

The Application of Buddhist Participation to the Conflict Management in Wat Noi Nang Hong Community, Singburi Province

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Abstract

This article is intended to present the application of Buddhist participation to the conflict management in Wat Noi Nang Hong Community, Singburi Province. Information is gathered from the evidence of participation in Buddhist perspective in the theory parts, according to the guideline of the west. In-depth interview. To observe and listening to public opinions, people in involved in Wat Noi Nang Hong community. From the research, it is found that the study related to the application of the ideas and principles of the participation in Buddhist perspective to manage conflicts and create community's unity, it is also found that the community leaders in the present lack virtues which are the tools of having trusts from people in the community. Hence, in order to bring back community leaders to have the equal roles comparing to the ones in the past, there must be the application of the Dhammas of the leaders in the past to let them have the roles in the aspects of "having the right view; acting as trustful relatives with the holy Dharma of Brahmavihara (The four divine abodes); and being able to make friendship by self-controlling with Sangahavathu Dhamma".

Therefore, there must be use of the process of the participation in Buddhist perspective as the impulsion for the movement of people's or private sector; it is divided into the 2 models of (1) the 5-Step-Model of the Participation in Buddhist Perspective (R5 Steps); and (2) the Process Model of the Participation in Buddhist Perspective (Noble Eightfold Cycle), both of which consist of the harmonization of "the Noble Eightfold Path or Magga", the important principle for the movement of sustainable participation in Buddhist perspective.

Keyword: The Application, Buddhist Participation, Conflict Management

Introduction

Conflicts can occur at any time and are ready to magnify. If you cannot control. Conflicts related to religious conflicts that resolve the most difficult. Peace and harmonious relation among different religious adherent is one

of problematic issues that have been haunting the civilization and human life. Religion perceived in contradictory perspectives. In one hand, human being perceived religion as a need of a set of value that would guide them to a good life, but in another, religion often led to threaten the human life (Monib, 2014 : 44-45). Each part relates the reason and factor under the rules of cycle. (Nuamcharoen (2015 : 217).

Thai society, currently has overly perform its rights and freedoms and often used more emotion than reasons. In recent years in Thailand and especially since 2006, the disputation and disharmony that traditionally characterizes the political sphere has spilled over into civil society (Boonpanyarote, 201 : 72-84). Most conflict may start at the perspective of different attitudes in beliefs or ways of life. These things are the factors that cause a lot of controversy in the society and sometimes spread a lawsuit in court at the end. The conflicts of Thai people occurred and spreaded wider and leded to violent combats by using democracy and quality of living as claimed for starting protests. The conflicts bring people to be suffered, loss lives and property, and also unstable imitability national level. It also effected on community that wanted to help to solve the crisis. As the saying “The participation of citizens is the heart of the development” that can promote the community’s cooperation in the development. The members of community can be united to stand for their own community in learning and solving problems and make their community sustainable development (Roop-Ngam, 2002) and human beings can live happily together with both inner peace and outer peace. (Mansumittrchai, 2015 : 163)

In Buddhism, Buddha shows the importance of participation among monks community and he taught his disciples and everyone to live in a harmonious society together. For example the discipline that will bring unity among monks community; they must meet every 15 days to jointly hold a religions service in the Buddhist chapel to state Patimoga chanting as the rules of conduct harmonious among monks [Vi. Ma (thai) 4/136-213]. But whenever there is a misunderstanding, they are allowed to hold a religious service in the Buddhist chapel premature together to clear the issue. Do not let misunderstandings accumulated deposition until they become a bigger controversy in monk’s community.

Wat Noi Nang Hong community is the place that can be relied on itself from the past to present. Currently with the development of society, it is expanded to wilder community with the differences in political ideas. According to the problems, the author is interested in studying in the participation of Wat Noi Nang Hong community in Singburi. It’s the area that has been participated with conflict management concept. Applying Buddhist conceptual ideas and principles in managing conflict with the aim to create unity in Wat Noi Nang Hong area, will be the way to manage the conflicts and promote truly harmony and peaceful to the community.

Research Objectives

- 1) To study the conceptual ideas and principles of the participation in

conflict management according to Buddhism.

2) To study the problems and the participation in Buddhist perspective of the unity creation in Wat Noi Nang Hong community, Sing buri Province.

3) To apply Buddhist conceptual ideas and principles in managing conflicts with the aim to create unity in Wat Noi Nang Hong community, Sing buri province.

Research Conduct

This research is a qualitative research studying in Buddhist Tipitaka, books, documents, literatures, and academic articles as primary sources together with an in-depth interview, observation and listening to public opinion of related people in Wat Noi Nang Hong community. Then all data collected are used to analyze and synthesize of application Buddhist participation to conflict management in Wat Noi Nang Hong Community in Singburi for creating sustainable unity of the community.

Research Results

1. The definition of conflict

“Conflict” comes from Latin “Confligere” which means fight and warfare, Incompatibility or Opposition means “Group or two people who have differences in ideas, beliefs, and needs, argue and competition” (Reymond W. Mack and John Pease, 1973: 68)

Conflict is common in society. Either causing the loss or development, it is up to the management of people in society. The conflict possibly happen and cannot be avoided when humans interact with each other. Sometimes conflicts create better ideas and changes or sometimes cause serious damage as well based on the process of dealing with conflict.

It can be seen that conflict is a natural phenomenon that is paired with nature of men, whether on a personal level or social level. Conflict is sometimes beneficial to have new way of development but sometimes, if poorly managed, it can extremely cause problems.

W. Watanasap (2012: 111-113) sees that whenever the conflict and violence happened in the society. There are only 2 choices for human to deal with conflict management that as follow:-

- 1) Using violent way to finish the conflict or
- 2) Using peaceful way to resolve the conflict.

Conflict is a feeling or reaction of persons that have ideas, values, and goals in different ways including competing and fighting to get the limited resources or invading or preventing the opposite group in order to achieve their goals. Conflicts may be reflected in the form of mild or severe, as Phramaha Hunsa Dhammhaso (2013: 22-23), stated a similar definition of conflicts into two main meanings, that is, the meaning of the positive and negative.

In conclusions that humans have a way of handling conflict with the instinct of self. Mostly they use violence to resolve conflicts. The conflict

is causing adverse effects such as arguing, fighting, hurting, and as much as killing or war but the crisis inevitably comes with opportunity. If conflict is used as the driving force, it contributes to creativity and causes a positive impact on organizations and society.

Concepts and Principles of Participation in Buddhism

Concepts and principles of participation in Buddhism can be summarized into three concepts as follow:-

1. Principle of participation based on Western concept, in conclusion, divided the participation of individuals in society into 4 groups: participations in decision making, participation in operation, participation in benefits, and participation in evaluation.

2. Principle of participation based on Eastern concept, in summary, divided into two ways categories creation of a pattern of activity for public participation, and evaluation of the participations of people.

3. The principles of participation based on Buddhism notion focusing on creating harmony and peace to live together in a peaceful society. Community leaders should promote moral virtues, Bhramvihardhamma (Dharma for having good mind and behavior) and Sangahavadhudhamma (Dharma for supporting good community) (Phra Brahmaganabhorn P. A. Payutto, 2008 : 142). Holding both Dharma together with the role of community leader in the past are Noble Eightfold Paths in Three Basic Training by grouping people based on their duty and role of Noble Eightfold Paths to the process of participation. The strategy to achieve four ways of success are (1) participation and cooperation (2) contributing and sharing (3) engaging in consultation or participation in public discussion (4) involving in a public hearing.

From the concepts and principles involved above, it can be concluded that the concept of the West and the concept of the East have been consistent in the idea that participation concept should allow people to understand the objective of the participation project to achieve the same goal and be part of the benefit arising from the projection which all sectors participate since the beginning in making decision, operating, problem solving, choosing the developing way, and following the evaluation.

Based on the principles of Buddhism, Buddha aims to start building participation within oneself first and then gradually develops according to the rule of society. To achieve this objective, the researcher will integrate both Eastern and Western science concepts to justify the application of the principles of Buddhism. However, to handle conflicts that arise in Wat Noi Nang Hong community in Singburi will lead to a model involved in Buddhist concept to resolve conflicts in the bigger society level in the future

Studying the Problems and engaging Buddhism to build a harmonious community of Wat Noi Nang Hong, Singburi

The study found that activities organized by the government and private sections have the share and differences that cause people in the community to

pay attention and have cooperation in the activities. The shares mentioned are:-
 1) Activities focusing on gratitude. 2) Activities for fun, such as music and so on.
 3) Activities that benefit the community. 4) Health promotion activities such as local sports, soccer ball, etc. 5) Activities about the faith of the community
 6) Activities with the giveaway, or sweepstakes.

The difference focus activities in public and private sectors are:- 1) the activities that have a beneficial effect upon certain individuals, groups; 2) activities that the parties to get cooperation in their own group; 3) activities that undisclosed information to only dissenters themselves; 4) activities that lack of involvement of the parties to jointly analyze share or exchange information; 5) activities that lack of confidence in the organizing sector
 6) activities that group or authority try to use the coercive powers to force an unfair situation of “the inside factor” causing conflicts and leading to the participation problems such as “desire to get more than give”, changing farming lifestyle to urban lifestyle which cause conflicts to the people.
 “External factor” includes the concealment of information, inequality of opportunity, and sided of opinion that are considered as major factors of lacking harmony and this become severer.

Application of Buddhist Concepts and Principles in Conflict Management Focusing on the Unity of the Community

The result of the application of Buddhist participation to conflict management to create harmonious community found that community leaders lack virtue that they should have to hold the faith of the people in the community. The community leaders should be able to play a role equivalent to community leaders in the past by applying these concepts to pursue leadership role,

- 1) Right View (Rv) by having Sammaditthi
- 2) Holy Abiding (Ha) by having Brahmavihara
- 3) Social Solidarity (Ss) by having Saṅgahavatthu

The author represents a role model of leadership of Buddhist Participation (RvHaSs Model), applied to cause the “Middle Way”, that is, dualistic Dhamma concept which is an idea of linking prominent points or looking for shared center of varied ideas for living together and collaborating in harmony which is called “the third idea”, that is, a principle beyond the traditional procedures that cause conflict. Community leaders must take into account the relationship between “a mean (participation) and a goal (unity),” as figure 1.

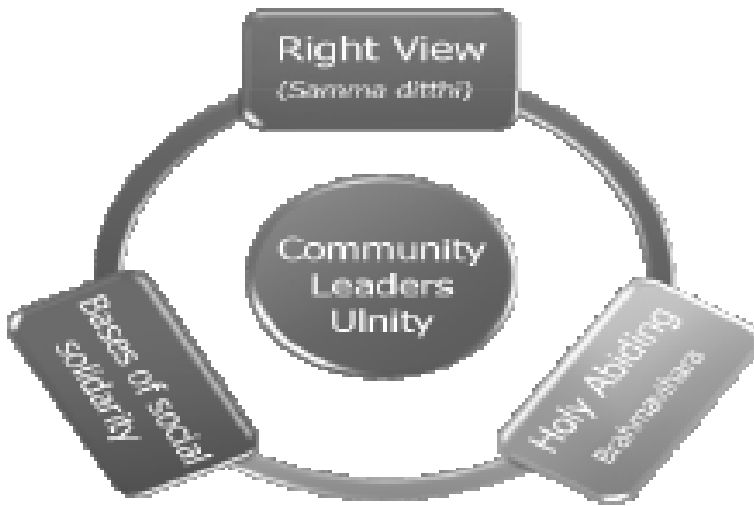


Figure 1: The role of leaders of Buddhist Participation (RvHaSs Model).

In the people sector, Dharma principles, which can help conciliation, create correct views that expel “unfaithfulness, suspicion, and not being open mind”, are “creating the Right View, Right Thought; Right Action; Right Speech; for Benefit of the society, Right Concentration and Right Mindfulness” for creating understanding and acknowledgement together in the beginning. Thus, the model of Buddhist Participation in the people sector is purposed to drive a community to unity. The process consists of 2 phases as follows:

Phase 1: the terrace model of Buddhist Participation or (R [Vi-TAS-Co-Min-LiEf] Steps: R5 Steps); in the phase 1, before applying the model of Buddhist participation to a community, the paradigm of the community must be first adjusted; getting empirical results in a small group, then into the large people sector. The model of Buddhist participation aims at creating unity in this phase. The model is processed step by step. It consists of five steps as follows.

Step 1 Right View: R [Vi].

Step 2 Right Thought; Right Action; Right Speech; for Benefit of the society): R [TAS].

Step 3 Right Concentration): R [Co].

Step 4 Right Mindfulness): R [Min].

Step 5 Right Livelihood; Right Effort; for Relationship): R [LiEf].

The model of Buddhist participation in the people sector for communities which face conflicts and lack of unity can be applied to their activities. I represent it as a mind map as figure 2.



Figure 2: the terrace model of Buddhist Participation (R5 Steps)

The model of Buddhist Participation, the phase 1 based on the principle of “the Noble Eightfold Path” is a motivation to drive the process of participation in the people sector, counted as the first step of the paradigm adjustment with an application of Buddhist Participation and creating “the right view together”. It is a determination of guideline in accordance with “the Threefold Training”, that is, the step of Right View led by “wisdom”, the actions for a goal directed by “morality”, and standing basically in process base with “concentration”. Every different group can do activities for public; doing work for work, doing a duty for a duty with gladness and right understandings. Public benefits are importantly focused on. Atmosphere of unity and solidarity is created.

Phase 2: Noble Eightfold Cycle

After the community driven by the process of participation in the phase 1, in order to create a sustainable web in a community, like large texture in a beautiful pattern weaved by a weaver with colorful and varied threads, when the same activities have to be done, the process of participation must be adjusted to harmonize completely different ideas' gaps. Every different group focuses on the same goal. So the phase 2 is a continued cycle for creating a sustainable web in a community with “the Threefold Training”, that is, morality, concentration, and wisdom. When the unity is needed to be driven in the model of Noble Eightfold Cycle, issues of specific groups can be adjusted; the terrace model of participation is still remained. To understand better, I can represent it as figure 3.

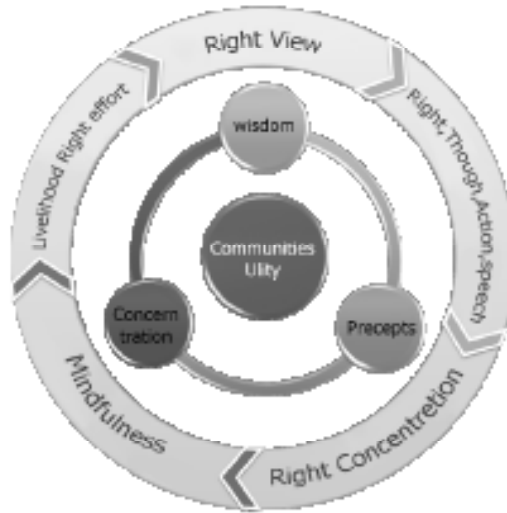


Figure 3: NOBLE EIGHTFOLD Cycle (summarized by the author)

The application of conceptual ideas and principles of Buddhist participation for conflict management focusing on creating a unity in community of Wat Noi Nang Hong, Singburi province, or even in other communities, creates sustainability and brings peace, resulting from using a principle of the Noble Eightfold Path as a mean to drive members in community to see “a goal” and “a mean” in the same direction, that is, creating a unity in a community. Both leaders of communities and the people sector need motivations to cycle “role of leader of creating Buddhist participation” altogether with cycling “Noble Eightfold Cycle”, like an engine’s gears functioning together, the engine is out of work if any gear is broken. Illustrated as the following figure 4.

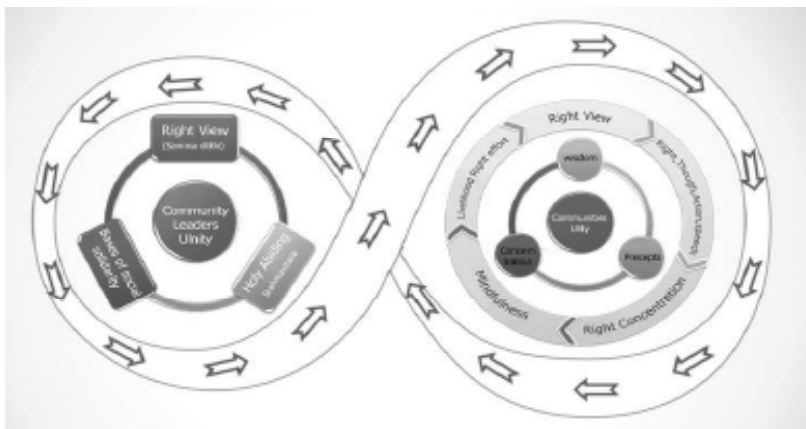


Figure 4: Buddhist participation cycle focusing on creating a sustainable unity

From Buddhist participation cycle focusing on creating a sustainable unity above, it shows that when the leaders of communities are strong, they are like cycling forward in the people sector, as a car driven with front wheels. On the contrary, when the people sector is strong, it is like cycling forward, the leaders of communities cycling rear wheels. The researcher need them to cycle together like a car moving with four wheels in order to strengthen community of Wat Noi Nang Hong with Buddhist participation for conflict management focusing on creating a unity, crossing over sustainably various problems and obstacles.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Although the application of conceptual ideas and principles of Buddhist participation focusing on creating a sustainable unity is a case study of the community of Wat Noi Nang Hong, Singburi province, resulting Noble Eightfold Cycle which is applicable to conflict management or creating a community unity, The researcher suggest that community's context to studies to survey and analyze problems throughout for knowing a way to apply the model properly with the phases of the model of Buddhist participation. Especially, an interesting issue to hold "Noble Eightfold Cycle", both the community leaders sector and the people sector can create an actual relationship for a sustainable unity in community.

The issues that the researcher did not study, but should be further studied is applying "Noble Eightfold Cycle" to the community of Wat Noi Nang Hong, Singburi province for creating a sustainable unity in the community.

Recommendations for further researches

- 1) Do a study of trying out conceptual ideas and principles of Buddhist participation for conflict management focusing on creating a community unity and a concrete evaluation of the participation of activities or projects.
- 2) Do a comparative study between the communities using Noble Eightfold Cycle to know the differences among the communities studied.
- 3) Use the resulting model from the study to encourage everyone to have "Right View: Rv".

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