

The 4 Sublime States of Mind for Educational Administrators*

Phrabuddhivajiramedhi¹, Phramaha Sombat²

Kamonchanok Sumrej³, Sub I.t.Phatphong Nilobol⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Mahamakut Buddhist University, Isan Campus

*Corresponding author e-mail: samai.phasuko@gmail.com

Abstract

A good educational administrator should be well equipped with both knowledge and skills. Principles of management, leadership and morality and ethics these will be indicators of the competence of educational administrators. Creating morality and ethics fours in administration is one of the important things for administrators to be able to operate smoothly and achieve the goals of organization with efficiency and effectiveness. This article, the author aims to connect the guidelines for promoting the dominance of people according to the Four Brahma Vihara for educational administrators in the 21st century by applying the Four Brahma Vihara principles. By connecting to see the importance of applying moral principles in management to promote morality and ethics for executives and for the benefit of the organization as a whole. Therefore, educational administrators, who are like ship captains who lead crew towards the goals of educational institutes, should have moral principles to use in managing people. The four Brahma Vihara principles, consisting of Metta, Karuna, Mudita, and Upekkha, are relevant to human dominance and are easy to remember which educational administrators can apply to suit the situation within their own educational institutions in order to keep up with the changing times.

Keywords: Four sublime states of mind, Education Administrators

Introduction

At present, educational institution management encounters numerous challenges, particularly arising from perceptions of unfairness among subordinates. For example, individuals who devote significant effort and commitment to their work often

* Accepted 28 December 2025

do not receive compensation or recognition commensurate with their performance. If educational administrators were to apply personnel management principles based on the **Four Brahmavihāras**, existing problems could be effectively alleviated.

According to the theoretical framework of the Four Brahmavihāras, these principles refer to the noble qualities for living, the exalted states of mind, and the virtuous code of conduct that governs human behavior toward all beings in a righteous and wholesome manner. The Four Brahmavihāras consist of:

1. **Mettā** – loving-kindness, goodwill, and the sincere wish for others to be happy;
2. **Karuṇā** – compassion, sympathy, and the desire to help others overcome suffering;
3. **Muditā** – sympathetic joy, rejoicing in the happiness and success of others; and
4. **Upekkhā** – equanimity, impartiality, and mental balance grounded in wisdom, maintaining fairness without bias arising from affection or aversion.

The application of the Four Brahmavihāras by school administrators highlights the necessity for leaders to maintain balance in their treatment of subordinates. Administrators must balance mettā, karuṇā, and muditā with upekkhā—remaining impartial and preventing violations of rules and regulations. Excessive compassion that undermines organizational discipline, or rigid adherence to rules devoid of kindness, may equally lead to inefficiency and organizational damage. Effective leaders must avoid such imbalance and foster discipline among those under their supervision.

Developing individual competencies as mechanisms driving organizational goals inevitably involves various challenges, especially in working collaboratively with others. Leaders expect honesty, responsibility, diligence, punctuality, and commitment from personnel, while subordinates likewise desire leaders who understand their feelings and workplace challenges. When dissatisfaction, low morale, or lack of motivation arises, organizational efficiency declines, adversely affecting overall performance. Management

efforts may fail if individuals prioritize personal gain, exhibit greed, anger, or delusion, exploit others, or neglect responsibility.

Consequently, the researcher is interested in studying the application of the Four Brahmavihāras in educational administration as a guideline for promoting moral and ethical leadership among school administrators, aligning with societal expectations and enhancing the effectiveness of educational management.

Educational Administrators

1. Meaning and Importance of Educational Administrators

Pranee Riwthong (2007: 12) defines educational administrators as individuals who employ managerial skills and leadership capabilities to coordinate academic activities and collaborate with colleagues to achieve educational goals effectively and efficiently, earning recognition both within and outside the institution.

Sasitip Tipmo (2009: 14) states that educational administrators are professional personnel responsible for managing educational institutions from early childhood to sub-degree higher education levels, leading schools toward goal attainment through effective administrative practices.

Penpitchaya Phaothong (2011: 21) defines educational administrators as individuals who undertake actions enabling learners to grow and develop toward intended objectives, designating teachers as agents of implementation.

Charan Lertchamigr (2011: 11) views educational administrators as those responsible for setting directions, planning, supervising, monitoring, and evaluating institutional performance to achieve established goals.

Bradford and Cohen (1984: 27) describe educational administrators as respected individuals who serve as exemplary role models, offering guidance and assistance to those around them.

Yukl (1998: 32) defines administrators as individuals endowed with authority and dynamic power, capable of adapting behavior to achieve success.

Educational administrators play a pivotal role in determining organizational success by establishing direction, planning, coordinating, motivating personnel, and

enhancing institutional capacity. Therefore, recognizing their importance is essential for ensuring effective and efficient educational operations.

Natthayan Phothichatharn (2010: 13) emphasizes that educational administrators are the highest leaders in institutions, managing resources through planning, organizing, leading, and controlling to achieve institutional goals through collaboration.

In summary, educational administrators are key leaders responsible for guiding, managing, and developing educational institutions effectively. They must possess professional competence, ethical standards, adaptability, and leadership qualities to ensure sustainable success.

2. Roles of Educational Administrators

Educational administrators significantly influence the direction and success of education management across academic affairs, personnel management, resource utilization, and learning environments. Their roles encompass academic leadership, administrative coordination, and community engagement.

In the digital era, administrators must promote the integration of digital technologies into teaching and management processes to foster innovation and efficiency (Thanakrit Pranno, 2023). They are also responsible for workforce planning, recruitment, professional development, performance evaluation, and staff welfare (Jiraporn Meesuk, 2020), as well as fostering collaboration with parents, communities, and external organizations (Pongsathon Prajee, 2020).

Hersey and Blanchard (1993: 103) categorize administrative roles into three groups:

1. Interpersonal roles as organizational heads and leaders;
2. Informational roles as information centers; and
3. Decision-making roles involving innovation, conflict resolution, and problem management.

In conclusion, educational administrators must plan strategically, allocate resources effectively, motivate personnel, and adapt to change using sound judgment and leadership skills to achieve institutional objectives.

The Four Brahmavihāras

1. Meaning of the Four Brahmavihāras

The Four Brahmavihāras are noble states of mind governing virtuous conduct toward all beings (Somdet Phra Ñāṇasamvara, 2013). They consist of mettā, karuṇā, muditā, and upekkhā, representing loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity respectively.

Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto) defines the Four Brahmavihāras as principles essential for ethical living, impartial conduct, and harmonious coexistence.

Jakkrid Phodaphon (2022) emphasizes that the Brahmavihāras guide individuals of noble character in fostering peace and social harmony through love, compassion, joy, and impartiality.

2. Components of the Four Brahmavihāras

Mettā (Loving-kindness) refers to goodwill and the sincere wish for others' happiness, characterized by benevolence and non-hostility.

Karuṇā (Compassion) denotes the desire to alleviate others' suffering, motivating supportive actions through empathy and concern.

Muditā (Sympathetic Joy) involves rejoicing in others' success and well-being without envy, fostering positive interpersonal relations.

Upekkhā (Equanimity) signifies impartiality and mental balance grounded in wisdom, enabling fair judgment without bias.

Application of the Four Brahmavihāras in Educational Leadership

1. **Mettā** enables administrators to treat subordinates as colleagues rather than mere subordinates, fostering trust, morale, and cooperation.
2. **Karuṇā** encourages administrators to support staff during professional or personal challenges, promoting motivation and well-being.
3. **Muditā** allows administrators to celebrate staff achievements sincerely, enhancing motivation and professional growth.

4. **Upekkhā** ensures impartial decision-making, especially in conflict resolution, based on fairness and evidence rather than favoritism.

Educational administrators, like captains steering a ship, must apply the Four Brahmavihāras to guide personnel toward shared goals amid societal change and competition.

Conclusion

The Four Brahmavihāras—mettā, karuṇā, muditā, and upekkhā—represent advanced moral virtues that educational administrators can apply across all eras to manage and inspire personnel effectively. Successful administration relies not only on task management but equally on people management. By integrating these principles into daily practice and adapting them to contemporary contexts, administrators can cultivate ethical leadership, organizational harmony, and sustainable institutional success.

According to the Guidelines attached below as in:

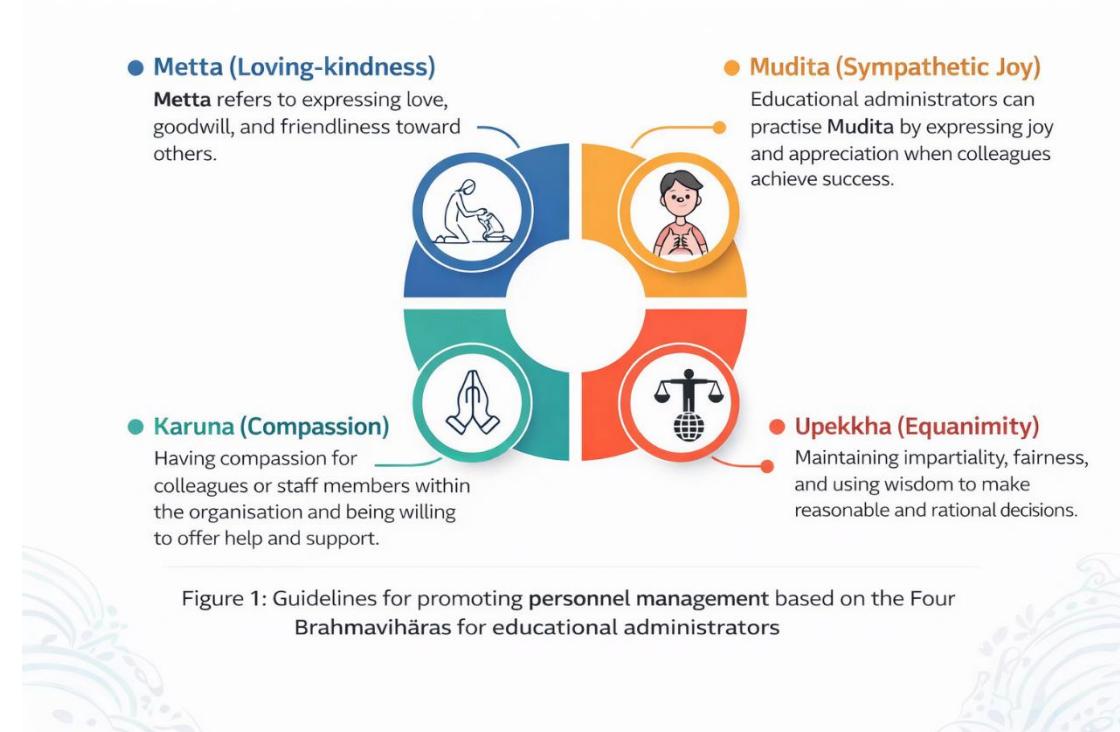


Image 1. Guidelines for promoting good conduct based on the Four Sublime States of Mind (Brahma Vihara 4) for school administrators.

References

Bradfor, D. L., & Cohen, A. R. (1984). *Managing for Excellence: The Guide to Developing High- Performance in Contemporary Organizations*. pp. 338-339 New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Chakkrit Phodaphon. (2022). Leadership based on the Four Brahmavihāras (pp. 2-3). Bangkok: Sukkhaphapjai Publishing.

Charan Lertjameekorn. (2011). School administration in the 21st century (p. 11). Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Book Center.

Chinawonsirivat, Somdet Phra Sangharaja Chao Krom Luang. (1998). *Abhidhānappadīpikā* (2nd ed.). Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University.

Harsey, P., & Blanchard, K. H. (1993). *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*. pp.1-3 New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Jiraporn Meesuk. (2020). Human resource management in educational institutions (p. 3). Bangkok: Ramkhamhaeng University Press.

Natthayan Phothachatharn. (2010). Principles and concepts of educational administration. Khon Kaen: Klangnanawittaya Printing.

Phenpitchaya Phaothong. (2011). Principles of modern educational administration (p. 21). Bangkok: Chandrakasem Rajabhat University.

Phongsathon Praji. (2020). Building community collaboration for education. Chiang Mai: Chiang Mai University Press.

Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto). (1999). Dictionary of Buddhist studies: Terminological compilation. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press.

Phra Dhammapitaka (P.A. Payutto). (2008). Buddhadhamma (Revised and expanded ed., 31st printing). Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press.

Phra Khru Niwitthurathorn. (2009). The Four Brahmavihāras and self-development. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Printing House.

Phra Maha Suthichai Thitachayo. (2003). Loving-kindness in Buddhism. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Publishing Co., Ltd.

Phra Phromkhunabhorn (P.A. Payutto) & Phra Dhammapitaka (Prayut Payutto). (2004). Dictionary of Buddhist studies: Doctrinal compilation. Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press.

Pranee Riuthong. (2007). Educational administration and leadership. Bangkok: Kasetsart University.

Royal Institute. (1999). Royal Institute Dictionary. Bangkok: Nanmee Books Publication.

Saddhammachotika Dhammācariya. (1997). Visuddhimagga (pp. 346–347). Bangkok: Thammasapha Printing House. ThaiJO Database.

Sasitip Thipmo. (2009). Educational leadership of school administrators as perceived by administrators, teachers, and parents under municipal schools in Saraburi Province (Master's thesis, M.Ed.). Valaya Alongkorn Rajabhat University, Pathum Thani, p. 14. ThaiJO Database.

Somdet Phra Yannasangwon. (2013). The Brahmavihāra Dhamma (pp. 1–3). Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University. ThaiJO Database.

Suphattha Pintapet. (2012). Educational administrative leadership in the 21st century (Online media, pp. 191–192). ThaiJO Database.

Thanakrit Pranno. (2023). Educational innovation in the digital era (pp. 3–4). Bangkok: Srinakharinwirot University Book Center.

Waichomphu, N., Nawarat, & Rapeepan Suwannatnachoti. (2017). The art of governing people: The Four Brahmavihāras for educational administrators in the 21st century. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4(1), 105–113. Princess of Naradhiwas University.

Yongyut Ketsakorn. (2009). Educational leadership. Bangkok: Suan Dusit Rajabhat University Book Center.

Yukl, G. A. (1998). *Leadership in Organizations*. 4th ed. pp.1-2 New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.