



Guidelines for Personnel Management Based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma) in Private Higher Education Institutions in Bangkok Metropolitan Area

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Abstract

Effective personnel management in higher education requires not only modern administrative practices but also a strong ethical foundation. In Buddhist-oriented contexts, the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma) provide a moral framework emphasizing wisdom, moderation, and respect for individuals and communities. This study aimed to examine the current state of personnel management based on the Sappurisa-dhamma, compare perceptions across personal factors, and propose personnel management guidelines for private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area. An explanatory sequential mixed methods design was employed. Quantitative data were collected from 70 administrators, faculty members, and graduate-level personnel selected through cluster random sampling from five private universities. Qualitative data were obtained from 10 purposively selected key informants to develop practical guidelines. Research instruments included a validated questionnaire (IOC = 0.80-1.00, reliability α = 0.95) and a semi-structured interview guide. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-tests, and one-way ANOVA, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings indicated that personnel management based on the Sappurisa-dhamma was practiced at a high level overall. Parisanññuta (knowing the community) received the highest rating, while Mattannuta (knowing moderation) was comparatively lower. No significant differences were found by gender, age, or educational level; however, work experience significantly influenced perceptions of Atthannuta (knowing the result) and Mattannuta. Integrating the

Sappurisa-dhamma into personnel management enhances ethical leadership, community engagement, and organizational harmony in private higher education institutions.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, 7 Principles of Good People, Private Higher Education, Ethics in Management, Private Higher Education

Introduction

Human resource management in private higher education institutions plays a vital role in the overall success and sustainability of institutional administration (Promvong et al., 2023b). Beyond efficiency and technical competence, effective personnel management increasingly requires strong ethical foundations to guide decision-making, leadership behavior, and personnel development (Suthongsa et al., 2023). In the Thai context, particularly within Buddhist-oriented educational environments, ethical administration is deeply rooted in moral principles derived from Buddhist teachings. (Worapongpat, 2025a). One of the most comprehensive ethical frameworks relevant to organizational management is the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma).

The Sappurisa-dhamma consists of seven interrelated qualities: Dhammannuta (knowing the cause), Atthannuta (knowing the result), Attannuta (knowing oneself), Mattannuta (knowing moderation), Kāḷannuta (knowing the right time), Parisaññānuta (knowing the community), and Puggalaññuta (knowing individuals). (Worapongpat, 2025b). These qualities emphasize rational judgment, self-awareness, ethical restraint, social sensitivity, and respect for individual differences. (Worapongpat, 2025c). When applied to human resource management, the Sappurisa-dhamma provides a moral framework that supports fairness, transparency, accountability (Worapongpat, 2025d) and harmonious organizational relationships elements that are critical for personnel management in higher education institutions.

Although human resource management in private higher education institutions has been widely recognized as a key factor contributing to organizational effectiveness and long-term sustainability, these institutions continue to face multiple challenges (Worapongpat, 2025e). Rapid changes in laws, policies, and regulatory requirements have increased the complexity of HR operations, leading to higher risks related to personnel administration, internal control, and governance (Worapongpat, 2025f). Consequently, human resource departments are required not only to improve efficiency and service quality but also to ensure ethical conduct, equity, and transparency in all personnel-related processes. However, existing human resource management practices often emphasize modern management

techniques and technological integration, while ethical dimensions particularly those grounded in indigenous moral frameworks remain insufficiently articulated.

In the Bangkok Metropolitan Area, where private higher education institutions operate in highly competitive and dynamic environments, administrators must balance performance demands with ethical responsibilities toward faculty, staff, and stakeholders. (Worapongpat, 2025g). The application of the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person offers a culturally relevant approach to addressing these challenges by integrating ethical awareness into personnel planning, recruitment, development, evaluation, and retention. (Worapongpat, 2025h). Nevertheless, empirical evidence regarding the current state of personnel management based on the Sappurisa-dhamma and its variation across demographic characteristics remains limited.

Previous studies have highlighted that ethical environments significantly enhance human resource performance, organizational trust, and educational outcomes (Worapongpat et al., 2025). Yet, there is a lack of systematic research examining how the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person are applied in personnel management practices within private higher education institutions, particularly in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area. (Worapongpat et al., 2025). Moreover, understanding differences in perceptions of ethical personnel management based on demographic variables such as gender, age, educational level, and work experience is essential for developing effective and context-specific management guidelines.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the current state of personnel management based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person in private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area, to compare perceptions across key demographic variables using quantitative analysis, and to propose practical guidelines for personnel management grounded in the Sappurisa-dhamma. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of ethically informed human resource management practices that are both culturally appropriate and practically applicable within the context of private higher education.

Research objectives

1. To examine the current state of human resource management based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma) in private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

2. To compare perceptions of human resource management based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma) in private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area, classified by gender, age, educational level, and work experience.

3. To develop guidelines for human resource management based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma) for private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

Conceptual framework

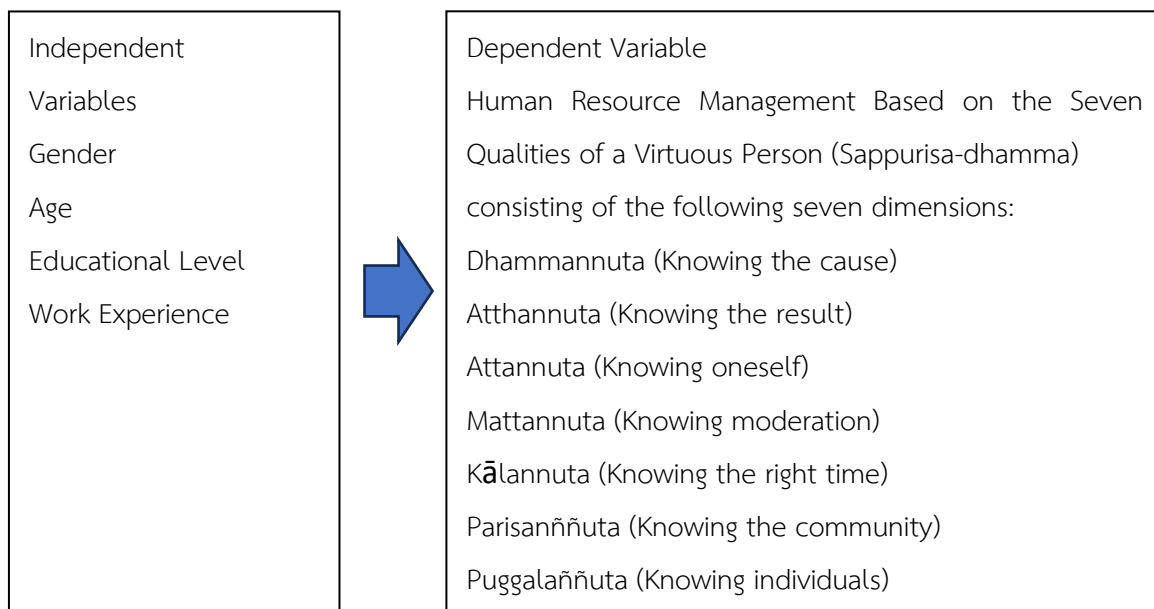


Figure 1 Illustration of Research Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between demographic characteristics of personnel (gender, age, educational level, and work experience) and human resource management practices based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma). The findings from this relationship are used to develop practical guidelines for ethical and effective personnel management in private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

Methodology

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design, in which quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data collection to further

explain and elaborate on the quantitative findings. This design was selected to ensure that the development of human resource management guidelines based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma) was grounded in empirical evidence and enriched by in-depth perspectives from key informants.

Phase 1: Quantitative Research

1. Population and Sample

The population consisted of 1,106 personnel affiliated with private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area offering graduate programs in Educational Administration and Business Administration (Master's and Doctoral levels), including full-time faculty members, academic experts, and graduate-level personnel from related disciplines during the second semester of the academic year 2024. The institutions included Shinawatra University, Rangsit University, Sripatum University, Bangkok University, and Mahanakorn University.

A total of 70 participants were selected using cluster random sampling, with universities serving as the sampling units. The sample represented personnel from the five selected private higher education institutions.

2. Research Instrument

The quantitative research instrument was a structured questionnaire developed based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma). The questionnaire consisted of two parts:

Part 1: Current conditions of human resource management practices based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person in private higher education institutions.

Part 2: Perceptions of personnel management practices classified by gender, age, educational level, and work experience.

The questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert-type rating scale.

3. Instrument Quality

The quality of the questionnaire was ensured through expert review and pilot testing. Content validity was assessed by three experts using the Index of Item–Objective Congruence (IOC), with values ranging from 0.80 to 1.00. A pilot test was conducted with 30 individuals outside the research sample. Item discrimination ranged from 0.25 to 0.75, and reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha yielded a coefficient of 0.95.

4. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Inferential statistical analyses included independent samples t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare perceptions across demographic variables.

Phase 2: Qualitative Research

1. Participants

The qualitative phase involved 10 key informants, including administrators and academic experts from private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on their experience and involvement in personnel management, in order to support the development of human resource management guidelines aligned with the Sappurisa-dhamma.

2. Research Instrument

The qualitative research instrument was a semi-structured interview guide developed from the results of the quantitative phase. The interview questions focused on explaining quantitative findings and exploring practical approaches to applying the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person in personnel management.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through in-depth interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. The qualitative findings were used to elaborate on quantitative results and to formulate practical guidelines for human resource management based on the Sappurisa-dhamma.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings.

The results from both research phases were integrated during the interpretation stage. Quantitative findings provided an overall picture of personnel management practices, while qualitative insights contributed to the development of context-specific and ethically grounded guidelines for personnel management in private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

Research results

This section presents the research findings in accordance with the research objectives. The results are organized into three parts: (1) the current state of human resource management based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma), (2) comparisons of perceptions classified by demographic variables, and (3) guidelines for personnel management derived from qualitative findings.

Objective 1: Current State of Personnel Management Based on the Sappurisa-dhamma

The results indicate that personnel in private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area perceived human resource management practices based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person at the highest overall level ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 0.36$). This reflects a strong integration of ethical principles rooted in the Sappurisa-dhamma within personnel management practices.

Table 1 presents an overall summary of personnel management practices based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person.

No.	Sappurisa-dhamma in Personnel Management	Mean (M)	SD	Interpretation	Rank
1	Dhammannuta (Knowing the cause)	4.55	0.41	Highest	6
2	Atthannuta (Knowing the result)	4.60	0.31	Highest	5
3	Attannuta (Knowing oneself)	4.49	0.36	High	7
4	Mattannuta (Knowing moderation)	4.68	0.38	Highest	3
5	Kāḷannuta (Knowing the right time)	4.68	0.36	Highest	4
6	Parisaññānuta (Knowing the community)	4.78	0.29	Highest	1
7	Puggalaññānuta (Knowing individuals)	4.70	0.39	Highest	2
Overall		4.64	0.36	Highest	

Among the seven qualities, Parisaññānuta (knowing the community) received the highest mean score ($M = 4.78$), followed by Puggalaññānuta (knowing individuals) ($M = 4.70$) and Mattannuta (knowing moderation) ($M = 4.68$). These findings suggest that administrators emphasize participatory management, sensitivity to individual differences, and moderation in resource and personnel management. Although Attannuta (knowing oneself) received the lowest mean score, it remained at a high level, indicating opportunities for further development in reflective and self-aware leadership.

Objective 2: Comparison of Perceptions Classified by Demographic Variables

Gender and Educational Level

The findings revealed no statistically significant differences in perceptions of personnel management based on the Sappurisa-dhamma when classified by gender and educational level.

($p > 0.05$). This indicates that ethical personnel management practices were perceived consistently across these groups.

Age

Due to an insufficient number of respondents in certain age categories, comparisons by age group did not yield statistically interpretable results. Therefore, age was not identified as a significant factor influencing perceptions in this study.

Work Experience

In contrast, work experience demonstrated statistically significant differences in several dimensions of the Sappurisa-dhamma. Personnel with 11-15 years of work experience reported significantly higher perceptions of personnel management practices related to Atthannuta (knowing the result), Mattannuta (knowing moderation), Kāḷannuta (knowing the right time), and Puggalaññuta (knowing individuals) ($p < 0.05$). These results suggest that professional experience enhances understanding and appreciation of ethical and situationally appropriate human resource management practices.

Table 2 Comparison of Personnel's Perceptions of Human Resource Management Based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person Classified by Work Experience.

Sappurisa-dhamma Dimension	< 5 Years (M ± SD)	5-10 Years (M ± SD)	11-15 Years (M ± SD)	≥ 16 Years (M ± SD)	Significance
Atthannuta (Knowing the Result)	4.54 ± 0.34	4.58 ± 0.29	4.68 ± 0.21	4.60 ± 0.20	$p < 0.05$
Mattannuta (Knowing Moderation)	4.62 ± 0.38	4.56 ± 0.44	4.81 ± 0.33	4.62 ± 0.29	$p < 0.05$
Kāḷannuta (Knowing the Right Time)	4.65 ± 0.36	4.50 ± 0.48	4.86 ± 0.26	4.67 ± 0.30	$p < 0.05$
Puggalaññuta (Knowing Individuals)	4.64 ± 0.44	4.54 ± 0.50	4.84 ± 0.26	4.73 ± 0.31	$p < 0.05$

Note: Only dimensions with statistically significant differences are presented.

Personnel with 11-15 years of work experience consistently reported higher perceptions of human resource management practices based on Atthannuta, Mattannuta, Kāḷannuta, and Puggalaññuta. These findings suggest that increased professional experience enhances awareness of ethical decision-making, moderation, timeliness, and individual consideration in personnel management.

Objective 3: Guidelines for Personnel Management Based on the Sappurisa-dhamma

The qualitative findings from in-depth interviews were used to explain the quantitative results and to develop practical guidelines for personnel management based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person. The synthesized guidelines are as follows:

Human resource planning and decision-making should be guided by Dhammannuta and Atthannuta, emphasizing careful consideration of causes, consequences, and long-term organizational impact.

Administrators should practice Attannuta and Mattannuta by demonstrating self-awareness, ethical restraint, and moderation in performance evaluation, workload allocation, and resource utilization.

Kāḷannuta should inform timely communication and administrative actions, ensuring that personnel receive accurate information and appropriate support at the right time.

Parisanññuta should be integrated into HR practices through participatory decision-making, collaboration, and engagement with institutional and community stakeholders.

Puggalaññuta should guide personnel development, recognizing individual differences, promoting fairness, and motivating personnel through appropriate recognition and support.

These guidelines provide a practical and ethically grounded framework for enhancing human resource management in private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area.

Discussion

The findings related to the first research objective indicate that overall human resource management based on the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person (Sappurisa-dhamma) in private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area was perceived at the highest level ($M = 4.64$). This suggests that ethical principles derived from Buddhist philosophy such as understanding causes and consequences, moderation, self-awareness, and respect for individuals are strongly reflected in personnel management practices. The Sappurisa-dhamma framework emphasizes justice, moral reasoning, and harmonious relationships, which are essential elements of ethical leadership and contribute to personnel satisfaction and motivation. These findings are consistent with (Kaewsrikhao

et al., 2025) previous studies highlighting that ethically grounded administration enhances personnel development and organizational effectiveness

With regard to the second research objective, the results revealed that *Parisaṇṇuta* (knowing the community) and *Puggalaṇṇuta* (knowing individuals) received the highest ratings among the seven qualities. This indicates that private higher education institutions place strong emphasis on participatory management, community engagement, and recognition of individual differences. Such practices align with participative management theory, which (Paethaisong & Thongdee, 2023a) posits that employee involvement and mutual recognition enhance organizational commitment, collaboration, and productivity. The emphasis on these two qualities reflects contemporary human resource management principles that prioritize employee engagement, inclusiveness, and supportive organizational climates

In relation to the third research objective, the findings demonstrated that perceptions of human resource management based on the *Sappurisa-dhamma* did not differ significantly by gender, age, or educational level. However, work experience emerged as a significant factor, as summarized in Table 2. Personnel with 11-15 years of work experience reported significantly higher perceptions in several dimensions, including *Atthannuta* (knowing the result), *Mattannuta* (knowing moderation), *Kālaṇṇuta* (knowing the right time), and *Puggalaṇṇuta* (knowing individuals). These results suggest that ethical sensitivity and situational judgment in personnel management are strengthened through accumulated professional experience.

From an ethical perspective, these findings are consistent with ethical leadership theory, which emphasizes that moral reasoning, fairness, and contextual awareness develop over time through reflective practice and real-world decision-making. From a human resource management standpoint, the dimensions that differed significantly correspond to core HRM competencies, such as strategic decision-making, equitable resource allocation, timely communication, and individualized personnel development. In addition, these results align with experiential learning theory, which asserts that knowledge and ethical competence are constructed through experience and reflection (Promvong, et al., 2023a). The explanatory sequential mixed methods design further strengthened the interpretation of these findings, as qualitative insights helped translate abstract ethical principles into practical personnel management guidelines.

Overall, the findings confirm that integrating the *Sappurisa-dhamma* into human resource management not only aligns with Buddhist ethical values but also complements modern HRM theories. The combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches enabled a comprehensive understanding

of both the extent and practical application of ethical personnel management in private higher education institutions.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Private Higher Education Institutions

Private higher education institutions in the Bangkok Metropolitan Area are encouraged to continue and strengthen the integration of the Seven Qualities of a Virtuous Person into human resource management policies and practices. Emphasis should be placed on ethical leadership development, participatory management, and individualized personnel support. Institutions should also provide systematic training and professional development programs that explicitly incorporate the Sappurisa-dhamma, particularly for early-career personnel, in order to foster ethical awareness and consistency in personnel management practices.

Recommendations for Policy Makers and Educational Authorities

Educational authorities and policy makers should promote the adoption of ethical frameworks, such as the Sappurisa-dhamma, as guiding principles for personnel management in higher education institutions. Developing clear policy guidelines, evaluation criteria, and institutional support mechanisms for ethical human resource management can enhance transparency, accountability, and sustainable development within the education system.

Recommendations for further research

Future research should expand the scope of study to include public universities and institutions in other regions of Thailand to enable comparative analysis across different educational contexts. In addition, further qualitative or longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how ethical principles based on the Sappurisa-dhamma are internalized and practiced by personnel over time, as well as the challenges and best practices associated with ethical human resource management.

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