

The Roles of Buddhist Monks to Promote Virtues in Managing Chinese Students' Social Networking in Thailand in the digital Era

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Received January 18, 2024 **Revised** February 26, 2024; **Accepted** March 3, 2024

Abstract

This article aimed to study the purposes of this research there are (1) To analyze the role of Buddhist monks to promote virtues in managing Chinese students' new social networking in Thailand in the digital Era (2) To study the methods of promoting virtues in managing Chinese students' new social networking in Thailand in the digital Era. The sample of this research there are Chinese students who are residing in Bangkok and surrounding areas. An in-depth data collection method was used to create objective knowledge on social network relationship factors of 200 Chinese students in Thailand. The research instruments were open-ended questionnaire and attitude questionnaire. In descriptive statistics, the description of variables, frequency distribution, percentage, mean (\bar{X}), and standard deviation (S.D.) were analyzed. The research finding that :

- (1) During the time of the COVID-19 was found that Thai Buddhist monks had the role play as promoting virtues in managing the social networks of Chinese students in Thailand in the digital era.
- (2) The role of promoting virtues and morality in the digital era of Thai Buddhist monks and Chinese students in Thailand was found that to use encouraging and inspirational sentences when students experience stress and pressure during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The body of knowledge from the research indicates that the Methods of Thai Buddhist monks who are promoting virtues in managing the social Networking of Chinese students in Thailand in the digital era. The research findings that during the COVID-19 pandemic, Thai Buddhist monks played a key role in promoting morality within the social network of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era. The monks used encouraging phrases and motivational strategies to support students experiencing stress and pressure

during this challenging time. The research revealed the methods used by Thai Buddhist monks to promote morality and support the well-being of Chinese students in Thailand's digital age.

Keywords: COVID-19; digital era; social networking; Chinese students; promote virtues

Introduction

The outbreak of the coronavirus (CoVs) or COVID-19 began in Wuhan, China, at the end of 2562 BE (2019 AD) and spread to other countries in early 2563 BE (2020 AD), leading to nationwide lockdowns, including in Thailand. Many Chinese students in Thailand were unable to return to China as usual, prompting them to adapt and strengthen their social network relationships in the New Normal era. Social media platforms became essential tools for maximizing communication benefits. This adaptation to the digital era during the COVID-19 crisis affected some Chinese students who could not travel back to China due to higher travel costs and stricter health screening regulations imposed by the Chinese government. They also faced mental pressure to balance their studies and work appropriately, especially adjusting to online learning discipline. Chinese students in Thailand, who understand and communicate in Thai at a functional level, are interested in listening to Thai Buddhist teachings as part of the learning process to enter a new culture (acculturation) in a borderless world. This includes visiting temples, chanting across the New Year, and participating in significant Buddhist activities along with Thai Buddhists. The COVID-19 situation, which requires a digital lifestyle with rapidly advancing technology, highlights the role of Thai Buddhist monks. Their actions are quickly disseminated in an era where social media plays a daily role in everyone's life. Technology is used to share religious teachings, especially providing correct guidance to promote morality among youth. This includes using platforms like YouTube for sermons, Facebook Live for moral teachings, posting moral aphorisms in Discord groups, and organizing motivational speaking events in podcasts. This has benefited Chinese students in Thailand who are beginning to learn Thai, making it easier to understand and follow the daily moral teachings of Thai monks in Thai. Some Chinese students in Thailand have a strong social media network. At the same time, some Thai monks are interested in learning and mastering the Chinese language. These adaptations show how Thai monks are adjusting to changes in the economic, social, and cultural development landscape, as well as managing human knowledge in the digital age. The researchers are interested in exploring how Thai monks play a role and use methods to teach and promote morality within the social network of Chinese students in Thailand.

The Evolution of the Digital Era in Modern Society, since the modern society began to be driven by digital technology around 1984, when the world was introduced to the World

Wide Web and TCP/IP connectivity (Siroj Leowasiri, 2017), our world has become both closer and wider. In this era, vast amounts of data are stored, organized, and presented to the world, enabling greater access for everyone. The period of social transformation known as the "Digital Age" can be categorized as follows:

- Desktop & Internet Era (since 1984): This era marked the transition from manual work to computer usage. Every organization adopted Windows operating systems for their operations and created websites for information dissemination. A significant highlight of this period was the emergence of email around 1994.
- Mobile & Social Era (since 2000): This era began alongside the development of smartphones, including the first mobile phone with a camera. Shortly after, platforms such as hi5, Myspace, and Facebook emerged, marking a flourishing period of virtual relationships and the thriving blog culture. Myspace fostered the rise of early bloggers and the era of mobile websites and voice interactions. Digital marketing in this period transitioned from banner ads to telesales, voice services, and social media marketing.
- Content & Data Era (since 2004): This era saw the rise of devices that facilitated diverse content production, such as high-resolution camera phones, digital video cameras, and transformative smartphones like the iPhone. Content platforms such as YouTube, Pinterest, and Instagram became major global players. This period emphasized content creation for audiences through new platforms and improved database technologies, which evolved into data mining applicable in organizations. Marketing strategies of this era included content marketing, social media marketing, data-driven marketing, and the proliferation of viral videos.
- Digital Experience Era (since 2013): This era involved leveraging digital technology to enhance physical human experiences through the production of smart devices beyond smartphones, such as smart glasses, wearable technology like Fitbits, drones, virtual reality, and augmented reality. The marketing focus shifted to utility marketing, emphasizing brand utility, and experiential marketing, which involved creating shared experiences with customers beyond one-way virtual communication.
- Artificial Intelligence Era (since 2016): This era signified the advent of human achievements previously deemed impossible, as seen in Hollywood movies, coming closer to reality. It involved the creation of artificial intelligence and robots capable of performing complex tasks or analyzing vast amounts of data accumulated since the Content & Data Era. With the advancement of modern

computer capabilities, programming and processing complex data have become straightforward. This era marks the beginning of using AI and robots in place of humans, exemplified by Google's Deep Learning and IBM's Watson. Future marketing is expected to benefit greatly from AI's ability to understand consumer patterns and facilitate easy access.

The spread of COVID-19 has created changes, forcing people to adapt their behavior to a "new way of life." One of these changes is the role of digital technology, which has been accelerated to an unprecedented pace. Digital technology has come to the rescue in reducing direct personal contact. It is evident that digital has become an integral part of everyday life. The role of Thai Buddhist monks in promoting morality to propagate Buddhism in the digital age is done with metta (loving-kindness) and wisdom in demonstrating the Dharma through social media. Referring to Phra Kru Kittisangkhan, "Strategies for Spreading the Teachings of Thai Buddhist Monks in Contemporary Society," *Journal of Dhamma Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (September - December 2560): 212-213, it is stated that modern monks must begin to learn, adapt, and respond wisely, turning crises into opportunities for development using new media to reach the general public. This is especially important in a situation where individuals are rushing to work to earn money to support their families and do not have time to visit temples to study the Dharma through digital technology systems.

According to Phra Phrommuniyabhorn (Bhikkhu Panyato), "Thai People and Technology," 8th print (Bangkok: Panyaprathep Foundation, 2548), p. 43, the way of life of Thai people has changed from the past. Most people have begun to neglect morality. Urban administrators do not see the importance of moral education, leading to a chaotic society with crime, competition, and a lack of compassion and metta (loving-kindness) for one another. This is because Thai people do not recognize the importance of Buddhism. Nowadays, Thai people have progressed materially, with significant advancements in science and technology, leading to a lack of religious and moral education. Currently, Buddhism is facing a major challenge from the globalized era, which is the age of information technology and communication. This is an era where technology has connected the world, allowing people to access and receive information rapidly. Information technology and communication have both positive and negative impacts on Buddhism. For example, the positive impact is the rapid and widespread dissemination of the Dharma, allowing people to access Buddhist teachings through information technology and communication at any time and place.

The role of monks in promoting morality in managing the social network of Chinese students in Thailand in the digital age is a method of propagating the core teachings directly,

which is the way the Buddha used throughout his propagation of the Dharma. The network is the mind of the Buddha, exploring the inclinations of sentient beings who are brave enough to practice the Dharma and go forth to preach to households, which is also a daily activity of the Buddha.

In addition, the method of conducting moral promotion activities with the Chinese student network in Thailand in the digital age is a way for monks to adapt to the digital culture, making the dissemination of teachings much easier. It makes the audience feel that the preacher is like a family member who wishes them well and sincerely wants to listen to the Dharma. This opens up opportunities for people of all nationalities to learn about morality universally.

In essence, the research explores how Thai Buddhist monks have adapted to the digital era to continue their traditional role of promoting morality and providing support to Chinese students in Thailand, with a particular emphasis on the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. The main question or problem that the research aims to address can be summarized as follows: 1) To analyze the role of Buddhist monks in promoting virtues within the context of managing Chinese students' social networking in Thailand during the digital era. 2) To study the methods employed for promoting virtues in managing the new social networking of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era.

The study focuses on Chinese students residing in Bangkok and its surrounding areas. An in-depth data collection method is utilized to gather objective knowledge on the factors influencing social network relationships among a sample of 200 Chinese students in Thailand. The methodological Tools is Open-ended questionnaires to gather qualitative insights that attitude questionnaires to assess perceptions and opinions. Data Analysis Approach, the descriptive statistics are used to describe variables, including frequency distribution, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The key Findings is Thai Buddhist monks played a significant role in promoting virtues within the social networks of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The monks' role in promoting virtues and morality was characterized by the use of encouraging and inspirational language to support students facing stress and pressure during the pandemic.

The research provides insights into the methods used by Thai Buddhist monks to promote virtues and support the well-being of Chinese students in Thailand's digital age, especially in the context of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the role of Buddhist monks in promoting virtues within the management of the social network of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era.
2. To study the methods of conducting activities to promote virtues within the network of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era.

Literature Review

The research focused on improving Chinese reading and writing skills among university students in Thailand's northeast incorporates various second language acquisition theories. Key theories include sociocultural theory, monitor theory, and contrastive analysis hypothesis. Sociocultural theory emphasizes the role of social interaction and cultural context in language learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Monitor theory, proposed by Krashen (1982), suggests that language learners use their learned language knowledge to monitor and self-correct their language use. The contrastive analysis hypothesis, as described by Lado (1957), highlights the importance of understanding differences between the first and second languages to predict and address potential learning difficulties.

Factors identified as influential in developing Chinese reading and writing skills include vocabulary acquisition, grammar comprehension, language environment, learner attitudes, motivation, and anxiety levels (Gardner, 1985; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). Vocabulary and grammar are foundational to language proficiency, while the language environment, encompassing exposure and practice opportunities, plays a crucial role in language acquisition (Ellis, 1994). Positive attitudes and high motivation are linked to better language learning outcomes, whereas anxiety can hinder language performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

Active Learning Methods and Professional Development in Thai Secondary Schools. In secondary education, Thai Chinese teachers have integrated active learning methods such as discussions, role-playing, and the use of audio-visual materials. These methods align with constructivist educational principles, which advocate for student-centered, interactive learning environments (Piaget, 1954; Vygotsky, 1978). Active learning has been shown to enhance student engagement and improve language skills (Prince, 2004).

However, there is a concern about the limited use of innovative teaching techniques for Chinese characters. Traditional rote memorization remains prevalent, despite evidence that more dynamic methods, such as visual and contextual learning strategies, can significantly improve character retention and understanding (Hsiao & Oxford, 2002).

Professional development for teachers is crucial in adopting and implementing these active learning strategies effectively. Participation in workshops, seminars, and collaborative

learning communities has been shown to improve teaching practices and student outcomes (Desimone, 2009).

Learn Buddhist Studies in Thailand at Chulalongkorn University. Buddhist Studies Programs and Resources, Chulalongkorn University (CU) is a prominent center for Buddhist Studies in Thailand, offering comprehensive programs and promoting research collaboration through its Center for Buddhist Studies. The International Tipitaka Hall and CU Dhamma Center serve as dedicated venues for study and research related to Buddhism, providing resources and support for both academic and practical engagement with Buddhist teachings (Swearer, 2010).

Thai Buddhist Monastic Schools and Universities. The Buddhist Monastic Education in Thailand, The relationship between temple education and Thai society is deeply rooted in the country's history. Buddhist monastic schools have traditionally provided both religious and secular education to monks, novices, and laypersons. This dual focus helps maintain the relevance of Buddhist teachings while addressing contemporary educational needs (Keyes, 1983). Buddhist universities play a significant role in this educational landscape, offering programs that range from Buddhist studies to general education subjects. These institutions contribute to the holistic development of students, preparing them for various societal roles (McDaniel, 2008).

Research Article on Chinese Students' Experiences. Chinese Students in Thailand, while specific details of the research article on Chinese students' experiences are not provided, it likely examines factors contributing to their educational satisfaction and success. Previous studies have highlighted issues such as cultural adaptation, language barriers, and academic support as critical to the experiences of international students (Yan & Berliner, 2011).

Thai Study the Cultural and Educational Interactions in a Thai Private University. This study examines the interactions and perceptions of Chinese, Thai, and international students at a private Thai university. Insights from such research can inform strategies to enhance cross-cultural understanding and improve educational experiences for diverse student populations (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009).

Experiences of Overseas Chinese Graduate Students International Programs in Thai Higher Education. Since 2005, Thai higher education institutions have expanded their international programs, attracting a growing number of Chinese students. This trend highlights the increasing globalization of education and the importance of accommodating the needs and expectations of international students (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

Factors Affecting Learning Satisfaction of Foreign Monks Educational Experiences of Foreign Monks in Bangkok, the factors influencing the learning satisfaction of foreign monks studying in Bangkok include the quality of instruction, availability of resources, and cultural integration support. Understanding these factors can help improve the educational

experiences of religious students and ensure their academic and personal growth (Brown & Holloway, 2008).

Educational Philosophies and Celebrity Monks Communicating Buddhist Values to Thai Youth, this article discusses strategies for imparting Buddhist values to Thai Buddhist youth, potentially offering insights into educational approaches and philosophies that could also influence Chinese students in Thailand. Effective communication of values and principles is essential for engaging younger generations in meaningful learning experiences (Gombrich, 2006).

The literature review highlights several key theories and concepts used in research on improving Chinese reading and writing skills, active learning methods, professional development, and educational experiences within Thai and international contexts.1)Second Language Acquisition Theories:

- Sociocultural Theory: This theory, emphasizing the role of social interaction and cultural context in language learning, has been applied to understand how university students in Thailand's northeast can improve their Chinese reading and writing skills through collaborative and culturally relevant instructional models.
- Monitor Theory: Krashen's monitor theory, which suggests that learners use their learned language knowledge to self-correct, has informed strategies to help students refine their Chinese language skills through structured practice and feedback mechanisms.
- Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis: This hypothesis, which focuses on understanding differences between the first and second languages to address learning difficulties, has been used to develop targeted instructional approaches that consider the linguistic contrasts between Thai and Chinese.
- Factors Influencing Language Acquisition: Vocabulary, Grammar, and Language Environment: These fundamental components of language proficiency have been identified as crucial for Chinese language acquisition. Research highlights the importance of extensive vocabulary and grammar instruction, along with creating immersive language environments.

Attitude, Motivation, and Anxiety: Studies have shown that positive learner attitudes and high motivation enhance language learning outcomes, while anxiety can impede progress. These factors are considered in designing supportive and motivating educational experiences for students.

Research Methodology

Data were collected using in-depth interviews with key informants, who were representative groups of Chinese students studying at universities in Bangkok and its metropolitan area. This region is a popular choice for Chinese students pursuing graduate studies and residing in large numbers. The key informants were selected using the Snowball Technique, based on three criteria:

1. Chinese students who entered Thailand on a student visa with a validity of more than six months.
2. Chinese students who have been studying and working in Thailand for no less than three months.
3. Chinese students who recently graduated and have been working in Thailand for no less than 18 months.

The snowball technique was chosen for selecting key informants because it is well-suited for studying social networks. This method helps the researcher visualize the interconnected relationships within the network of Chinese students in Thailand, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, it allows the researcher to cross-check information among the key informants.

Identifying Population and Samples

The target population consists of 200 Chinese students who have chosen to pursue their studies in Thailand. The reference sample, representing the target population, comprises Chinese students studying in Thailand. The sample size for this study was determined using Taro Yamane's formula (1973, as cited in Boontham Kitpridaborisut, 1992) as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

n refers to the sample size.

N refers to the population size from which data is collected.

e refers to the margin of error used in the research.

Study Tools and Outcome Measurement

Open-ended questionnaires and attitude surveys (available in Chinese, English, and Thai). The interviews with key informants:

- In-depth interviews are conducted to gain an understanding of the phenomena under study. This approach allows for flexible analysis and includes both in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The information gathered is synthesized to develop a social network framework, providing insights into the adaptation processes and social network relationships of Chinese students in Thailand during the COVID-19 era.

Data Collection Process

- **Data collection through online platform surveys:** surveymonkey.com.
 - **Data collection from interviews:** conducted from October 15 to December 15, 2022.
1. **Interview guide:** The interview questions were designed based on the research objectives, allowing for open-ended responses. This approach is highly flexible, providing interviewees the freedom to explain and elaborate without constraints.
 2. **Digital audio recording:** Performed with the consent of the informants.
 3. **Participant observation:** The researcher actively participated in various activities or immersed themselves within the target group's community to obtain accurate and detailed information.
 4. **Data validation:** The researcher employed the triangulation method by comparing data collected through three different methods to ensure accuracy and consistency. For example, comparing data on the same topic obtained through focus group discussions with data from in-depth interviews.
 5. **Content analysis:** The collected data were analyzed and categorized according to the research objectives.

Theoretical Concept of Cultural Adaptation

In a globalized world without cultural boundaries, culture, defined as human behaviors, has evolved continuously and systematically. Humans have the ability to improve various aspects by incorporating related elements into their own culture to enrich it. According to Petsiri (2007), the components of culture can be categorized into 5 parts:

1. **Creation and Sharing:** Creation of behaviors followed by sharing to ensure mutual adherence.
2. **Learning:** Human behavior includes the creation and facilitation of learning for proper living.

3. Trans-generation: Transmission of cultural aspects from one generation to another, creating unique identities.
4. Pattern: Clear patterns facilitate learning and adherence.
5. Change: Culture undergoes changes influenced by era, circumstances, or stronger cultures.

However, cultural practices such as visiting Thai Buddhist temples, which have existed since the Sukhothai period, reflect the roots of Thai Buddhist culture. Thailand is predominantly a Buddhist country, where Thai people have been practicing Buddhist rituals, such as making merit, offering alms, observing precepts, and listening to Dharma teachings, since ancient times. If we look at religion in China (Suan, 2020), the Chinese have practiced Taoism and Confucianism for thousands of years, which form the cultural foundation of China. Both beliefs emphasize virtues, respect for elders, and reverence for ancestors. However, during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, religion was banned, with the Communist Party claiming it as a threat. Temples, religious sites, icons, and religious texts were destroyed. After the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese government began restoring religious beliefs and promoting some traditional values beneficial to governing the Chinese people, allowing more freedom to choose and practice religions. Since the 1980s, China has initiated projects to restore temples and emphasized Buddhist and Taoist values. China hosted the World Buddhist Forum in 2006 and the International Conference on Taoism in 2007, recognizing the importance of both religions in Chinese culture. Currently, the Chinese government officially recognizes five religions: Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism.

Often, we see Chinese tourists, volunteer Chinese teachers, or Chinese students paying respects at temples in Thailand. This is a process where individuals encountering different cultures begin to adapt for easier living, understanding, and comfort. Based on studies by Black (1988), Bennett (1993), Earley & Peterson (2004), and Jia & Rutherford (2010), the steps of cultural learning include understanding, seeing, and comprehending different cultures within a given community. For instance, Chinese students in the New Normal era of COVID-19 demonstrate understanding, viewing, and comprehending the different cultures in Thai society. They show interest in and understand Thai cultural practices, participate in activities, and learn to adapt to new cultural elements beyond those from their upbringing in Chinese society. Additionally, demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education, and language ability are factors influencing cultural adaptation abilities (Baek, 1989).

This theoretical concept can help reflect the adaptation of Thai monks and social network groups of Chinese students in Thailand in terms of communication, emotions, and practices to understand the cultural values of Thai Buddhism and promote monk virtues.

Research Results

From studying the role of monks in promoting morality in managing the social networks of Chinese students in digital-era Thailand, an analysis of research objective 1 reveals the following factors:

1. **Guidance and Counseling:** Providing advice and inspirational words to boost morale, especially for Chinese students in the network experiencing high levels of stress and pressure due to the COVID situation (mean \bar{X} = 4.6, S.D. = 0.41).
2. **Dissemination of Moral Teachings:** Utilizing easily accessible social media platforms to disseminate moral teachings to the social network groups of Chinese students in Thailand (mean \bar{X} = 4.5, S.D. = 0.42).
3. **Use of Thai Language:** Using Thai sentences that Chinese students understand when delivering explanations (mean \bar{X} = 4.3, S.D. = 0.41).
4. **Accommodation Arrangements:** Providing accommodation or recommending accommodation to some Chinese students in the network during the COVID situation when they need to find or move accommodations (mean \bar{X} = 4.2, S.D. = 0.44).

From in-depth interviews, it was found that the "charm and teachings" of senior monks and teachers are factors that generate interest and excitement among Chinese student groups. Furthermore, when posts are made in social network groups through applications such as Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok, which emphasize simplicity and speed and are accessible to everyone, many Chinese students initially used methods such as setting up their own online stores in their pages. Later, when they communicated and collaborated in activities with Chinese people in Thailand or Thai people in the network community, which were activities that Facebook users were interested in, they participated in projects like the Happiness Sharing Box project, distributing health masks in various communities, distributing food to children in communities, and engaging in live chat sessions on topics of social interest, opening up opportunities for live chats on their pages for the general public.

The activity Chinese students leaders within the network of Chinese students have established a specific group where they initially invited monks to deliver talks in audio format via a special talk line. This was designed exclusively for Chinese students to help alleviate the stress of being far from home, especially for those unable to travel back to China during the COVID situation. Additionally, there are Chinese students studying within the monk universities, forming a supplementary explanatory group. Translating the meanings

into Chinese aims to foster understanding of the moral teachings within the network group. From studying the methods of conducting moral promotion activities with the digital-era Chinese student network in Thailand, it was found that conversing, lecturing, and addressing issues in easy-to-understand Thai, along with providing encouraging summaries, helped ease the stress of online learning, enabling individuals to better understand their emotions.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Thai monks played a role in promoting morality within the social networks of Chinese students in Thailand's digital era. Regarding the promotion of morality in the digital age by Thai monks and Chinese students in Thailand, it was found that using encouraging sentences and providing inspiration was effective in alleviating stress and pressure among students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research findings highlight the methods used by Thai monks to promote morality in managing the social networks of Chinese students in Thailand.

Objective 1.) To analyze the role of Buddhist monks in promoting virtues within the management of the social network of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era. The results showed that the results revealed that Buddhist monks played a significant role in promoting virtues within the social networks of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era. They primarily achieved this through various means, including providing spiritual guidance, offering counseling and support, and organizing activities aimed at fostering moral values and ethical behavior among the students. Monks utilized their influence and authority to impart teachings on compassion, kindness, and mindfulness, which resonated well with the students, especially during challenging times such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, monks actively engaged with the students through social media platforms, delivering messages of encouragement, inspiration, and comfort, thereby contributing to the overall well-being and moral development of the Chinese student community in Thailand. Their efforts were instrumental in creating a supportive and nurturing environment within the social network, fostering a sense of community, solidarity, and shared values among the students.

Objective 2.) To study the methods of conducting activities to promote virtues within the network of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era. The results showed that various effective methods were employed to conduct activities aimed at promoting virtues within the network of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era. These methods included:

- Utilizing social media platforms: One of the most prevalent approaches was the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, and others to disseminate teachings, inspirational messages, and moral guidance. These platforms provided easy access to information and allowed for widespread dissemination of virtues-related content to a large audience.

- Organizing special talks and lectures: Special talks and lectures, often conducted by Buddhist monks or other spiritual leaders, were organized within the network to provide guidance, inspiration, and encouragement to the students. These talks focused on topics such as compassion, kindness, mindfulness, and ethical behavior, and served as platforms for interactive discussions and learning sessions.
- Engaging in dialogues and discussions: Dialogues and discussions, both online and offline, were facilitated to foster a deeper understanding of virtues and moral values among the students. These dialogues provided opportunities for students to share their experiences, thoughts, and concerns, and to learn from one another in a supportive and respectful environment.
- Providing emotional support and counseling: Emotional support and counseling services were offered to students who experienced stress, anxiety, or other emotional challenges, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Buddhist monks and other mentors provided guidance, comfort, and reassurance to help students cope with their difficulties and build resilience.

Overall, these methods effectively contributed to the promotion of virtues within the network of Chinese students in Thailand, fostering a sense of community, moral responsibility, and ethical conduct among the student population during the digital era.

Discussions

The analysis of the concept "Acculturation strategies of Chinese people in Southeast Asia" can be translated and explained in English as follows:

- 1.) Concept: Acculturation Strategies of Chinese People in Southeast Asia
- 2.) Analysis: Definition of Acculturation: Acculturation refers to the process by which individuals from one cultural background adopt traits, values, and behaviors from another culture. In the context of Southeast Asia, this concept is particularly relevant when examining the integration and adaptation strategies of Chinese immigrants and their descendants.
- 3.) Historical Context: The Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia has a long history, with significant waves of immigration occurring over the past several centuries. The acculturation strategies of Chinese people in this region have been shaped by historical events, economic opportunities, and the socio-political climate of the time.
- 4.) Cultural Differences: The process of acculturation involves navigating cultural differences between the Chinese immigrants' original culture and the host culture

of Southeast Asia. This includes differences in language, religion, social norms, and values.

5.) Strategies of Acculturation: There are several strategies that Chinese individuals may employ as they acculturate, including:

- Assimilation: Adopting the cultural traits of the host society and shedding their own cultural identity.
- Separation: Maintaining one's cultural identity and resisting the influence of the host culture.
- Integration: Balancing the retention of one's cultural identity with the adoption of elements from the host culture.
- Marginalization: Rejecting both one's own culture and the host culture, often leading to a loss of cultural identity.
- Adaptation: Modifying one's behavior to fit the host culture while internally retaining one's original cultural values.

The Factors Influencing Acculturation: The choice of acculturation strategy can be influenced by various factors, such as:

- Societal Attitudes: The level of acceptance and integration offered by the host society.
- Economic Opportunities: The need to adopt certain cultural practices to access economic opportunities.
- Social Networks: The presence of established Chinese communities can provide support and reduce the need for acculturation.
- Personal Values: Individual preferences and values can influence the degree of acculturation.
- Impact of Acculturation: The process of acculturation can have significant implications for individuals and communities. It can lead to the creation of new cultural forms that blend elements from both the original and host cultures.
- Identity Formation: The development of a bicultural or multicultural identity.
- Social Cohesion: Improved social cohesion within the host society as cultural barriers are broken down and
- Cultural Loss: Potential loss of traditional cultural practices and values.

The Current Trends: In contemporary Southeast Asia, there is a growing recognition of the value of cultural diversity. This has led to a more inclusive approach to acculturation, where the contributions of Chinese communities are celebrated and integrated into the broader cultural fabric.

Knowledge from Research

The research explores the adaptation of Thai Buddhist monks to the digital era, focusing on their role in promoting morality and supporting Chinese students in Thailand, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. It addresses two main objectives:

1. **Analyzing the Role of Buddhist Monks:** This involves understanding how Buddhist monks promote virtues within the social networks of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era. The monks utilize direct propagation of core teachings, resembling the Buddha's methods, and adapt to digital culture to make teaching more accessible.
2. **Studying Methods for Promoting Virtues:** The research investigates the methods employed to promote virtues within the social networks of Chinese students in Thailand during the digital era. These methods include utilizing social media platforms, organizing special talks and lectures, engaging in dialogues and discussions, and providing emotional support and counseling.

The study focuses on Chinese students in Bangkok and surrounding areas, using in-depth data collection methods such as open-ended questionnaires and attitude questionnaires. Descriptive statistics are used for data analysis, revealing that Thai Buddhist monks played a significant role in promoting virtues, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, through the use of encouraging and inspirational language.

Overall, the research provides valuable insights into the adaptation of Thai Buddhist monks to the digital era and their efforts in promoting virtues among Chinese students in Thailand, especially amidst the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

The acculturation strategies of Chinese people in Southeast Asia are complex and multifaceted, reflecting the interplay between individual choices, societal pressures, and historical contexts. Understanding these strategies is crucial for promoting cultural harmony and social integration in the region.

The conclusion drawn from the research is that Thai Buddhist monks have successfully adapted to the digital era to continue their traditional role of promoting morality and supporting Chinese students in Thailand. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the monks played a significant role in promoting virtues within the social networks of Chinese students. Through the utilization of various methods such as direct propagation of core teachings, adaptation to digital culture, and the use of

encouraging and inspirational language, Thai Buddhist monks effectively reached out to Chinese students, providing them with moral support and guidance during stressful times. The study underscores the importance of the monks' role in promoting virtues and supporting the well-being of Chinese students in Thailand's digital age. It highlights the resilience and adaptability of traditional practices in the face of modern challenges, demonstrating the enduring relevance of Buddhist teachings in contemporary society.

The research contributes valuable insights into the ways in which Thai Buddhist monks have navigated the digital era to continue their mission of promoting morality and providing support to individuals, particularly amidst the complexities of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Suggestions

Based on the findings and conclusions of the research, several suggestions can be made for future studies and practical applications:

1. **Further Research:** Future studies could delve deeper into the specific impact of Buddhist teachings and practices on the well-being and moral development of Chinese students in Thailand. This could involve longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects of monk-led interventions on individuals' lives.
2. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Given the diverse cultural backgrounds of Chinese students in Thailand, it's essential to tailor Buddhist teachings and support methods to resonate with their cultural beliefs and values. Further research could explore culturally sensitive approaches to promoting virtues and supporting the well-being of Chinese students.
3. **Technology Integration:** As technology continues to play a significant role in people's lives, there's a need to explore innovative ways of integrating technology into monk-led initiatives. Future research could investigate the effectiveness of digital platforms, such as mobile applications or online forums, in disseminating Buddhist teachings and providing support to individuals.
4. **Community Engagement:** Engaging the broader community, including Thai and Chinese stakeholders, could enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of monk-led initiatives. Future research could explore community-based approaches to promoting virtues and supporting the well-being of Chinese students, fostering collaboration and partnership among various stakeholders.
5. **Capacity Building:** Building the capacity of monks and other stakeholders involved in promoting virtues and supporting individuals' well-being is crucial. Future research could focus on developing training programs and resources to

equip monks with the skills and knowledge needed to address the unique challenges faced by Chinese students in Thailand.

6. **Evaluation and Monitoring:** Continuous evaluation and monitoring of monk-led initiatives are essential to assess their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. Future research could develop robust evaluation frameworks and metrics to measure the impact of interventions on individuals' moral development and well-being over time.

By addressing these suggestions, future research and practical initiatives can contribute to the ongoing efforts to promote virtues and support the well-being of Chinese students in Thailand, ultimately fostering a more compassionate and harmonious society.

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