

## The Enrollment Advantages of Meditation for Life Development Course: A Case Study of King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang Students

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### ABSTRACT

This survey research aimed 1) to study the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course to the students, and 2) to compare the benefit levels of students after the enrollment of Meditation for Life Development with the criteria. The samples used in this research were 120 undergraduate students at King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, the second semester in the academic year 2018, consisting of 120 students in a classroom selected by using cluster random sampling. The research instrument was a questionnaire about the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course that divided into 2 parts as follows: The first part was Check List which consists of 8 items with Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) between 0.67-1.00 and the overall reliability of 0.74. The second part was the Narrative Form. The quantitative data were analyzed by using statistics; mean, standard deviation and hypothesis testing by Nonparametric statistics which was determined the statistical significance at the .05 level. The qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis and analytic induction.

The research results found that;

1) The students could get the enrollment advantages of the Meditation for Life Development course both each item and the overall were at a high level. In addition, the qualitative data analysis showed that the advantages of enrollment in this course that summarized in 3 aspects; 1) Meditation helps to develop their personality 2) Meditation helps to improve the mental powers, and 3) Meditation helps to develop their mindfulness and intellectual powers.

2) The advantages after finishing the Meditation for Life Development course were at a high level which was higher than the determined criteria with the statistical significance at the .05 level. ( $Z=9.519$ ,  $p\text{-value} = < .001$ )

**Keywords:** Meditation, Meditation for Life Development, Nonparametric statistics, Student, Phraprommongkolyan (Luangphor Viriyang Sirintharo)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

On account of today's society, there are Hi-Technological progress, the environmental fluctuations and the fast-paced lifestyle of the people that caused the people to have to compete with both themselves and others. Moreover, it causes a lot of inequality in society that makes many people feel stressed and have depression. According to a survey conducted by the Department of Mental Health found that the number of depressive patients about 1.5 million people in 2017, by calculated with the number of population in 2018 who were aged 15 up) [1] [2]. In addition, the number of patients that are estimated from the prevalence of the survey is 1,448,913 people and the suicide rate survey of the whole country in 2018, calculated by the population of 65,406,320, there were 3,327 dead men and 810 dead women. So, the total was 4,137 people that equivalent to the rate of 6.32 per one hundred thousand people. This is considered to be a fairly high number and there were many cases that did not get exploration or there were many groups of people who attempted suicide but it did not work. [3]

Suangmon Sittisaman [3] mentioned the incident at the beginning of the year 2019 which was shocking news for parents and Thai society about many students did serial commit suicide. In just a week, there were 6 students from 6 educational institutions jumped down from a tall building to commit suicide and they chose a place of suicide as a school building or dormitory. Shortly thereafter, there was news of a high school student who decided to jump into a pond to commit suicide. By writing a letter said that he was on probation and did not want to repeat the same class again. Therefore, he decided to commit suicide in order to escape the problem in the future.

With concern students who will be the manpower of the country in the future. Many educational institutions are getting to realize the importance of preventing these conditions. Thus, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang started improving the courses by focusing on soft skills in life and society to be clearer than ever. Since 2014, they have established a department that was responsible for skills development in life and society directly, that is the School of General Education (General Education), which has been approved by the establishment of the Council of King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang in the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting / 2014 on November 26, 2014 and has been announced in the Government Gazette, page 12, volume 131, as the special section: 262, on December 23, 2014, which had the duty of Federal agency on management of teaching courses in general education institutions, including planning the courses development, teaching and evaluation of students' learning [4]. As the Meditation for Life Development course is a new course in the group of values of life. The purpose is to let students know the meaning of meditation, the purpose, the methods, the steps, and starting points of meditation. Moreover, they will learn about the characteristics of meditation, how to make the meditation, the benefits of meditation. Then, they can apply it for use in their daily life including it will help them to concentrate on education and work as well.

As the instructional process, there will be both theory and how to do meditation correctly which is a course according to the good intention of Phraprommongkolyan (Luangphor Viriyang Sirintharo) who was the founder of the Willpower Institute which has the main objective to disseminate the right concentration in the country and all over the world to make peace. This is a course that will make students have balance both body and mind because meditation can decrease the bad temper and control the mind that makes the people live together happily. [5]. In addition, the research team is the lecturers who taught this course and we are also interested to do the survey research in order to get the empirical information about the advantages that the students gained from this course. This will be the basic data to support the instructional

process development and encourage the students and staff in the institute to see the value and advantages of meditation in order to make them stronger and control their own minds properly. Then, they can adapt it to use in their life and learning in the present and future.

## 2. OBJECTIVE

1. To study the advantages of learning Meditation for Life Development course to the students.
2. To compare the level of advantages that students received after learning Meditation for Life Development course with the criteria.

## 3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The students took advantage after learning the Meditation for Life Development course at a higher level.

## 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research of the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course, a case study of King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang students was a survey research by using the research methodology as follows:

### 4.1 THE POPULATION AND SAMPLES

The population used in this research was 296 undergraduate students in 4 classrooms at King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, the second semester in the academic year 2018.

The samples were 132 undergraduate students in a classroom at King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, the second semester in the academic year 2018, selected by using cluster random sampling.

### 4.2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The development of a research instrument was a questionnaire about the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course, divided into 2 following parts:

The first part was the questionnaire that developed by the research team on the learning content of the meditation advantages that was a Check List which had a rating scale of 1-4; as the details below:

- 4 means the highest level of taking advantage.
- 3 means the high level of taking advantage.
- 2 means the low level of taking advantage.
- 1 means the lowest level of taking advantage.

This consisted of 8 items with Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) between 0.67-1.00 and the overall reliability of 0.74 which was a high level of reliability. [6]

The second part was the Narration Form to describe individual opinions about meditation advantages.

### 4.3 Data collection

Data collection of this research was the questionnaire on the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course, collected at the last hour of the course by distributing 132 sets of questionnaires to students, but handed back only 120 sets, representing 90.91 percent.

## 5. DATA ANALYSIS

1) The analysis of the enrollment advantage of Meditation for Life Development course with the quantitative data by using statistics; mean, standard deviation. There are criteria of interpreting the analysis results as follows:

Scale level of 3.51 – 4.00 means the highest level of taking advantage.

Scale level of 2.51 – 3.50 means the high level of taking advantage.

Scale level of 1.51 – 2.50 means the low level of taking advantage.

Scale level of 1.00 – 1.50 means the lowest level of taking advantage.

2) The analysis of the enrollment advantage of Meditation for Life Development course, with the qualitative data by using content analysis and analytic induction. [7]

3) The comparison of the advantage levels that students received after learning the Meditation for Life Development course with the criteria by using Non-parametric statistics on the One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, determined the statistical significance level was at .05.

The reason of using the One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test statistics because the researchers analyzed the distribution of the normal curve of population by Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test found that the significance level of (Sig. 2-tailed) = <.001, which is less than the significance level of .05, therefore we accepted the assumption that the data did not have a normal distribution at the .05 significance level, so it was not according to the basic rule on parametric statistics.

## 6. CONCLUSION

### 6.1 THE STUDY RESULTS ON THE ENROLLMENT ADVANTAGE OF MEDITATION FOR LIFE DEVELOPMENT COURSE AS THE TABLES BELOW:

**Table 1.** Mean, standard deviation, and scale level of taking advantage of Meditation for Life Development course.

The enrollment advantage of Meditation for Life Development course	Mean	S.D.	Level
1. Always sleeping well	3.23	0.53	High
2. Being smarter	3.16	0.47	High
3. Being more careful before start working	3.23	0.53	High
4. Be able to control the temper well	3.28	0.61	High
5. Be able to handle when feeling stressed	3.09	0.65	High
6. Being happy	3.42	0.56	High
7. Being kind and gentle	3.43	0.55	High
8. Being good and merciful	3.48	0.50	High
Total average	3.29	0.32	High

As the table 1, we found that the students took the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course, the overall and each item were at a high level (Mean= 3.29, S.D. = 0.32). The highest advantage item was being good and merciful (Mean= 3.48, S.D. = 0.50), followed by the item of being kind and gentle (Mean= 3.43, S.D. = 0.55), and the item of being happy (Mean= 3.42, S.D. = 0.56) respectively.

The study results on the enrollment advantage of Meditation for Life Development course with the qualitative data as the table below:

**Table 2.** The enrollment advantage of Meditation for Life Development course according to individual opinions.

The enrollment advantage of meditation for life development course	Number of informant (persons)
Be able to more control the temper, be patient, feeling calm down	52
Being more conscious	51
Focusing on learning, reading, doing exams and tasks including more concentrating with things that want to do	30
More calm down	19
Being more careful and more considering before doing	18
Feeling relaxed	12
Precaution	8
Be able to handle the problems, find ways to solve any obstacles properly and also solving immediate problems by knowledge	6
Having more positive thinking	6
Being bright and cheerful	6
Being happier	6
Being better memorize	5
Do not worry too much and let it be	4
Feeling relaxed and relieved	4
Sleeping well	4
Doing meditation properly, practicing in the right way as well as getting knowledge	3
Being more gentle	3
Being more merciful	3
Having better health care	3
Being more disciplined and more responsibility	2
Having more rational	2
More understanding of life and the truth	2
Having merit (through Metta chanting)	2
Having a good personality	1
Being cheerful	1
Having better mental health	1
Making more merit	1

As table 2, based on individual opinions of students, it can be summarized that the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course in 3 parts as follows:

1) The meditation helps to improve the students' personality such as doing meditation properly, getting more knowledge, sleeping well and having better health as the opinion of students said that:

*".....I did meditation properly and got more knowledge."*

*The 62<sup>nd</sup> student*

*" Feel relieved and no stressful, when I was not stressful, so I felt so happy and had good health."*

*The 23<sup>rd</sup> student*

*" .....I had no stress before going to bed, so I slept very well."*

*The 31<sup>st</sup> student*

2) Meditation helps to improve the mental powers for example controlling the temper properly, not feeling anger easily, being more patient, being calmed down, being disciplined and more responsible, having more rational, being gentle and feeling sympathy with others and having merit, always making merit, feeling relaxed, being optimistic, having better mental health and be happier as the opinion of students said that:

*"I had been refined, controlled the temper and stressful properly, was more optimistic in life as well as I enjoyed and got along with others that made me happier."*

*The 71<sup>st</sup> student*

*"It made me focus on everything that I want to do in my life, be steady and calm, having a good mood and I could better tolerate things."*

*The 2<sup>nd</sup> student*

*"I felt calm down and paid attention to things, concentrated on the study that made me more understand in the lesson, not greedy and having a conscious. If everyone could do the meditation, I think our world will be peaceful, definitely."*

*The 21<sup>st</sup> student*

*"After making meditation, I felt like I had more conscious to do things, no bad temper during working or learning. I was less stressful and controlled my temper better. So, I did my tasks properly, had a better point on the exam, I felt very happy and felt like getting merit as well."*

*The 97<sup>th</sup> student*

3) Meditation helps to improve the mindfulness and intellectual powers. The students have concentrated on studying for an exam, doing homework and the examination including all tasks. They could memorize things better, had a conscious, was not careless, thought before doing, was able to solve any problem properly, more understood in life and law of nature and just let it be. As the opinions of students said that:

*"I had more conscious to do my own things in daily life, not careless when driving, felt relaxed and no stressful even if it did not help too much but made me feel happier. Moreover, I could memorize the lesson contents better and get ready for the exam."*

*The 39<sup>th</sup> student*

*"I was as an ADHD person (Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder), less conscious or unable to focus on my tasks, after practicing meditation for a while, I become a conscious person who can concentrate on working and doing homework. I feel relaxed, calm down and more understand to study for an exam also."*

*The 98<sup>th</sup> student*

*"I had more conscious, was a thoughtful person that made me more understanding everything in life."*

*The 22<sup>nd</sup> student*

*"Learning to do meditation helps me to understand Buddhism better ... When there were some troubles in my life that made me stressful, I thought that it was not a big deal. We could handle it and not worry too much as the past."*

*The 107<sup>th</sup> student*

*"I could control my temper properly, did not worry too much and just let it go. When having some problem, I could have a conscious to solve it, tried to not concern about it too much and pull myself out of the problem. That made me calm down and be happier. After that, I could find ways to solve it properly by using my thought than emotion."*

*The 55<sup>th</sup> student*

## 6.2 THE COMPARISON OF SCALE LEVEL ON THE ENROLLMENT ADVANTAGES OF MEDITATION FOR LIFE DEVELOPMENT COURSE WITH THE CRITERIA. (OVER THAN 2.51)

**Table 3.** The comparison results of scale level on the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course with the criteria.

Items	Mean	Median	Z	p-value
1. Always sleeping well	3.23	3.00	9.817	< .001*
2. Being smarter	3.16	3.00	8.770	< .001*
3. Being more careful before start working	3.23	3.00	8.532	< .001*
4. Be able to control the temper well	3.28	3.00	7.824	< .001*
5. Be able to handle when feeling stressed	3.09	3.00	5.488	< .001*
6. Being happy	3.42	3.00	9.092	< .001*
7. Being kind and gentle	3.43	3.00	9.276	< .001*
8. Being good and merciful	3.48	3.00	9.817	< .001*
<b>Total mean</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>9.519</b>	<b>&lt; .001*</b>

\*Statistical significance at the level of .05

As the table 3 found that the comparison results on the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course with the criteria that was at higher level of 2.51, analyzed by One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, it showed that the students took the enrollment advantages of Meditation for Life Development course at a high level (mean = 3.29, median = 3.25) which was higher than the determined criteria with the statistical significance at the .05 level. (Z=9.519, p-value = < .001).

## 7. DISCUSSIONS

### 7.1 STUDY OF THE ADVANTAGES OF MEDITATION FOR LIFE DEVELOPMENT COURSE

The results showed that students took advantage of Meditation for Life Development course. The overall and each item is at a high level. The three most advantage items such as being good and merciful, being gentle and being happier respectively. Regarding the qualitative data, the students gave the opinions that the greatest advantage of meditation was to make them control the temper properly, not easily angry, be patient ,calmer down, being conscious, focusing on learning and working, having a good memory which helps to

improve the mental powers, mindfulness and intellectual powers due to the Meditation for Life Development course, the students learned both theory and practical parts. As the theory parts, they could learn and understand the ways including techniques to do meditation properly. About the practical part, they did walking meditation in 15 minutes and meditated in 15 minutes at school and home continuously throughout a semester. Thus, meditation helped to improve themselves in many ways. This was be measured at a high level consistent with the research of Sutthilak Sutthi [8] that analyzes the achievement of meditation teaching of Luangphor Viriyang Sirintharo because there were many factors for instance the course management, the media management with public relations, the teaching methodology in accordance with the curriculum, the personnel management with planning, the management through the Willpower Institute and the foundation. As the result of Luangphor Viriyang Sirintharo's meditation course, it was good to a person who did mediation such as sleeping well, feel more relaxed, having a good health, no illnesses, being smarter, being sensible, relieving stress. Therefore, meditation is beneficial in daily life and also affects society. In the case that people in society become more conscious. It will make society more peaceful and livable. According to the research of Suruyan Sattayakum [9] which studied the effects of Anapanasati Meditation on learning behavior in Middle school, Grade 9 at Watpratumwanaram School, Bangkok. The results showed that after attending the Anapanasati Meditation program, students will focus more on their studies with statistical significance at the level of 01.

## **7.2 COMPARISON OF THE SCALE LEVEL OF THE ADVANTAGES OF MEDITATION FOR LIFE DEVELOPMENT COURSE AFTER LEARNING WITH THE CRITERIA.**

The comparison of the scale level of the advantages of Meditation for Life Development course after learning with the criteria that higher than 2.51 found that overall, they received the advantages after finishing class at a high level (The mean is 3.29, the median is 3.25). This was higher than the specified criteria, was determined the statistical significance at 0.05 level ( $Z = 9.519$ ,  $p\text{-value} = <.001$ ). According to learning in Meditation for Life Development course, the students learned both theory and practical parts in the classroom and they had to continually do meditation at home for a semester. This affected them to improve themselves in many ways. This was be measured at a high level and it was higher than the specified criteria because the instructional methods in this course are the principle of Phraprommongkolyan (Luangphor Viriyang Sirintharo) who was the founder of the Willpower Institute, He aimed to publicize the right concentration for peace in the country and worldwide which consistent with the research of Somboon Watana [10], which compares research on academic achievement in meditation according to Buddhism philosophy. It was found that the achievement of learning after joining the project was significantly higher than before attending the program at 0.05 level ( $t = 12.718$ ). As the opinions and suggestions of this research found that the most of samples were pleased with this project, they said that it could help to develop their mind, be more conscious, concentrating, calm down, and feel happier than the past.

## **8. SUGGESTIONS**

Regarding, the research found that students received advantages from learning Meditation for Life Development at a high level. The three most useful points are meditation makes them being good and kind person, being gentle and being happier respectively. As the qualitative data, students gave the opinion about the greatest advantage of meditation was helping to control their temper when getting anger, being patient, calm down, being conscious, focusing on studies, works, and having a better memory. These are considered to be the mental power development, mindfulness and intellectual powers that were the advantages



obviously as well as these were great importance that we would like the students received because they are the next generation who will develop and lead the country to be better in the near future. Therefore, Educational institutions should support them to know the principles of meditation correctly and continuously. It will help them to be strong and be encouraging them to keep going. In addition, they know how to deal with their temper and are conscious when facing any problems or emergencies that caused the depression. This will prevent them from the beginning, rather than solve them at the end.

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