

A Study on Buddhist Dissemination of Wat Sri-Udomwong Meditation Center in Loei Province

Abstract

There were three objectives for studying the Buddhist dissemination of Wat Sri-Udomwong Meditation Center in Loei Province: 1) to study the Buddhism ways in disseminating Buddhism, 2) to study how Wat Sri-Udomwong Meditation Center disseminated Buddhism, and 3) to study the achievement of the center in disseminating Buddhism. The data collection of this qualitative research study was through documents and interviews. Descriptive analysis was applied.

The findings were as follows:

1) It was found that Buddhism had been disseminated through Dhamma preaching. Dhamma dialogue discussion provided an opportunity for teaching and learning the principle of the Buddha's teachings through questioning and responding on Dhamma issues. The Buddha gave advice to the people who asked questions to avoid problems on nonsense issues and taught them to focus on a rational way of thinking. The Buddha had an efficient way in disseminating Dhamma by analyzing the people who needed Dhamma learning, then categorized the Dhamma principles suitable to each category. This was an effective way for human development. When the number of Buddhist followers was higher, the Buddha managed his Buddhism dissemination systematically. Planning for Buddhism declaration with well-managed religious organization was conducted. Decentralization of authority was delivered to the ministry. Any instruction directed was followed based on self-motivation rather than in force. Meritocracy with Buddhist principles were always applied for supervising Buddhist monks. He taught people to practice in Buddhist ways in order to permanently eliminate their suffering. The people who followed Buddhist practice understood the Dhamma and found themselves actually released from misery. As a result, Buddhism has been flourished till nowadays.

2) The Buddhist dissemination of Wat Sri-Udomwong Meditation Center in Loei Province was found complete in all aspects of being a Buddhist mediation center for disseminating Buddhism. The monks who conducted the dissemination were well-educated of the Dhamma. They behaved as a model of moral practice for people to witness empirically and follow the practice. The Center, on behalf of Buddhist

organization, played its role in leading people to avoid immorality and to follow moral practice in Buddhist ways. The Center as a representative of the religious administrative organization provided people with religious education, welfare education, public assistance, public welfare, and Buddhist dissemination in application with modern technology. The Dhamma was presented focusing on analyzing each issue collaboratively. This method helped those people who were interested in meditation or learning Dhamma to better understand the Buddha's teaching principles and generously accept other people's opinions from different world views. The Dhamma was delivered through Dhamma preaching, traditional dissemination, radio networks, and religious ceremonies hosted by the people with strong faith in Buddhism to encourage all staff of the ceremonies and Buddhist followers to continue and achieve the goal of their religious activities.

3) The achievement of the center in disseminating Buddhism reflected in people, society, and Buddhism.

For people, it was found that they gained more knowledge and better understood on the principles of the Buddha's teachings. They were able to follow the Buddhist practices properly with faith, wisdom, and good attitudes towards Buddhism. Application of the knowledge and understanding led them to change their behaviors and had a better way of life. Such achievement was not only found in Thai people but also found in those foreigners who were interested in the meditation and Buddhist Dhamma.

For society, it was found that the problem on people's misunderstanding on Buddhism was solved, the strong faith in materialism was reduced, solving economic problems based on self-sufficiency was encouraged, and the unity of the community was promoted.

For Buddhism, it was witnessed that the Center achieved its goals in conducting its Buddhist mission, in disseminating Buddhism through various methods, in protecting Buddhism by applying knowledge, wisdom, and carefulness for disseminating and creating the right understanding and knowledge of Buddhism.