



ISSN: 3056-9680 (Online)

Journal of Public and Private Issues: JPPI

Journal homepage: <https://so17.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/jppi>

E-mail: jppissues@gmail.com



Strategic leadership according to the four Brahmvihāra principles in the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office 1

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: May 2, 2024

Revised: August 21, 2024

Accepted: August 26, 2024

Keyword:

strategic leadership

Brahmvihāra principle

educational institution administrator

ABSTRACT

This research aims to achieve the following objectives: (1) to examine the conditions and challenges associated with strategic leadership grounded in the four Brahmvihāra principles among educational institution administrators under the jurisdiction of the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 1; and (2) to compare the strategic leadership practices based on these Brahmvihāra principles among the administrators. The study sample comprised 70 academic department heads from educational institutions within the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 1, selected using simple random sampling. Data were gathered through questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including percentages, means, and standard deviations. The analysis also involved t-tests to compare differences and content analysis to interpret the findings. The results indicate that: Strategic leadership, as informed by the four Brahmvihāra principles, is practiced at a high level across all aspects among the administrators in Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 1. When considering individual principles, the levels were uniformly high, with kindness and compassion being the most prominent, followed by sympathetic joy (*mudita*) and equanimity. The strategic leadership practices based on the Brahmvihāra principles did not show significant differences when classified by educational level and work experience.

Origin and significance of the issue

Strategic leadership involves the process of setting direction, generating strategic options, and implementing these strategies effectively. According to Kongngoen, Phra Palad Khampha Simphi (2023), strategic leaders believe that achieving organizational objectives is not a matter of luck but the outcome of proactive monitoring of external conditions, long-term forecasting, and strategic development. Leaders in organizations must therefore embody strategic leadership to guide their institutions toward a desired future.

Effective strategic leadership encompasses several key activities: planning, implementation, and control or evaluation. According to Worapongpat et al. (2020), effective personnel management within primary educational institutions relies heavily on strategic leadership. This includes the ability to plan

strategically, manage resources efficiently, and oversee organizational operations effectively. Strategic management in educational institutions is defined as planning with a focus on setting clear objectives, determining timelines, and implementing proactive or preventative measures to achieve desired outcomes (Worapongpat et al., 2022; Phunahha & Worapongpat, 2023). Strategic management offers a comprehensive view of the internal and external environments, linking various aspects of organizational success. It involves a long-term, in-depth perspective on predicting both short-term and long-term outcomes (Phra Maha Thawee Siriwat et al., 2023). Effective strategic management requires analyzing method alternatives and completing tasks with intelligence, competitiveness, and situational awareness (Worapongpat et al., 2023).

The Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office 1 has adopted the National Education Plan 2017-2036 as its long-term strategic framework for guiding educational agencies throughout the country. This plan serves as a comprehensive guide for educational development and learning across all age groups, from birth through to lifelong learning (Kulniti Baochanya, Phrakhru Palad Bunchuay Chotivam So, Sunthorn Saikham, & Worapongpat, 2023). The primary objectives of the plan are to ensure educational opportunities, promote equality, and foster education for employment and job creation within the context of a globally innovative and dynamic environment (Worapongpat & Suphachai Phosri, 2024; Worapongpat & Yaowalak Jirayu, 2023; Anant Pramathikul & Worapongpat, 2023). This strategic framework aims to help Thailand transition from a middle-income country to a developed nation.

According to the National Education Plan 2017-2036, there are five key areas for achieving educational development goals: access to educational opportunities, educational equality, educational quality, efficiency, and relevance (Worapongpat & Muensai, 2023). However, recent internal quality assessments from the academic year 2022 reveal that many educational institutions are rated at the "Good" level rather than "Excellent" across all standards, with Standard 2 (Administration and Management Process) showing particularly low evaluation results (Worapongpat & Barnee Sopha, 2023; Venus Rungrachana & Worapongpat, 2023; Pitchapo & Worapongpat, 2024). This standard is crucial as it directly pertains to the role of administrators.

Moreover, the morality and ethics of administrators are fundamental to their effectiveness and the respect they command from colleagues (Worapongpat et al., 2023). Effective administration is marked by ethical conduct, compassion for coworkers, selflessness, and a commitment to the public interest over personal gain (Maneeploypairin Pitchapo & Worapongpat, 2024). Administrators should embody these qualities to facilitate smooth operations and earn public respect (Worapongpat et al., 2023).

Principles such as self-rule and Dharma principles, as well as the teachings of Buddhism, are integral to effective educational management (Worapongpat, Suriya Wachi Ruang Phaisan, Phong Sak Phakamas, & Jira Nan Yai Lamyong, 2022; Ratchawin Phunahha & Worapongpat, 2023). Among these, the Four Brahmavihāra principles—Metta (loving-kindness), Karuna (compassion), Mudita (sympathetic joy), and Upekkha (equanimity)—are particularly significant. These principles provide a foundation for effective leadership and management (Kulniti Baochanya, Phrakhru Palad Bunchuay Chotivam So, Sunthorn Saikham, & Worapongpat, 2023; Worapongpat & Supachai Phosri, 2023; Worapongpat & Yaowalak Jirayu, 2023).

As a member of the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office 1, the researcher is motivated to study the conditions and challenges related to strategic leadership based on the Four Brahmavihāra principles. The aim is to evaluate and compare the strategic leadership of educational administrators in this region, categorized by their educational level and work experience. The findings will serve as guidelines for enhancing leadership effectiveness in alignment with the Four Brahmavihāra principles.

Objectives

1. To examine strategic leadership practices among educational institution administrators within the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office 1, as guided by the Four Brahmavihāra principles.

2. To compare the strategic leadership practices, in accordance with the Four Brahmavihāra principles, of educational institution administrators within the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office 1, with a focus on variations based on educational level and work experience, as assessed by evaluations of Academic Heads.

Literature review

Baochanya, K., Chotiwan, P.P.B., Saikham, S., & Worapongpat, N. (2023). Thawee, P.M., Chotiwan, P.P.B., Saengkham, T., & Worapongpat, N. (2023). The Four Brahmavihāra principles encompass key behavioral guidelines for administrators and educators, emphasizing the manner in which they interact with others. These principles include:

Metta (Loving-Kindness): This principle entails administrators and educators demonstrating genuine love and goodwill towards all individuals, devoid of favoritism or animosity. It underscores the importance of fairness and equal treatment for everyone.

Karuna (Compassion): This principle involves administrators and educators expressing empathy and compassion towards others, particularly when individuals face personal or professional challenges. It emphasizes providing support and assistance in times of need.

Mudita (Sympathetic Joy): This principle refers to the genuine joy and encouragement administrators and educators show when others succeed or excel. It involves fostering an environment where individuals can develop their skills and capabilities without fear of competition or hindrance.

Upekkha (Equanimity): This principle involves administrators and educators maintaining neutrality and impartiality, refraining from favoritism or bias. It emphasizes the importance of addressing issues constructively, avoiding punitive measures, and supporting problem resolution with empathy and understanding.

Strategic leadership, as guided by the Four Brahmavihāra principles, represents a conceptual framework aimed at leading organizations effectively towards their primary objectives while ensuring long-term sustainability. The Four Brahmavihāra principles offer a comprehensive approach to leadership, encompassing:

Systemic Perspective: Strategic leaders must perceive the organization as an interconnected system, where various components work harmoniously. This perspective enables them to devise strategies that enhance overall organizational effectiveness.

Goal Setting and Planning: Effective strategic leadership involves setting goals aligned with the organization's vision and mission, and developing appropriate plans to achieve these objectives.

Execution: Strategic leaders must exhibit a strong commitment to action, ensuring that plans are implemented effectively to achieve desired outcomes. This requires careful preparation and situational readiness.

Analysis and Evaluation: Strategic leaders should utilize data and performance metrics to assess the success and efficiency of operations. Continuous evaluation provides critical insights for refining strategies and enhancing organizational performance.

Employing the Four Brahmavihāra principles enables organizations to develop and execute strategies that are both effective and sustainable, fostering long-term success and resilience.

Conceptual framework

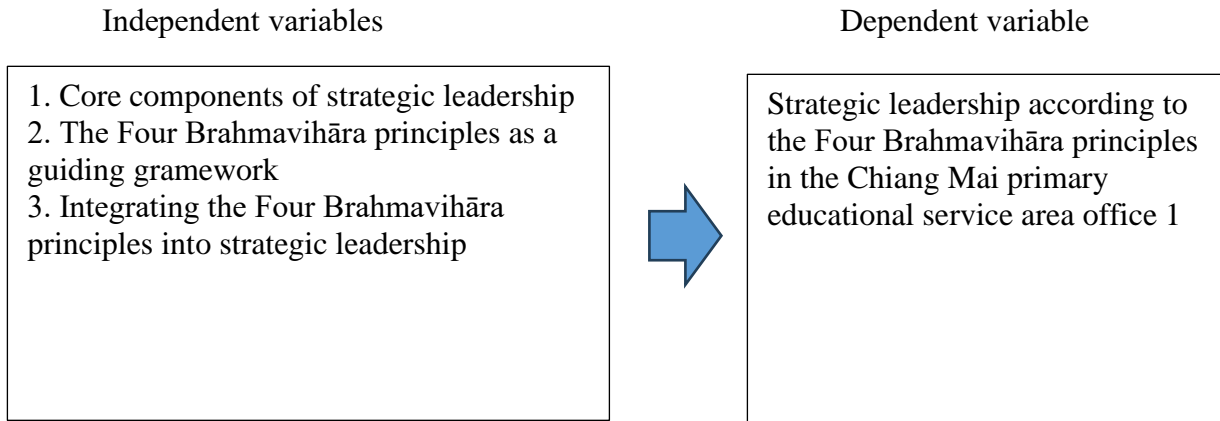


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Methods

This study employs a survey research design to explore the strategic leadership of educational institution administrators according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles within the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area. The research methods are detailed as follows:

Population and sample group

1.1 Population: The research population comprises the Heads of Academic Departments from educational institutions under the jurisdiction of the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 1. As of June 10, 2023, this population includes 85 individuals.

1.2 Sample Group: A sample of 70 Heads of Academic Departments was selected through simple random sampling from the population. This sample size was determined using a pre-determined sampling table.

1.3 Target Group: Additionally, the study includes 3 experts (Connoisseurs) and a pilot experimental group consisting of 30 Heads of Academic Departments to evaluate the learning management model.

Research tools

Questionnaires: The primary research tool is a structured questionnaire divided into two parts:

Part 1: Collects general demographic information of the respondents.

Part 2: Assesses strategic leadership according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles, using a 5-point Likert scale to evaluate responses. Tool Validation: Consultation and Revision: The questionnaire was reviewed by a consultant and revised based on recommendations. Expert Review: The revised questionnaire was presented to three experts to verify content validity, with an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) ranging from 0.80 to 1.00. Pilot Testing: The tool was pilot-tested with 30 individuals not included in the main sample. The evaluation indicated discriminatory power ranging from 0.25 to 0.75 and a reliability coefficient of 0.95, as determined using Cronbach's alpha.

Data collection

Primary Data: Collected through in-depth interviews with the target group and administration of the questionnaire. Secondary Data: Gathered from various documents, including books, academic texts, research studies, and relevant electronic media.

Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis: Conducted through content analysis of in-depth interview data and documentary sources. Quantitative data analysis: Involves statistical analysis of questionnaire data using descriptive statistics, including percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Comparative analysis will be performed using t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Statistical Tools: Descriptive statistics, including percentage, mean, and standard deviation, will be used for data

summarization. Comparative analysis will be conducted using t-tests to evaluate differences between groups.

Results

Objective 1: Strategic leadership according to the Four Brahmavihāra Principles

The research results indicate that the strategic leadership of educational institution administrators under the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 1, is rated highly across all aspects according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles.

Table 1 Presents the mean and standard deviation of strategic leadership in relation to each of the Four Brahmavihāra principles

Strategic leadership according to Brahmavihāra 4 principles	Mean (\bar{X})	Standard deviation (SD)	Level
1. Kindness	4.29	0.76	High
2. Compassion	4.21	0.77	High
3. Mudita	4.12	0.88	High
4. Equanimity	4.05	0.79	High
Overall	4.17	0.80	High

Table 1 shows that the overall strategic leadership according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles is at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.17$). When examining each principle individually, the results indicate that all aspects are rated highly. The principles are ranked from highest to lowest average as follows:

1. Kindness ($\bar{X} = 4.29$)
2. Compassion ($\bar{X} = 4.21$)
3. Mudita ($\bar{X} = 4.12$)
4. Equanimity ($\bar{X} = 4.05$)

Objective 2: Comparison of strategic leadership according to the Four Brahmavihāra Principles by educational level and work experience

The research results reveal that strategic leadership among educational institution administrators under the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 1, does not show statistically significant differences when classified by educational level and work experience. This indicates that variations in educational level and work experience do not significantly impact the strategic leadership practices according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles.

Table 2 Presents the results of comparing strategic leadership according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles, categorized by educational level, both overall and within each principle:

Strategic Leadership According to the principles of Brahma Vihara 4	Education level				t	p
	Bachelor's degree n=45		Postgraduate n=25			
	\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
1. Kindness side	4.29	.36	4.27	.34	.56	.57
2. Kind side	4.19	.30	4.22	.29	.86	.39
3. Mutita side	4.09	.41	4.13	.31	1.25	.21
4. Equanimity	4.03	.45	4.05	.47	.41	.69
Together	4.15	.27	4.17	.27	.58	.56

Table 2 indicates that the analysis, which included comparisons by educational level and work experience, found no statistically significant differences in strategic leadership across the Four Brahmavihāra principles. The p-values for the comparisons exceeded the conventional significance level (typically 0.05), suggesting that differences in educational background and work experience do not significantly influence strategic leadership practices in this context.

These findings imply that regardless of educational qualifications or years of experience, educational institution administrators exhibit similar levels of strategic leadership according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles.

Table 3: Comparison of strategic leadership according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles by work experience

Strategic leadership principles	Work experience	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	t-value	p-value
1. Kindness	Under 10 years (n=20)	4.30	.36	.56	.57
	10 years and up (n=50)	4.28	.34		
2. Compassion	Under 10 years (n=20)	4.20	.30	.86	.39
	10 years and up (n=50)	4.23	.29		
3. Mudita	Under 10 years (n=20)	4.10	.41	1.25	.21
	10 years and up (n=50)	4.14	.31		
4. Equanimity	Under 10 years (n=20)	4.04	.45	.41	.69
	10 years and up (n=50)	4.06	.47		
Overall	Under 10 years (n=20)	4.16	.27	.58	.56
	10 years and up (n=50)	4.18	.27		

The analysis of Table 3 reveals that while there are some variations in the mean scores of strategic leadership according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles based on work experience, none of these differences are statistically significant. This suggests that the level of work experience does not have a significant impact on how administrators apply the Brahmavihāra principles in their strategic leadership. Both groups demonstrate high levels of strategic leadership across all principles, indicating consistent application of the Brahmavihāra principles irrespective of the duration of work experience.

Discussion

Objective 1: The results indicate that strategic leadership based on the Four Brahmavihāra principles among educational institution administrators under the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 1, is rated highly overall and in each specific aspect. The overall assessment of strategic leadership according to the Four Brahmavihāra principles reveals that administrators exhibit high proficiency across all dimensions: kindness, compassion, mudita (sympathetic joy), and equanimity. This consistent high-level performance reflects the successful integration of these principles into leadership practices. Impact of Brahmavihāra Principles: Kindness (Metta): Administrators show a strong commitment to fostering a supportive environment, characterized by love and goodwill towards others. This positive approach enhances team morale and motivation, which in turn contributes to achieving organizational goals.

Compassion (Karuna): Effective leadership is evident through the administrators' efforts to alleviate both physical and emotional suffering among staff. By providing appropriate support and avoiding harm, administrators create a nurturing work environment. Mudita: The celebration of others' successes and

progress is a notable aspect of leadership. Administrators demonstrate genuine joy in their colleagues' achievements, reinforcing a culture of shared success and reducing feelings of jealousy or envy. **Equanimity:** Administrators consistently apply fairness and reason in decision-making, maintaining neutrality and accuracy. This balanced approach helps in making well-informed decisions that uphold justice and integrity within the organization. **Relevance of Brahnavihāra Principles in Leadership:** The Four Brahnavihāra principles are integral to effective leadership in educational settings. These principles are derived from Buddhist teachings and are recognized for their capacity to promote societal harmony and personal growth. Their application in leadership practices contributes to a calm, thoughtful, and ethically grounded approach to managing educational institutions. **Comparative Analysis with Previous Research:** The findings are consistent with previous studies, such as Phra Maha Thawee Siriwat's research on leadership principles. This research found that high levels of leadership effectiveness align with the Brahnavihāra principles and similar frameworks, such as the Dutiyapapanika Sutta. Effective leadership in both studies involves setting clear goals, delegating authority, and maintaining fairness. **Practical Implications for Leadership Development: Enhancing Leadership Skills:** To sustain and advance high-level strategic leadership, administrators should continue to develop their skills in kindness, compassion, mudita, and equanimity. This involves not only personal practice but also fostering these values within their teams. **Organizational Benefits:** Adhering to these principles leads to a more engaged and motivated staff, improved organizational outcomes, and successful achievement of set goals. **Recommendations for Future Practice: Training and Development:** Implementing ongoing professional development programs focused on the Four Brahnavihāra principles can further enhance leadership effectiveness. Workshops and training sessions should emphasize practical applications of these principles. **Evaluation and Feedback:** Regular assessment of leadership practices and feedback from staff can help identify areas for improvement and ensure that the principles are effectively applied in day-to-day operations. In conclusion, the study confirms that administrators' adherence to the Four Brahnavihāra principles significantly contributes to high-level strategic leadership. By continuously embodying these principles, administrators can foster a positive and productive work environment, drive organizational success, and support sustainable development.

Objective 2: The research found that strategic leadership based on the Four Brahnavihāra principles among educational institution administrators under the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 1, did not show significant differences when classified by educational level or work experience. The analysis revealed no statistically significant differences in strategic leadership qualities across different levels of education or varying years of work experience. This indicates that the application of the Four Brahnavihāra principles in leadership is consistent regardless of these factors. **Consistency Across Variables:** The consistency in strategic leadership performance across educational levels and work experience may suggest that the effectiveness of the Brahnavihāra principles is uniformly applied among administrators. This uniformity could imply that the principles themselves are robust and universally relevant in guiding effective leadership, independent of personal background variables. **Comparison with Previous Research:** The findings align with Kulniti Baochanya, Phrakhrui Palad Bunchuay Chotiwan, Sunthorn Saikham, and Na Tha Pat Woraphongphat's (2023) study on leadership development under the Khon Kaen Primary Educational Service Area Office 2. Their research indicated that leadership practices according to the principles of Itthipatha 4 (similar to the Brahnavihāra principles) were uniformly high across various aspects, including problem-solving, teamwork, analytical thinking, and technology use. This suggests that high levels of practice and leadership development are achieved regardless of specific educational or experiential backgrounds. **Principles of Itthipatha and Brahnavihāra:** Both sets of principle Itthipatha and Brahnavihāra are derived from Buddhist teachings and emphasize similar core values, including problem-solving, teamwork, and analytical thinking. The lack of significant difference in leadership effectiveness based on educational level or work experience supports the idea that these principles provide a strong foundation for effective leadership across different contexts. **Guidelines for Leadership Development:** Based on the research and previous studies, it is clear that high levels of leadership practice are achievable by adhering to these principles. For future development: **Support Personnel Development:** Administrators should continue to focus on enhancing their personnel's skills in technology,

communication, and interpersonal relations. Vision and Planning: Effective leadership involves having a clear vision, setting goals, and developing strategic plans. This aligns with the principles of both Itthipatha and Brahnavihāra, reinforcing the importance of clear and strategic planning in leadership. Practical Implications: Uniform Application: The lack of significant variation across educational levels and work experience suggests that training and development programs focused on Brahnavihāra principles can be universally applied and beneficial, regardless of an administrator's background. Focused Development: While the principles are universally effective, specific training programs should emphasize practical applications of these principles to ensure continued effectiveness in leadership roles. In summary, the research demonstrates that strategic leadership based on the Four Brahnavihāra principles maintains a high level of effectiveness across different educational and experience backgrounds. This uniformity supports the broad applicability of these principles in fostering effective leadership in educational settings. The findings are consistent with previous research, suggesting that adherence to these principles universally enhances leadership performance, regardless of individual differences.

Body of knowledge

From the study of strategic leadership according to the 4 Brahnavihāra principles of educational institution administrators. Under the jurisdiction of the Chiang Mai Primary Educational Service Area Office 1 Found knowledge that can be summarized. It can be diagrammed as follows.

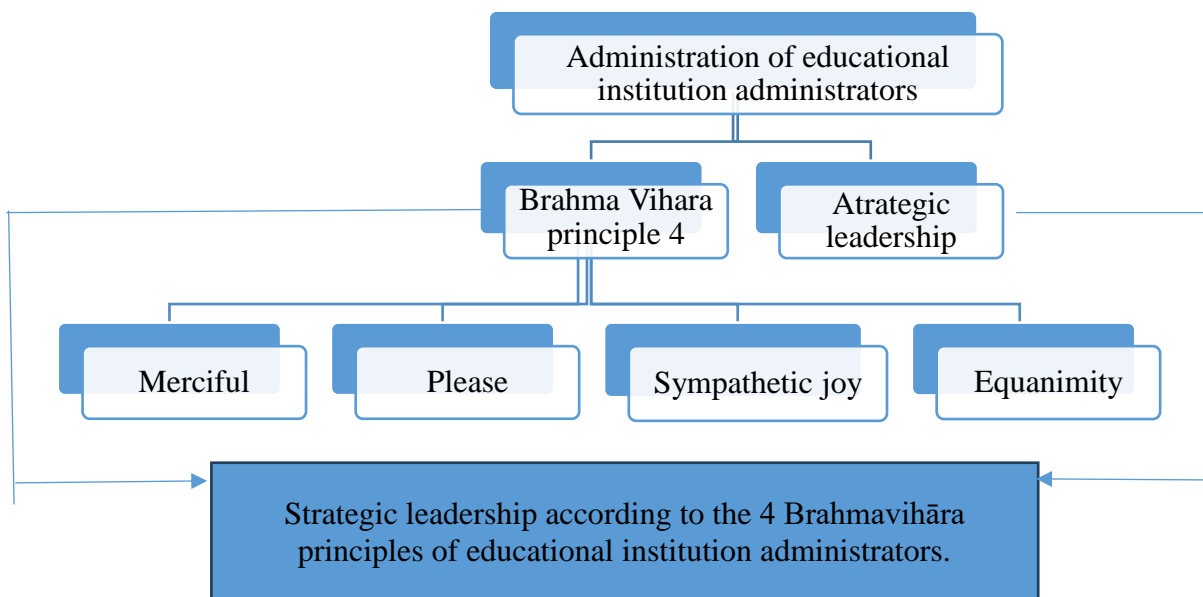


Figure 2 Strategic leadership according to the four Brahnavihāra principles of educational institution administrators.

Diagram 1, shows that the Management of educational institution administrators using the principles of strategic leadership and the 4 brahnavihāra principles as aids in administration creates leadership. Strategically according to the 4 Brahnavihāra principles which directly affect the organization in every aspect. Therefore, the leadership of executives is an important part that can drive the organization forward. Create awareness of the peaceful coexistence of people in the organization. And develop the organization to be balanced and sustainable.

Suggestions

1. Suggestions for applying research results

1.1 Enhancing Leadership and Motivation: Given that the research indicates high levels of strategic leadership based on the Four Brahmavihāra principles among educational administrators, it is advisable for executives to continually foster and motivate their teams. This can be achieved through regular encouragement and recognition of employees' contributions, promoting a positive and motivating work environment. Emphasizing these principles—kindness, compassion, kindness, and equanimity—can enhance organizational morale and productivity.

1.2 Integration of Technology: To align with contemporary management practices, it is essential to integrate technology into strategic leadership approaches. This includes utilizing digital tools for communication, project management, and performance tracking. By doing so, administrators can improve efficiency and effectiveness in achieving organizational goals while maintaining alignment with the Brahmavihāra principles.

1.3 Building Positive Relationships: Promoting and nurturing good relationships within the organization is crucial. Administrators should focus on creating a supportive and collaborative work environment where employees feel valued and motivated. This can be achieved through team-building activities, open communication channels, and fostering a culture of mutual respect and support.

2. Suggestions for future research

2.1 Exploring Additional Factors: Future research should investigate other factors that may influence strategic leadership effectiveness. This includes examining organizational culture, external environmental factors, and individual leader attributes. Understanding these variables can provide a more comprehensive view of what contributes to successful leadership and help refine management strategies in educational institutions.

2.2 Comparative Studies: Conduct comparative studies across different educational contexts or geographic regions to assess whether the application of the Brahmavihāra principles yields similar results. This can help determine the universality of these principles and identify any contextual factors that might influence their effectiveness.

2.3 Longitudinal Research: Implement longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impact of applying the Brahmavihāra principles on strategic leadership. Tracking changes over time can provide insights into how these principles influence leadership effectiveness and organizational outcomes in the long run.

2.4 Impact Assessment of Technological Integration: Further research should evaluate how the integration of technology within leadership practices affects the application of the Brahmavihāra principles. Understanding the interplay between technology and traditional leadership values can offer guidance on optimizing technological tools to enhance leadership effectiveness.

2.5 Developing Practical Guidelines: Based on research findings, developing practical guidelines and training programs for educational administrators to implement the Brahmavihāra principles effectively can be beneficial. This includes creating resources and workshops that focus on applying these principles in daily management practices.

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