

Dissertation Title : Buddhist Integration for Quality of Life Development
of Members in the Thai Women Empowerment Funds
in Ayutthaya Province

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research were : 1) to study general conditions of Life Quality development of members of the Thai Women Empowerment Funds, 2) to study and analyze principle, concept, theory and Buddhism Integration that support the Life Quality development of members of the Thai Women Empowerment Funds in Ayutthaya Province and 3) to propose a model of Buddhism integration for life quality development of members of the Thai Women Empowerment Funds in Ayutthaya Province.

Methodology was the Qualitative Research, collected data from 25 key informants, purposefully selected from experts in the field with structured in-depth interview form by face-to-face in-depth-interviewing and also from 10 participants in focus group discussion. Data from both methods were analyzed by descriptive interpretation.

The Findings were as follows:

1. General conditions of life quality development of members of the Thai Women Empowerment Funds in Ayutthaya Province emphasized 4 aspects as, 1) physical development; the loan from the fund was used to create new careers supporting the members family welfares. The fund helped members access the loan with low interest and also the fund helped members with welfares in sickness and death, 2) mental development; the Thai Women Empowerment Funds helped members access equal opportunities in life quality development. They were assured to access to the Fund that was the base of equal opportunity, 3) social relationship; The Thai Women Empowerment Funds was the central arena for learning and exchanging the

woman's need and problems, supporting interpersonal relationship, enhancing the family relations including receiving the benefits after the member's death and 4) environmental aspect; members of the Thai Women Empowerment Funds were developed in managerial efficiency and various skills in line with the community needs as well as knowledge and experience exchanging among members.

2. Principle, concept, theory and Buddhism integration that supported the life quality development the Thai Women Empowerment Funds in Ayutthaya Province were that life quality development depended on physical environment. Those who lived in the good and rich environment must have better quality of life than those who lived in a poor resources and environment. The Buddhism integration that was applied in the life quality development of the members of the Thai Women Empowerment Funds were *Ditthadhammikattha* 4: virtues conducive to benefits in the present; virtues leading to temporal welfares and *Aparihaniyadhamma* 7: virtues leading never to decline but only to prosperity to manage the Thai Women Empowerment Funds for the stability and good life quality of the members of the Funds.

3. The model of Buddhism Integration for the life quality development of the Thai Women Empowerment Funds in Ayudhaya Province was the *Aparihaniyadhamma* 7: consisting of (1) regular and frequent meeting to exchange ideas about women's problems or problems of the families, (2) meeting in harmony, members knew the rules and regulations, doing duties in harmony and dispersed in harmony, (3) not to establish the rules and regulations that society did not accepted, must abide by the rules of laws accepted by majority of members, (4) worship and honour the elders, members must respect the right and dignity of each others, listen and open to the members' ideas and opinions, (5) protect women and girls from being forced and abducted, (6) respect and worship shrines and monuments that were the spiritual centers, and performed ceremonies before them according to the previous traditions and (7) support and protect the persons of religions for the refuges of the members.