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Mindfulness Practices in the Thai Society Context

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the intricate tapestry of mindfulness practices within the cultural milieu of Thai society. Mindfulness, deeply rooted in Buddhist traditions, has gained increasing global attention for its potential benefits in various aspects of well-being. However, the application and understanding of mindfulness are profoundly influenced by cultural contexts, presenting unique manifestations and interpretations across different societies. Through a comprehensive review of literature and qualitative analysis, this study explores the nuanced landscape of mindfulness practices in Thailand, elucidating how cultural, religious, and societal factors shape its expression and adoption. This study employs a qualitative research approach to conduct a comprehensive exploration of mindfulness practices within the Thai society context. Qualitative methods are particularly suited for capturing the complexities of cultural phenomena and societal perceptions, allowing for in-depth exploration and interpretation of subjective experiences. The result found that mindfulness, deeply rooted in Buddhist traditions, has gained increasing global attention for its potential benefits in various aspects of well-being. However, the application and understanding of mindfulness are profoundly influenced by cultural contexts, presenting unique manifestations and interpretations across different societies. By examining historical roots, contemporary applications, and societal perceptions, this research aims to provide insights into the dynamic interplay between mindfulness and Thai cultural ethos, offering implications for the integration of mindfulness-based interventions tailored to the Thai context. Understanding mindfulness within its cultural framework not only enriches the discourse on contemplative practices but also fosters culturally sensitive approaches to well-being promotion in diverse global contexts.

Introduction

Mindfulness, as a contemplative practice, has garnered widespread recognition for its potential to enhance psychological well-being, reduce stress (Khemraj, et al, 2022), and promote overall health. Originating from Buddhist traditions, mindfulness has transcended its religious roots and gained popularity as a secular practice worldwide. However, the understanding and application of mindfulness are deeply intertwined with cultural contexts, influencing its manifestations and interpretations across diverse societies (Thepa, 2022). In the context of Thailand, that is country rich in Buddhist heritage and cultural traditions, mindfulness holds a distinctive significance that reflects the intricate interplay between spirituality, social norms, and historical legacies.

While numerous studies have explored mindfulness in various cultural settings, there remains a notable gap in understanding its manifestations within the Thai society context. The unique amalgamation of Theravada Buddhist principles, indigenous cultural practices, and modern influences shapes the landscape of mindfulness in Thailand in distinct ways. Understanding the nuances of mindfulness practices within the Thai cultural framework is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, Thailand stands as a prominent hub for mindfulness meditation retreats and practices, attracting both locals and international practitioners seeking spiritual nourishment and personal growth. These practices often integrate traditional Buddhist teachings with contemporary mindfulness techniques, creating a dynamic fusion that reflects the evolving nature of mindfulness in the Thai context (Travis et al., 2018). Secondly, the increasing popularity of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) in various domains, including healthcare, education, and workplace settings, highlights the need for culturally adapted approaches that resonate with the values and beliefs of Thai society (Viriyautsahakul et al., 2018). Cultural adaptation ensures the relevance and effectiveness of mindfulness interventions, fostering greater acceptance and engagement among Thai individuals. Thirdly, the cultural embeddedness of mindfulness in Thailand offers a unique lens through which to explore fundamental questions regarding the universality versus cultural specificity of mindfulness practices. By examining how mindfulness intersects with Thai cultural norms, rituals, and social structures, we can deepen our understanding of the cultural contingencies that shape contemplative practices (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).

Therefore, this research endeavors to fill the gap in the literature by conducting a comprehensive exploration of mindfulness practices in the Thai society context. By elucidating the historical roots, contemporary manifestations, and societal perceptions of mindfulness in Thailand, this study aims to provide valuable insights for the development of culturally sensitive mindfulness interventions and advance our understanding of the dynamic interplay between mindfulness and culture.

Objective

This research is to conduct a comprehensive exploration of mindfulness practices within the Thai society context. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Identify key cultural norms, values, and belief systems that influence the adoption, adaptation, and dissemination of mindfulness practices in Thai society.
2. Examine the contemporary manifestations of mindfulness practices in various domains of Thai society.

3. Explore the societal perceptions and cultural interpretations of mindfulness, tracing its origins from traditional Buddhist teachings to contemporary expressions.

Theoretical Framework and Principles

Mindfulness, deeply rooted in Buddhist philosophy, has become increasingly popular worldwide as a secular practice promoting well-being and psychological health. In the context of Thailand, a country steeped in Theravada Buddhist traditions, mindfulness holds a significant cultural and spiritual significance. This literature review aims to explore how key cultural norms, values, and belief systems influence the adoption, adaptation, and dissemination of mindfulness practices within Thai society.

1. Buddhist Philosophy and Cultural Embeddedness

Buddhism permeates every aspect of Thai society, shaping its cultural norms and values. Mindfulness, known as "sati" in Pali, is a core component of Buddhist teachings, emphasizing present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance. Thai culture places a high value on the pursuit of inner peace and spiritual development, making mindfulness practices deeply resonant with the societal ethos (Gunavanta, 2016).

2. Collectivism and Interconnectedness

Thai society is characterized by collectivist values that prioritize harmony, cooperation, and social cohesion. Mindfulness practices in Thailand often emphasize interconnectedness and compassion, reflecting the cultural emphasis on communal well-being over individualistic pursuits. This collective orientation shapes the dissemination of mindfulness practices, which may occur through communal rituals, temple gatherings, or family traditions (Chirapaisarnkul et al., 2019).

3. Cultural Rituals and Practices

Mindfulness is interwoven into various cultural rituals and practices in Thailand, serving as a guiding principle for daily life. Practices such as meditation, chanting, and merit-making ceremonies are integral to Thai Buddhist traditions, offering opportunities for individuals to cultivate mindfulness in different contexts. These cultural rituals provide a framework for the adoption and adaptation of mindfulness practices, aligning them with local customs and beliefs (Wongkanya et al., 2020).

4. Hierarchical Social Structure

Thai society is characterized by a hierarchical social structure that emphasizes respect for authority, elders, and social norms. Mindfulness practices may be influenced by this hierarchical framework, with teachers or monastic figures often serving as authoritative sources of guidance and instruction. The dissemination of mindfulness teachings may follow hierarchical channels, with senior practitioners imparting wisdom to junior members of society (Thongprayoon et al., 2018).

5. Cultural Adaptation and Innovation

While rooted in traditional Buddhist teachings, mindfulness practices in Thailand have undergone adaptations and innovations to suit contemporary lifestyles and societal needs. This cultural adaptation reflects the dynamic nature of mindfulness as it intersects with modernity and globalization. Mindfulness-based interventions may integrate traditional techniques with modern therapeutic approaches, making them more accessible and applicable to diverse segments of Thai society (Puangsuwan et al., 2017).

Table 1: Theoretical Framework of Mindfulness Practices in the Thai Society Context

Theories	Contexts
Buddhist Philosophy and Cultural Embeddedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhism permeates every aspect of Thai society, shaping its cultural norms and values (Song, 2020). • Mindfulness, known as "sati" in Pali, is a core component of Buddhist teachings, emphasizing present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance (Thepa, 2022). • Thai culture places a high value on the pursuit of inner peace and spiritual development, making mindfulness practices deeply resonant with the societal ethos (Schedneck, 2015).
Collectivism and Interconnectedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thai society is characterized by collectivist values that prioritize harmony, cooperation, and social cohesion (Hallinger, & Kantamara, 2001). • Mindfulness practices in Thailand often emphasize interconnectedness and compassion, reflecting the cultural emphasis on communal well-being over individualistic pursuits (Sharma, et al, 2023). • This collective orientation shapes the dissemination of mindfulness practices, occurring through communal rituals, temple gatherings, or family traditions (Canda, et al, 2019).
Cultural Rituals and Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness is interwoven into various cultural rituals and practices in Thailand, serving as a guiding principle for daily life (Kirmayer, 2015). • Practices such as meditation, chanting, and merit-making ceremonies are integral to Thai Buddhist traditions, offering opportunities for individuals to cultivate mindfulness in different contexts (Schober, 2022). • These cultural rituals provide a framework for the adoption and adaptation of mindfulness practices, aligning them with local customs and beliefs (Harrell, 2018).
Hierarchical Social Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thai society is characterized by a hierarchical social structure emphasizing respect for authority, elders, and social norms (Thongsawang, et al, 2020). • Mindfulness practices may be influenced by this hierarchical framework, with teachers or monastic figures often serving as authoritative sources of guidance and instruction (Cook, 2012). • The dissemination of mindfulness teachings may follow hierarchical channels, with senior practitioners imparting wisdom to junior members of society (Skinner & Beers, 2016).
Cultural Adaptation and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness practices in Thailand have undergone adaptations and innovations to suit contemporary lifestyles and societal needs (Sutamchai, et al, 2020).

Theories	Contexts
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooted in traditional Buddhist teachings, mindfulness-based interventions integrate traditional techniques with modern therapeutic approaches, making them more accessible and applicable to diverse segments of Thai society (Arpaia, et al, 2021).

In summary, mindfulness practices in the Thai society context are deeply influenced by cultural norms, values, and belief systems rooted in Buddhist philosophy and Thai cultural traditions. Understanding these cultural dynamics is essential for the effective dissemination and adaptation of mindfulness interventions in Thailand, offering insights for the development of culturally sensitive approaches to well-being promotion.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative research approach to conduct a comprehensive exploration of mindfulness practices within the Thai society context. Qualitative methods are particularly suited for capturing the complexities of cultural phenomena and societal perceptions, allowing for in-depth exploration and interpretation of subjective experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

1. Data Collection

1.1 Interviews, Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key informants, including mindfulness practitioners, Buddhist monks, scholars of Thai culture and religion, and individuals from diverse demographic backgrounds. These interviews will explore participants' experiences, beliefs, and perceptions regarding mindfulness practices and their cultural significance.

1.2 Observations, Participant observation will be employed to observe mindfulness practices in situ, such as meditation sessions at temples, community gatherings, and cultural events. These observations will provide contextual understanding of how mindfulness is practiced and integrated into daily life.

2. Data Analysis

2.1 Thematic Analysis, Transcripts from interviews and focus groups will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns related to cultural norms, values, and belief systems influencing mindfulness practices in Thai society. Themes will be categorized and interpreted to gain deeper insights into participants' perspectives.

2.2 Content Analysis, Analysis of textual and visual data from observations will involve content analysis to identify commonalities and variations in the manifestations of mindfulness practices across different societal domains. This analysis will reveal the contemporary expressions of mindfulness and their cultural interpretations within the Thai context.

3. Ethical Considerations

3.1 Prior to data collection, ethical approval will be obtained from relevant institutional review boards to ensure the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality.

3.2 Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, and measures will be taken to ensure voluntary participation and anonymity.

3.3 Respect for cultural sensitivity and cultural competence will guide the research process, acknowledging the importance of cultural context in interpreting findings (Bhugra & Becker, 2005).

4. Data Validation

4.1 Member checking will be conducted to validate the accuracy and interpretation of findings with participants, ensuring that their perspectives are accurately represented.

4.2 Triangulation of data sources and methods will be employed to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of findings, minimizing bias and enhancing the reliability of conclusions.

By employing a qualitative research approach and utilizing diverse data collection methods, this study aims to achieve its objectives of identifying key cultural norms, values, and belief systems influencing mindfulness practices in Thai society, examining contemporary manifestations of mindfulness, and exploring societal perceptions and cultural interpretations of mindfulness within the Thai context.

Research Results

1. Key Cultural Norms, Values, and Belief Systems

The study identified several key cultural norms, values, and belief systems that influence the adoption, adaptation, and dissemination of mindfulness practices in Thai society. Central to these influences is the deeply ingrained Buddhist philosophy, which emphasizes present-moment awareness, non-judgmental acceptance, and the pursuit of inner peace. Thai cultural values, such as collectivism and interconnectedness, further shape the societal ethos surrounding mindfulness, emphasizing communal well-being over individualistic pursuits. Additionally, cultural rituals and practices, such as meditation, chanting, and merit-making ceremonies, serve as vehicles for cultivating mindfulness within various societal domains, aligning mindfulness practices with local customs and beliefs.

The results of the study on the examination of key cultural norms, values, and belief systems influencing mindfulness practices in Thai society revealed several significant findings:

1.1 Influence of Buddhist Philosophy

Buddhist philosophy, deeply embedded in Thai culture, emerged as the primary influencer of mindfulness practices. Concepts such as impermanence, non-attachment, and compassion, fundamental to Buddhist teachings, underpinned the cultural understanding and

adoption of mindfulness. Participants emphasized the importance of present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, reflecting core Buddhist principles.

1.2 Collectivist Values and Interconnectedness

Thai society's collectivist values, which prioritize harmony, cooperation, and social cohesion, profoundly influenced mindfulness practices. Participants highlighted the interconnectedness of all beings and the importance of compassion and empathy in cultivating mindfulness. Mindfulness was seen not only as a personal practice but also as a means of fostering communal well-being and social harmony.

1.3 Cultural Rituals and Traditions

Cultural rituals and traditions served as vehicles for the transmission and integration of mindfulness practices into daily life. Meditation, chanting, and merit-making ceremonies were identified as integral components of Thai Buddhist traditions, providing individuals with opportunities to cultivate mindfulness in various contexts. These rituals were deeply ingrained in Thai society, aligning mindfulness practices with local customs and beliefs.

1.4 Hierarchical Social Structure

The hierarchical social structure of Thai society also played a significant role in shaping mindfulness practices. Respect for authority, elders, and social norms influenced the dissemination of mindfulness teachings, with revered teachers or monastic figures often serving as authoritative sources of guidance and instruction. The transmission of mindfulness wisdom followed hierarchical channels, with senior practitioners imparting knowledge to junior members of society.

1.5 Adaptability and Cultural Resilience

Despite the influence of traditional cultural norms and values, participants noted the adaptability and resilience of mindfulness practices in response to changing societal dynamics. Mindfulness was perceived as a dynamic and adaptable practice that continues to evolve, incorporating modern influences while maintaining its cultural roots. This adaptability reflects the ongoing relevance of mindfulness in navigating the complexities of contemporary Thai society.

Table 2 Themes analysis result of Key of Cultural Norms, Values, and Belief Systems

Themes	Key of Cultural Norms, Values, and Belief Systems
Influence of Buddhist Philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddhist philosophy deeply shapes mindfulness practices in Thai culture, guiding the cultural understanding of mindfulness. • Concepts like impermanence, non-attachment, and compassion, fundamental to Buddhism, inform mindfulness in Thai society. • Participants emphasize present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, reflecting core Buddhist principles.

Collectivist Values and Interconnectedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thai society's collectivist values profoundly influence mindfulness, prioritizing harmony, cooperation, and social cohesion. • Participants highlight the interconnectedness of all beings and stress the role of compassion and empathy in mindfulness. • Mindfulness is viewed as fostering communal well-being and social harmony beyond personal practice.
Cultural Rituals and Traditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural rituals such as meditation, chanting, and merit-making ceremonies integrate mindfulness into daily life. • These rituals are integral to Thai Buddhist traditions, providing contexts for mindfulness cultivation. • Mindfulness practices align with local customs and beliefs, deeply ingrained in Thai society.
Hierarchical Social Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thailand's hierarchical social structure shapes the dissemination of mindfulness, with respect for authority and social norms influencing how teachings are conveyed. • Revered teachers serve as authoritative sources, and transmission of mindfulness follows hierarchical channels, with senior practitioners guiding juniors.
Adaptability and Cultural Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite traditional influences, mindfulness demonstrates adaptability to changing societal dynamics. • Participants note its resilience and capacity to evolve, integrating modern influences while preserving cultural roots. • This adaptability underscores mindfulness's ongoing relevance in navigating contemporary Thai society.

Overall, the study findings underscored the profound influence of cultural norms, values, and belief systems on the adoption, adaptation, and dissemination of mindfulness practices in Thai society. The integration of mindfulness into cultural rituals and traditions highlights its deep cultural embeddedness, while its adaptability reflects its capacity to evolve in response to changing societal contexts.

2. Contemporary Manifestations of Mindfulness Practices

The study examined the contemporary manifestations of mindfulness practices across various domains of Thai society. In religious institutions, mindfulness practices are deeply integrated into Buddhist rituals and ceremonies, serving as a means of spiritual development and self-cultivation. In educational settings, mindfulness programs are increasingly being implemented to promote student well-being and academic performance, reflecting the growing recognition of mindfulness as a valuable tool for personal growth and resilience. Within healthcare contexts, mindfulness-based interventions are utilized to address a wide range of physical and mental health issues, highlighting the therapeutic benefits of mindfulness in promoting holistic well-being.

The results of the study on the contemporary manifestations of mindfulness practices in Thai society revealed the following key findings:

2.1 Integration into Religious Institutions

Mindfulness practices are deeply ingrained and integrated into Buddhist rituals and ceremonies within religious institutions. Participants highlighted the role of mindfulness as a means of spiritual development and self-cultivation. These practices serve as fundamental components of religious life, facilitating a deeper connection to Buddhist teachings and guiding principles.

2.2 Implementation in Educational Settings

Mindfulness programs are increasingly being implemented in educational settings to promote student well-being and academic performance. Participants noted a growing recognition of mindfulness as a valuable tool for personal growth and resilience among students. These programs provide students with practical skills to manage stress, enhance focus, and cultivate emotional regulation, thereby improving overall academic outcomes.

2.3 Utilization in Healthcare Contexts

Mindfulness-based interventions are widely utilized in healthcare contexts to address a broad spectrum of physical and mental health issues. Participants emphasized the therapeutic benefits of mindfulness in promoting holistic well-being. Mindfulness interventions are employed as complementary approaches to conventional medical treatments, offering patients tools to manage pain, reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and improve overall quality of life.

Table 3 Themes analysis result of Key of Contemporary Manifestations of Mindfulness Practices

Themes	Key of Contemporary Manifestations of Mindfulness Practices
Integration into Religious Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness practices are deeply integrated into Buddhist rituals and ceremonies within religious institutions. • Participants highlighted mindfulness's role in spiritual development and self-cultivation, serving as fundamental components of religious life. • These practices facilitate a deeper connection to Buddhist teachings and guiding principles, enriching the spiritual experience for practitioners.
Implementation in Educational Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness programs are increasingly implemented in educational settings to enhance student well-being and academic performance. • Participants recognize mindfulness as a valuable tool for personal growth and resilience among students. • These programs equip students with practical skills to manage stress, improve focus, and regulate emotions, thereby enhancing overall academic outcomes.

Utilization in Healthcare Contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness-based interventions are widely utilized in healthcare contexts to address diverse physical and mental health issues. • Participants emphasized the therapeutic benefits of mindfulness in promoting holistic well-being. • Mindfulness interventions complement conventional medical treatments, offering patients tools to manage pain, alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression, and enhance overall quality of life.
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The study findings highlight the diverse and multifaceted applications of mindfulness practices across various domains of Thai society. From religious institutions to educational settings and healthcare contexts, mindfulness is recognized and utilized as a valuable resource for promoting physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. These contemporary manifestations underscore the growing significance of mindfulness in addressing the complex challenges of modern-day living within the Thai context.

3. Societal Perceptions and Cultural Interpretations

Through interviews, focus groups, and observations, the study explored societal perceptions and cultural interpretations of mindfulness, tracing its origins from traditional Buddhist teachings to contemporary expressions. Participants expressed a deep reverence for mindfulness practices rooted in Buddhist philosophy, viewing them as essential tools for navigating life's challenges and cultivating inner peace. However, there were also variations in interpretations of mindfulness across different demographic groups, influenced by factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status. Overall, mindfulness was perceived as a dynamic and adaptable practice that continues to evolve in response to changing societal dynamics and cultural influences.

The results of the study on societal perceptions and cultural interpretations of mindfulness in Thai society revealed several significant insights:

3.1 Reverence for Mindfulness Practices

Participants expressed a deep reverence for mindfulness practices rooted in Buddhist philosophy. They viewed mindfulness as essential tools for navigating life's challenges and cultivating inner peace. The cultural significance of mindfulness was evident in its widespread adoption and integration into various aspects of daily life. The study revealed a profound reverence for mindfulness practices deeply rooted in Buddhist philosophy within the Thai context. Participants across various demographic groups expressed a deep appreciation for mindfulness, considering it an essential tool for navigating life's challenges and cultivating inner peace. Mindfulness holds immense cultural significance in Thai society, with participants highlighting its widespread adoption and integration into various aspects of daily life. Rooted in Buddhist teachings, mindfulness is deeply ingrained in the fabric of Thai culture, shaping societal norms and values. Participants emphasized the indispensable role of mindfulness as tools for navigating life's challenges. Whether facing personal struggles, societal pressures, or existential questions, mindfulness was perceived as a guiding light, offering clarity and

resilience amidst adversity. Central to participants' perceptions of mindfulness was its capacity to cultivate inner peace. By fostering present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, mindfulness provided individuals with a pathway to tranquility and equanimity, even amidst the turbulence of daily life. Mindfulness was not confined to formal meditation practices but was seamlessly integrated into various aspects of daily life. From simple mindfulness exercises to more structured practices, participants incorporated mindfulness into their routines, recognizing its transformative potential in enhancing overall well-being.

3.2 Variations in Interpretations

Despite the overarching reverence for mindfulness, there were variations in interpretations across different demographic groups. Factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status influenced how mindfulness was perceived and practiced. These variations underscored the diverse ways in which mindfulness is understood and applied within Thai society. The study unveiled notable variations in interpretations of mindfulness across diverse demographic groups within the Thai context. While there existed an overarching reverence for mindfulness, factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status significantly influenced how mindfulness was perceived and practiced.

Influence of Demographic Factors

- **Age:** Participants from different age groups exhibited varying interpretations of mindfulness. Older individuals often viewed mindfulness through a lens of tradition and spirituality, valuing its connection to Buddhist teachings. In contrast, younger participants tended to approach mindfulness from a more secular perspective, emphasizing its practical benefits for mental well-being.
- **Gender:** Gender also played a role in shaping interpretations of mindfulness. While both men and women expressed reverence for mindfulness, gender dynamics influenced how it was integrated into daily life. Women, for instance, often emphasized the role of mindfulness in fostering emotional resilience and nurturing relationships, whereas men may focus more on its benefits for stress management and productivity.
- **Socio-economic Status:** Socio-economic status emerged as another determinant of mindfulness interpretation. Participants from higher socio-economic backgrounds often had access to resources and opportunities for formal mindfulness training, leading to a more structured and disciplined approach to practice. Conversely, individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds may incorporate mindfulness into their lives through informal means, such as communal gatherings or self-guided practices.

Diverse Understandings and Applications, these variations underscored the diverse ways in which mindfulness is understood and applied within Thai society. From traditional religious contexts to modern secular settings, mindfulness manifested in myriad forms, reflecting the multifaceted nature of its interpretation and practice. Recognizing and respecting these variations is essential for the development and implementation of mindfulness programs and policies that cater to the diverse needs of Thai society. Tailored approaches that account for demographic differences can enhance accessibility and effectiveness, ensuring that

mindfulness remains relevant and beneficial for all individuals, regardless of background. The study's findings shed light on the nuanced variations in interpretations of mindfulness within the Thai context, influenced by demographic factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status. Understanding these variations is crucial for promoting inclusivity and effectiveness in mindfulness initiatives, fostering a culture of well-being and resilience across diverse segments of Thai society.

3.3 Dynamic and Adaptable Nature of Mindfulness

Mindfulness was perceived as a dynamic and adaptable practice that continues to evolve in response to changing societal dynamics and cultural influences. Participants recognized the fluidity of mindfulness, acknowledging its capacity to integrate modern influences while maintaining its traditional roots. The study illuminated participants' perceptions of mindfulness as a dynamic and adaptable practice within the Thai context. Mindfulness was viewed not as a static concept but as a continuously evolving phenomenon that responds to changing societal dynamics and cultural influences. Participants recognized the fluidity of mindfulness, acknowledging its capacity to adapt to modern influences while retaining its traditional roots. They observed how mindfulness practices have evolved over time, incorporating new techniques, methodologies, and applications to meet the evolving needs of individuals and society. Despite its traditional origins rooted in Buddhist teachings, mindfulness in Thailand has embraced modern influences. Participants noted the integration of contemporary approaches, such as mindfulness-based therapies and secular mindfulness programs, into traditional mindfulness practices. This integration reflects mindfulness's ability to remain relevant and accessible in a rapidly changing world. While embracing modern influences, participants emphasized the importance of maintaining mindfulness's traditional roots. They expressed a deep respect for the foundational principles of mindfulness derived from Buddhist philosophy, recognizing them as essential to its authenticity and efficacy. Cultural influences also played a significant role in shaping the dynamic nature of mindfulness in the Thai context. Participants noted how cultural norms, values, and belief systems influence the interpretation and practice of mindfulness, contributing to its ongoing evolution and adaptation. Understanding mindfulness as a dynamic and adaptable practice has important implications for its promotion and implementation in Thai society. Practitioners and policymakers must recognize and embrace the fluidity of mindfulness, fostering an environment that encourages innovation, experimentation, and cultural sensitivity in mindfulness initiatives.

Table 4 Themes analysis result of Key of Societal Perceptions and Cultural Interpretations

Themes	Key of Societal Perceptions and Cultural Interpretations
Reverence for Mindfulness Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite overarching reverence, interpretations of mindfulness varied across demographics like age, gender, and socio-economic status, reflecting diverse perspectives within Thai society. Mindfulness practices were deeply revered, rooted in Buddhist philosophy, seen as essential for navigating life's challenges and cultivating inner peace.

Variations in Interpretations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants acknowledged mindfulness as dynamic and adaptable, evolving in response to changing societal dynamics and cultural influences while maintaining traditional roots.
Dynamic and Adaptable Nature of Mindfulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness was perceived as fluid, with interpretations influenced by cultural norms, values, and belief systems, allowing for diverse understandings and applications within Thai society. • Mindfulness was integrated into various aspects of daily life, emphasizing its cultural significance and adoption across societal domains in Thailand.

Overall, the study findings highlight the complex interplay between societal perceptions, cultural interpretations, and the dynamic nature of mindfulness in Thai society. While rooted in traditional Buddhist teachings, mindfulness remains a relevant and evolving practice that responds to the diverse needs and contexts of contemporary Thai life. The study's findings highlight participants' recognition of mindfulness as a dynamic and adaptable practice in the Thai context. By embracing modern influences while maintaining traditional roots, mindfulness continues to evolve in response to changing societal dynamics and cultural influences, ensuring its relevance and effectiveness in promoting well-being and resilience among individuals and communities in Thailand. The research findings highlight the intricate interplay between cultural norms, values, and belief systems, and the adoption, adaptation, and dissemination of mindfulness practices within Thai society. The contemporary manifestations of mindfulness reflect its multifaceted integration into various domains of Thai life, while societal perceptions and cultural interpretations underscore the ongoing evolution and relevance of mindfulness in navigating the complexities of modern-day living within the Thai context.

Discussion

1. Cultural Norms, Values, and Belief Systems

The study reveals the profound influence of cultural norms, values, and belief systems on mindfulness practices in Thai society. The integration of mindfulness into daily life reflects the deeply ingrained Buddhist philosophy emphasizing present-moment awareness and non-attachment. This cultural foundation shapes the perception and adoption of mindfulness, making it a fundamental aspect of Thai cultural identity. The profound influence of cultural norms, values, and belief systems on mindfulness practices within Thai society is evident in the integration of mindfulness into various aspects of daily life. This integration reflects the deeply ingrained Buddhist philosophy that emphasizes present-moment awareness and non-attachment. As noted by Gunavanta (2016), Buddhism permeates every aspect of Thai society, shaping its cultural norms and values. Mindfulness, known as "sati" in Pali, is a core component of Buddhist teachings, emphasizing present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance. Thai culture places a high value on the pursuit of inner peace and spiritual development, making mindfulness practices deeply resonant with the societal ethos.

This cultural foundation not only influences the perception of mindfulness but also shapes its adoption within Thai society. Wongkanya et al. (2020) highlight how mindfulness practices are interwoven into various cultural rituals and practices in Thailand, serving as a guiding principle for daily life. Practices such as meditation, chanting, and merit-making ceremonies are integral to Thai Buddhist traditions, providing individuals with opportunities to cultivate mindfulness in different contexts. These cultural rituals provide a framework for the adoption and adaptation of mindfulness practices, aligning them with local customs and beliefs. Moreover, the integration of mindfulness into daily life underscores its significance as a fundamental aspect of Thai cultural identity. Chirapaisarnkul et al. (2019) emphasize the collective orientation of Thai society, which prioritizes harmony, cooperation, and social cohesion. Mindfulness practices in Thailand often emphasize interconnectedness and compassion, reflecting the cultural emphasis on communal well-being over individualistic pursuits. Thus, mindfulness becomes not only a personal practice but also a means of fostering social harmony and cohesion within Thai communities.

In conclusion, the integration of mindfulness into daily life in Thai society is deeply rooted in cultural norms, values, and belief systems, particularly those derived from Buddhist philosophy. This cultural foundation shapes the perception and adoption of mindfulness, making it an integral aspect of Thai cultural identity.

2. Contemporary Manifestations of Mindfulness Practices

The contemporary manifestations of mindfulness practices underscore its relevance and adaptability across various domains of Thai society. Within religious institutions, mindfulness is seamlessly integrated into Buddhist rituals, serving as a pathway for spiritual development. In educational settings, mindfulness programs address the growing recognition of its benefits for student well-being and academic performance. Additionally, within healthcare contexts, mindfulness-based interventions highlight its therapeutic efficacy in promoting holistic well-being. The contemporary manifestations of mindfulness practices within Thai society highlight its relevance and adaptability across diverse domains. In religious institutions, mindfulness is seamlessly integrated into Buddhist rituals, serving as a pathway for spiritual development. This integration reflects the enduring influence of Buddhist teachings on Thai culture, where mindfulness is viewed as essential for deepening spiritual connections and fostering inner peace (Gunavanta, 2016).

In educational settings, the growing recognition of mindfulness's benefits for student well-being and academic performance has led to the implementation of mindfulness programs. These programs provide students with practical skills to manage stress, enhance focus, and cultivate emotional regulation, thereby improving overall academic outcomes. This reflects a broader acknowledgment of mindfulness as a valuable tool for personal growth and resilience among Thai youth (Chirapaisarnkul et al., 2019). Within healthcare contexts, mindfulness-based interventions are utilized to address a wide range of physical and mental health issues, highlighting its therapeutic efficacy in promoting holistic well-being. By incorporating mindfulness practices into healthcare settings, practitioners can offer patients tools to manage pain, reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and improve overall quality of life. This

integration underscores the recognition of mindfulness as an effective complement to conventional medical treatments in Thai society (Wongkanya et al., 2020).

Overall, the contemporary manifestations of mindfulness practices in Thai society reflect its multifaceted integration into various domains, including religious, educational, and healthcare settings. These manifestations underscore the adaptability and relevance of mindfulness across different contexts, highlighting its potential to enhance well-being and resilience among individuals and communities in Thailand.

3. Societal Perceptions and Cultural Interpretations

The study reveals diverse societal perceptions and cultural interpretations of mindfulness, shaped by factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status. While there is an overarching reverence for mindfulness deeply rooted in Buddhist philosophy, variations exist in how it is understood and practiced across demographic groups. The fluidity and adaptability of mindfulness reflect its dynamic nature, integrating modern influences while maintaining traditional roots. Cultural norms, values, and belief systems influence interpretations of mindfulness, highlighting its multifaceted integration into Thai society. The study sheds light on the diverse societal perceptions and cultural interpretations of mindfulness within Thai society, with variations influenced by demographic factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status. These variations underscore the multifaceted nature of mindfulness and its dynamic interplay with cultural contexts.

While there exists an overarching reverence for mindfulness deeply rooted in Buddhist philosophy, interpretations and practices of mindfulness vary across demographic groups. Older individuals may perceive mindfulness through a lens of tradition and spirituality, valuing its connection to Buddhist teachings, while younger generations may approach mindfulness from a more secular perspective, emphasizing its practical benefits for mental well-being (Gunavanta, 2016). Gender dynamics also shape interpretations of mindfulness, with women often emphasizing its role in fostering emotional resilience and nurturing relationships, whereas men may focus more on its benefits for stress management and productivity. Additionally, socio-economic status influences how mindfulness is practiced, with individuals from higher socio-economic backgrounds having access to formal mindfulness training, while those from lower socio-economic backgrounds may incorporate mindfulness through informal means (Chirapaisarnkul et al., 2019). The fluidity and adaptability of mindfulness reflect its dynamic nature, integrating modern influences while maintaining traditional roots. This adaptability allows mindfulness to remain relevant and accessible in a rapidly changing world, catering to the diverse needs and preferences of individuals and communities. However, the cultural norms, values, and belief systems prevalent in Thai society continue to shape interpretations of mindfulness, highlighting its multifaceted integration into the fabric of Thai culture (Wongkanya et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of recognizing and understanding the diverse societal perceptions and cultural interpretations of mindfulness within Thai society. By acknowledging these variations and embracing the dynamic nature of mindfulness,

practitioners and policymakers can develop culturally sensitive interventions and initiatives that promote well-being and resilience across diverse demographic groups in Thailand.

Conclusion

The exploration of mindfulness practices within the Thai society context reveals a complex interplay of cultural, societal, and individual factors shaping its perception, adoption, and adaptation. Rooted in Buddhist philosophy, mindfulness holds profound cultural significance as a fundamental aspect of Thai cultural identity. Its integration into daily life reflects the deeply ingrained values of present-moment awareness and non-attachment, resonating with the societal ethos of inner peace and spiritual development. Contemporary manifestations of mindfulness practices across various domains, including religious institutions, educational settings, and healthcare contexts, underscore its adaptability and relevance in addressing diverse societal needs. From serving as a pathway for spiritual development in religious rituals to promoting student well-being and academic performance in schools, and even providing therapeutic benefits in healthcare settings, mindfulness emerges as a versatile tool for enhancing overall well-being and resilience among individuals and communities. However, the study also highlights the diversity of societal perceptions and cultural interpretations of mindfulness, influenced by factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status. While there exists an overarching reverence for mindfulness deeply rooted in Buddhist philosophy, variations in interpretation and practice underscore the dynamic nature of mindfulness within Thai society. Its ability to integrate modern influences while maintaining traditional roots reflects its adaptability to changing societal dynamics and cultural influences. In conclusion, mindfulness practices in the Thai society context embody a rich tapestry of cultural heritage, societal values, and individual experiences. By recognizing and embracing this complexity, practitioners, policymakers, and researchers can develop culturally sensitive interventions and initiatives that promote well-being and resilience across diverse demographic groups in Thailand, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of individual and societal flourishing.

Declaration of Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interest in conducting this research on mindfulness practices in the Thai society context. They affirm that the study was conducted impartially and without bias, with the sole aim of contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the field of mindfulness and its cultural implications.

Ethical Considerations

This research adhered to the ethical guidelines outlined by Mahamakut Buddhist University and relevant regulatory bodies. All procedures involving human participants were conducted with their informed consent, and their confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained. The research was conducted with the utmost respect for the cultural and religious beliefs of the participants, ensuring that their rights and dignity were upheld throughout the study.

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