton, 1998 in Blickle et al, 2008), it is not only concerned with task performance but also the contextual performance, adaptive performance and counterproductive work behavior (Koopmans et al., 2011). The virtues for a good household life: Gharavasa (GHA) is the teaching of Buddha that creates a divinely inspired life for humans. Practicing this principle is always doing the good deeds while living such as behave in the right and truthful ways, always developing themselves, being patient & trying the best to resolve the problems and helping others living lives which cover the four areas of individual work performance. Believing in the law of karma (BLK) is the core teaching of Buddhism, relationship between cause and effect leads Buddhist to do the good deeds for receiving happiness. Believing in the law of Karma will lead managers or leaders to always concern with their decisions and activities which might affect their followers (Chadha, Jain and Krishnan, 2013). With regard to the careful decisions and activities of leaders, their followers will return them the best supports which will help them to achieve success reflects the task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance and preventing from counterproductive work behavior. However, it seems simple to describe that believing in the law of karma can lead to individual work performance in the link of current actions resulting in future rewards but there is scarce study about the law of karma and management or work performance. On the other hand, there is few studies show the relationship between the principle of success (Iddhipada) and work performance which had no significant effect in this

study. The principle of success (Iddhipada) can be compared to the Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle (PDSA) of Dr. W. Edwards Deming which is the integration of scientific methods into the science of improvement (Moen and Norman, 2009) but with the deeply embedded love of the task or job in mind. With the principle of success (Iddhipada), individuals must firstly demonstrate love in their jobs (Having heart of zeal: Chanda), from love, individuals will push their right efforts on their tasks without exhaustion. This is congruent with the study of Jirawan (2014), which revealed that the principle of success (Iddhipada) was practiced by the employee in Buddhachinaraj Hospital (Thailand) in a very high level and significantly increased their duty performance. Moreover, Buddhist conscientiousness practice, meditation, was much mentioned in the area of work performance or individual performance studies. People who regularly practice Buddhist Meditation enhanced work performance when compared to people who do not practice (Petchsawanga and Duchon, 2012).   The study of Orachorn (2014) explored that 30 days from practicing Buddhist principles and Meditation promoted the effective work of professional nurses from by relieving stress and increasing happiness. However, in the holistic view, practicing Buddhist principles will result in performance behavior from mindfulness and from Buddhist characteristic. Therefore, providing Buddhist knowledge and training will enhance work performance (Sribhen and Kamvicha, 2001).

Burnout and individual work performance
        On the other hand, the results show that burnout had a negative effect on individual work performance. The result when employees are experiencing burnout is indicated by their feelings and attitude toward work and environment, which will decrease their performance or can harm their health. Burnout occurred when employees experienced stress from their work environment and this stress reduced job performance (Kwag and Kim, 2009). This study indicated that diminished personal accomplishment had a significantly negative effect on the individual work performance which is different but fulfill the study of Nafees et al, (2015) which indicated that exhaustion and depersonalization had a moderately negative effect on in-role performance of service employees in the Pakistani bank. Moreover, the study of Kwag and Kim (2009) with Korean employees in Pusan and Kaengnam revealed that depersonalization had a significantly negative effect on this. However, with the results, it could be implied that burnout has a negative effect on job performance.

Burnout as a mediator between Buddhist principles in work and individual work performance

According to the three dimensions of burnout as mediators between Buddhist principles in work and individual work performance, the results show that only diminished personal accomplishment was a mediator. Therefore, practicing Buddhist principles in work will reduced burnout. This in turn will increase individual work performance which is not quite similar but related to the study of Babakus, Yavas, and Ashill (2009) that burnout partially mediates the effect of job demands and job resources on job performance.

Conclusion

Theoretical implications

Beliefs play a role in human personality, its principles and teachings are embedded in an individual's mind and influence behavior. The chosen four Buddhist principles that were studied in the research are the principles that have been taught from young until adult in Thai Buddhist culture, they are easy to remember and related to the work environment. The results of these findings show that the two from the chosen four Buddhist principles had a negative effect on two of the three dimensions of burnout and had positive effect on individual work performance. Moreover, the results also show that one of the three dimensions of burnout had negative effect on individual work performance. Furthermore, when compared the three dimensions of burnout as the mediating variable between Buddhist principles in work and the Individual Work Performance the results show that diminished personal accomplishment was a mediator. This can underline that religious principles can become a practical tool to be implemented in work for burnout prevention. When employees are practicing Buddhist principles in work they will protect themselves from burnout and increase their individual work performance. The reason is Buddhist principles influence their attitudes and personalities to behave in the way of good deeds and then constructs them a consciousness which effects their individual work performance.

Managerial implications

According to the results of the findings, Buddhist principles help employees to prevent burnout from work and to increase individual work performance. Therefore, Buddhist principles should be a good tool for HRM to use in training courses such as orientation and mind development, managerial preparation courses and for the set-up of an organization's values, rules, strategies etc. However, Buddhist principles could be used for the case study, and other religions' teaching and principles could also be practiced. It might seem old fashioned or devotee for the new age of HRM to use religion's principles in work, as a tool

they are easier, faster and cheaper than developing new age tool. The reason is it has been perceived in individual's mind since a young age but not yet excavated and rightly implemented. Not only Buddhist principles but others, if there is a good designed training course or direction and rightly implementation, the result will be reflected in both performances on individual and organization.

Suggestion for future research

With regard to the research, there is little in prior research that has studied the correlations between religion's teaching and workplace burnout. The suggestion for further research is to create the study with other religious principles or to study the results after the principles have been taught, trained and practiced in the longitudinal design or one group pretest – posttest. This would help people who are interested in the area of religion, belief and culture to develop that knowledge for an advanced managerial tool in the management area.

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