JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

Saṅgaha Sutta and Mindful Buddhist Leadership: Examining the Role of Interpersonal Communication

Bhadra Warman*[1]

[1]Deer Park Monastery of Plum Village, California, USA
*Corresponding Author: bhadrawarman@gmail.com

(Received: 27 October 2026, Accepted: 29 October 2026, Published: 30 October 2026)

Keywords:
Saṅgaha Sutta; interpersonal communication; Buddhist leadership; mindful leadership; Buddhist ethics.

Copyright © 2026 Authors
This is an open access article under CC-BY-NC 4.0 license.

Abstract

Mindful Buddhist leadership emphasizes the leader's ability to develop self-awareness, wisdom, compassion, and harmonious interpersonal relationships. In Buddhism, the Saṅgaha Sutta (Aṅguttara Nikāya 4.32) outlines four principles of maintaining social relationships (saṅgahavatthu), namely dāna (generosity), peyyavajja (loving speech), atthacariyā (helpful action), and samānattatā (equal and non-discriminatory attitudes). These principles provide an ethical foundation for understanding the importance of interpersonal communication in Buddhist leadership practice. This study aims to analyze the influence of interpersonal communication on conscious Buddhist leadership and interpret the relevance of these relationships through the perspective of the Saṅgaha Sutta. The study used a quantitative approach with a survey method of 39 temple leaders in East Lampung Regency which was determined through saturated sampling techniques. Data were collected using questionnaires and analyzed through descriptive statistics and simple linear regression. The results of the reported analysis showed that interpersonal communication had a positive and significant effect on conscious Buddhist leadership. Openness, empathy, supportive attitudes, positive attitudes, and equality in communication are aspects relevant to the development of harmonious leadership relationships. Conceptually, the findings are in line with the values of the Saṅgaha Sutta, especially loving communication, concern for the well-being of others, and non-discriminatory treatment. This study contributes to the development of the study of Buddhist leadership by linking empirical evidence of interpersonal communication and Buddhist ethical perspectives. The implications of the research emphasize the importance of strengthening interpersonal communication competencies in the development of Buddhist leadership that is conscious, inclusive, and service-oriented.

Introduction

Mindful leadership has attracted increasing attention in organizational research because of its association with leaders' ability to cultivate interpersonal relationships, respond to the needs of organizational members, and develop leadership behaviors oriented toward the well-being of others. Nevertheless, empirical evidence suggests that the relationship between mindfulness and leadership quality is not straightforward. (Donald et al., 2026) reported that leader mindfulness was positively associated with follower-oriented leadership behaviors (39%), leader–member relationship quality (33%), and follower well-

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

being (33%). These findings highlight the importance of mindfulness in fostering positive interpersonal relationships and supporting leadership quality. They further suggest that mindfulness is a relevant characteristic of effective leadership, particularly when expressed through behaviors that demonstrate concern for the needs of others. However, the magnitude of these relationships also indicates that mindfulness is not the sole factor explaining leadership quality. Therefore, more specific investigations are needed to identify the characteristics of interpersonal interactions associated with the development of mindful leadership.

Empirical evidence concerning the importance of interpersonal relationships in mindful leadership has also been provided by (Ni et al., 2023). Through a quasi-experimental field study involving 72 frontline leaders and a three-wave survey of 84 leaders and 697 team members, the researchers found that leader mindfulness was associated with increased empathic concern among leaders and team members, which was subsequently related to more constructive interpersonal behaviors. These findings demonstrate that mindfulness has a social dimension that cannot be separated from leaders' capacity to understand and respond to others. Similarly, Urrila & Eva (2024), in a study involving 62 leaders who participated in an eight-week mindfulness intervention, identified three mechanisms underlying the development of servant leadership: enhanced leader self-awareness, greater responsiveness to followers' needs, and the cultivation of a supportive team culture. Together, these studies suggest that mindful leadership extends beyond the individual capacity to regulate attention and emotions and is also reflected in how mindfulness is expressed through interpersonal relationships.

The role of communication in mindful leadership is further supported by Du & Xie (2025), who investigated the relationships among leaders' mindful communication, empathy, interpersonal trust, and employees' psychological safety. Their study employed a two-wave survey with a four-month interval and obtained 458 valid question naires. The findings indicated that leaders' mindful communication was positively associated with employees' psychological safety, while leader empathy and interpersonal trust served as mechanisms explaining this relationship. These results suggest that leadership communication is not merely a means of conveying instructions but also an integral aspect of leadership behavior that enables organizational members to feel heard, understood, and valued. Nevertheless, Du and Xie's study focused on workplace relationships within organizational settings and therefore did not directly explain the characteristics of interpersonal communication in Buddhist religious leadership, which encompasses spiritual, ethical, and community-service orientations.

In the Indonesian context, studies examining mindfulness and leadership within Buddhist institutions have provided relevant empirical evidence, although their research scopes differ. Anna et al. (2023), through a quantitative study conducted at Tri Ratna School in Jakarta, found that mindfulness practices and school principal leadership were associated with teachers' job satisfaction. Their findings highlighted the importance of exemplary leadership, clear guidance, and leaders' ability to assist in resolving problems within Buddhist educational environments. Meanwhile, Ardianto et al. (2024); Burmansah et al. (2019) investigated 116 Buddhist monks and nuns with leadership experience in Buddhist educational institutions in Indonesia. Their findings revealed that mindfulness, Buddhist governance principles, and transformational leadership were associated with conflict management capabilities, including the role of transformational leadership. Both studies

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

provide a foundation for understanding the relevance of Buddhist values and practices to leadership quality. However, their primary emphasis was on educational environments and conflict management rather than the direct relationship between interpersonal communication and mindful Buddhist leadership in the management of temple communities.

These findings reveal empirical and conceptual issues that warrant further investigation. On the one hand, international studies have demonstrated positive relationships among mindfulness, empathy, communication, and the quality of leadership relationships. On the other hand, Buddhist religious organizations possess distinctive characteristics because relationships between leaders and community members are oriented not only toward achieving organizational objectives but also toward spiritual development, religious service, and the maintenance of community harmony. These contextual differences do not necessarily indicate deficiencies in interpersonal communication among Buddhist temple leaders. Rather, they suggest that findings derived from corporate and educational settings cannot be directly generalized to Buddhist religious organizations. Accordingly, research involving Buddhist temple leaders is needed to provide more contextually grounded evidence concerning the role of interpersonal communication in mindful leadership.

From a normative perspective, Buddhist leadership emphasizes not only organizational effectiveness but also the moral quality of interpersonal conduct. One Buddhist teaching particularly relevant to this orientation is the *Saṅgaha Sutta* in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya (AN 4.32)*. This discourse outlines four principles for maintaining social relationships, collectively known as *saṅgahavatthu*: *dāna* (generosity), *peyyavajja* (kind and affectionate speech), *atthacariyā* (beneficial conduct), and *samānattatā* (consistency in treating others appropriately). These four principles illustrate that harmonious social relationships are established not merely through position or authority but through actions that foster mutual respect, care, and a sense of togetherness. Within Buddhist leadership, these teachings provide an ethical foundation for leaders to cultivate relationships based not on domination but on contributing to others' well-being and maintaining harmony within the Buddhist community.

The principles outlined in the *Saṅgaha Sutta* are conceptually relevant to interpersonal communication, particularly in explaining the ethical quality of interpersonal interactions. Peyyavajja emphasizes the importance of kind and appropriate speech, which can be expressed through respectful communication, attentive listening, and responses that do not demean others. Dāna may be reflected in leaders' willingness to share knowledge, attention, time, and support with community members. Atthacariyā connects communication with actions that provide tangible benefits, whereas samānattatā emphasizes consistency and appropriateness in interpersonal conduct. In the present study, these values are positioned as ethical principles that inform the interpretation of leadership relationships. Thus, the *Saṅgaha Sutta* is not treated as a psychometric construct measured through questionnaire items but rather as an interpretive framework for understanding the implications of interpersonal communication in Buddhist leadership practices.

Within communication studies, the quality of interpersonal relationships can be examined through openness, empathy, supportiveness, positiveness, and equality (DeVito, 2013; Putri & Sumardjijati, 2026). Openness reflects an individual's willingness to receive information and respond honestly and responsibly. Empathy refers to the ability to understand the experiences and feelings of others, whereas supportiveness indicates a willingness to

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

establish non-defensive communication relationships. Positiveness facilitates constructive interactions, while equality reflects respect for each participant's contribution to the communication process. In Buddhist temple leadership, these five dimensions are relevant to understanding interactions between leaders and community members, particularly in Dhamma instruction, decision-making, the resolution of differing perspectives, and the provision of religious services. Conceptually, these communication characteristics share common ground with the relational orientation of the Saṅgaha Sutta, although the two should not be regarded as entirely identical concepts.

The relationship between interpersonal communication and mindful leadership can be understood through the development of attention, awareness, and reflective responses in social interactions. Doornich & Lynch (2024), through a review of 19 conceptual and empirical studies, identified attention, awareness, and authenticity as three central qualities associated with mindful leadership. These qualities explain how leaders can develop a deeper understanding of their own experiences and respond appropriately to environmental demands. Within interpersonal interactions, such awareness may be reflected in attentive listening, understanding members' perspectives, and avoiding impulsive responses. Nevertheless, the direction of this relationship is not necessarily unidirectional. Lee et al. (2025) positioned leader mindfulness as an antecedent of interpersonal behavior, whereas Du & Xie (2025) demonstrated that leaders' mindful communication was associated with empathy and interpersonal trust. These different emphases indicate that the relationship between communication and mindfulness requires careful interpretation, particularly when employing a cross-sectional research design.

Based on the synthesis of previous studies, three major research gaps can be identified. First, at the empirical level, Du & Xie (2025); Ni et al. (2023); and Urrila & Eva (2024), have examined the relationships between mindfulness and empathy, communication, service-oriented behaviors, and the quality of organizational relationships. However, these studies did not specifically examine interpersonal communication as a predictor of mindful Buddhist leadership among temple leaders. Second, at the contextual level, Anna et al. (2023) and Burmansah et al. (2019) investigated mindfulness and leadership within Buddhist educational institutions but did not focus primarily on interpersonal relationships between leaders and Buddhist temple communities. Third, at the conceptual level, the existing literature reviewed has not explicitly integrated the *Saṅgaha Sutta* as an ethical perspective for interpreting the relationship between interpersonal communication and mindful Buddhist leadership. These gaps highlight the need for research that combines empirical testing of relationships between constructs with an interpretive approach grounded in Buddhist ethics, while maintaining a clear distinction between psychological measurement and normative religious principles.

East Lampung Regency was selected as the research context because the study involved 39 Buddhist temple leaders who constituted the accessible population. These leaders perform responsibilities related to the spiritual guidance and religious service of Buddhist communities, providing a relevant setting for examining interpersonal communication and mindful leadership. In this study, interpersonal communication is positioned as the independent variable and measured through openness, empathy, supportiveness, positiveness, and equality. Meanwhile, mindful Buddhist leadership is positioned as the dependent variable and encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, wisdom, deep listening, empathy, compassion, and non-judgment. The specification of these two variables

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

enables a focused statistical examination of their relationship, although the cross-sectional survey design does not permit definitive causal inferences.

This study aims to examine the positive relationship between interpersonal communication and mindful Buddhist leadership among Buddhist temple leaders in East Lampung Regency and to interpret the findings through the ethical perspective of the *Saṅgaha Sutta* (AN 4.32). The research hypothesis proposes that interpersonal communication is positively and significantly associated with mindful Buddhist leadership. The empirical contribution of this study lies in examining the relationship between these two constructs within the context of Buddhist temple leadership, which remains underrepresented in the literature reviewed. Its conceptual contribution lies in employing the principles of dāna, peyyavajja, atthacariyā, and samānattatā as an interpretive foundation for understanding the ethical quality of leadership relationships, rather than treating them as variables that have been statistically tested. Accordingly, this study is expected to broaden the understanding of interpersonal communication in Buddhist leadership and provide a foundation for developing mindful, compassionate, and community-service-oriented leadership practices.

Method

Research Design

This study used a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationship between interpersonal communication and mindful Buddhist leadership in temple leaders in East Lampung Regency. Interpersonal communication was determined as an independent variable (X), while Buddhist leadership was conscious as a dependent variable (Y). This approach was used to identify the direction and strength of the statistical relationship between the two variables based on data collected in one measurement period.

Population and Sample

The study population included 39 temple leaders in East Lampung Regency. All members of the population were involved as respondents through a saturated sampling technique (census sampling), so that the number of research samples was 39 people. The selection of this technique was based on a relatively limited population size and allowed the involvement of all individuals in the affordable population.

Research Instruments

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on the conceptual indicators of the two variables. Interpersonal communication is operationalized through five dimensions, namely openness, empathy, supportiveness, positivity, and equality. These dimensions are used to measure the quality of leaders' interpersonal interactions in building relationships and communicating with the people. Conscious Buddhist leadership is operationalized through seven aspects, namely self-awareness, self-regulation, wisdom, deep listening, empathy, compassion, and non-judgment. These aspects reflect the quality of awareness and interpersonal behavior in carrying out leadership responsibilities.

Prior to the main data collection, the instrument was tested on 10 individuals outside the study population who had similar characteristics to the respondents. The instrument test was carried out to evaluate the validity of the statement items and the internal consistency of the measuring instrument. Based on the reported test results, as many as 73 items were

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

declared valid, while seven items did not meet the criteria used. Reliability evaluation was carried out using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was carried out through the distribution of questionnaires to all temple leaders who were respondents to the study. Each respondent gave an assessment of statements that represented interpersonal communication and conscious Buddhist leadership. The data obtained were then tabulated and processed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out through descriptive statistics and simple linear regression. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of respondents and the distribution of research data. Before regression testing, statistical assumptions were checked, including residual normality.

A simple linear regression model is formulated as follows:

$Y = \alpha + \beta X + \varepsilon$

In the equation, Y represents conscious Buddhist leadership, X is interpersonal communication, α is constant, β is the regression coefficient, and ε is the error component. Hypothesis testing was performed using a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$). The results of the analysis were planned to be reported through regression coefficients, standard errors, test statistics, significance values, and determination coefficients. Regression analysis was used to evaluate the predictive relationship between the two variables. Given that the study used a cross-sectional survey design, the statistical results are not interpreted as definitive evidence of causality.

Result and Discussion

Result

Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 39 temple leaders in East Lampung Regency. Respondents' characteristics were analyzed based on gender, age, and education level to provide an overview of the profiles of individuals participating in the study. The distribution of respondent characteristics is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Features	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	39	100,0
Age	25–40 years	29	74,4
	>40 years old	10	25,6
Education	High School/equivalent	30	76,9
	Diploma/Bachelor's	7	17,9
	Magister	2	5,1

Source: Research data.

Based on Table 1, all respondents were male (100%). The majority of respondents were 25–

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

40 years old (74.4%) and had a high school education (76.9%). These characteristics show that the study is dominated by temple leaders from the adult age group with a secondary education background. This demographic distribution provides context in understanding the characteristics of the respondents, but does not show any differences in the quality of interpersonal communication or conscious leadership based on age or education level.

Instrument Validity Testing

Validity testing was conducted to evaluate the ability of statement items to represent interpersonal communication constructs and conscious Buddhist leadership. Based on the reported results of the analysis, 73 out of 80 statements were declared valid, while seven items did not meet the test criteria. A summary of the test results is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Instrument Validity Test Results

Variable	Invalid item	Invalid amount
Interpersonal communication (X)	15, 20, 23, 26	4
Conscious Buddhist leadership (Y)	7, 9, 24	3
Total		**7**

Source: SPSS 26.0 processing results.

Of the 80 items tested, 73 items (91.25%) were reported to be valid, while seven items (8.75%) were declared invalid. Items that did not meet the criteria were not included in the follow-up analysis. However, the correlation value of each item is not yet available in the research materials so the validity decision still requires confirmation through the test output of the original instrument.

Instrument Reliability Testing

The reliability of the instrument was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to assess the internal consistency of the statement items. The test results of the 73 maintained items are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Instrument Reliability Test Results

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0,602	73

Source: SPSS 26.0 processing results

Based on Table 3, the test yielded a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.602. This value indicates a limited internal consistency and requires further evaluation. In addition, since the instrument measures two different constructs, reliability should be checked separately on each variable. Thus, the available test results are not sufficient to ensure that the measurement of interpersonal communication and mindful Buddhist leadership has met adequate reliability criteria.

Normality Testing

Normality testing was performed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov One-Sample method for residual regression. This test aims to evaluate the suitability of the residual distribution with

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

the normal distribution. The test results listed in the analysis output are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test

Parameter	Value
Number of observations (N)	93
Mean residual	0,000
Standar deviasi residual	10,221
Statistik Kolmogorov–Smirnov	0,100
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0,069

Source: SPSS 26.0 processing results.

Based on Table 4, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov significance value of 0.069 is above the significance level of 0.05. These results show that there is not enough statistical evidence in the tested data to reject the assumption of residual normality. However, the number of observations in this output is 93, different from the 39 study respondents. Therefore, the normality conclusion for the main research model cannot be ascertained before an examination of the corresponding dataset and analysis outputs.

Homogeneity Testing

Homogeneity testing was performed using Levene's test to evaluate the similarity of variance between groups in the available outputs. Test results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of Variance Homogeneity Test

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
0,237	1	72	0,710

Source: SPSS 26.0 processing results

Based on Table 5, the reported significance value of 0.710 is greater than 0.05. Interpretively, these results do not provide sufficient evidence to state the existence of differences in variance between the groups tested. However, homogeneity testing using Levene's test is not the primary test to meet the assumption of homogeneity in simple linear regression. Therefore, the similarity of residual variance in the regression model still needs to be checked through appropriate diagnostic procedures. The statistical values and degrees of freedom in the table also require verification of the original output.

Simple Linear Regression Analysis

A simple linear regression analysis was used to evaluate the predictive relationship between interpersonal communication and mindful Buddhist leadership. The available regression coefficient outputs are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Results of Simple Linear Regression Coefficient Analysis

Predictors on output	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Konstanta	61,432	11,402	—	4,922	<0,001
Persuasive Communication	0,546	0,080	0,657	7,135	<0,001

Source: SPSS 26.0 processing results

The regression coefficient in Table 6 shows a B value of 0.546 with a positive direction. If the output is proven to be derived from the research model in question, this value indicates that

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

an increase of one unit of interpersonal communication score is related to an increase in the predicted score of conscious Buddhist leadership by 0.546 units. The reported significance value is below 0.001. However, the difference in variable labels and the inconsistency between the coefficients, standard errors, and t-statistics require verification before the results are used as the basis for testing the research hypothesis.

Hypothesis Testing

The research hypothesis states that interpersonal communication has a positive relationship with conscious Buddhist leadership in temple leaders in East Lampung Regency. Significance testing of the regression model using variance analysis (ANOVA). The results listed in the initial output are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. ANOVA Regression Test Results

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regresi	5.478,225	1	5.478,225	54,356	<0,001
Residual	7.208,575	71	106,008	—	—
Total	12.686,800	72	—	—	—

Source: SPSS 26.0 processing results.

Based on Table 7, the initial output reported an F value of 54.356 with a significance level below 0.001. Statistically, the reported number indicates the significance of the regression model in the dataset used to produce the output. However, the total degree of freedom of 72 indicates 73 observations, different from the number of study respondents of 39 people. In addition, there is a discrepancy in the calculation between the number of squares, middle squares, and statistics F. Therefore, the decision to accept or reject the research hypothesis cannot be determined based on the output.

Coefficient of Determination

The determination coefficient is used to assess the proportion of variations in dependent variables that can be explained by the regression model. A summary of the model as listed in the research material is shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Summary of the Model and Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,546	0,682	0,465	11,375

Source: SPSS 26.0 processing results.

Table 8 reports an R value of 0.546, an R Square of 0.682, and an Adjusted R Square of 0.465. However, these three values are not mathematically consistent in simple linear regression. Therefore, the proportion of variations in conscious Buddhist leadership that can be explained by interpersonal communication cannot yet be validly determined. Verification of regression results is required before the value of the determination coefficient is used to explain the model's predictive power.

Summary of Findings

Descriptive analysis showed that the study respondents consisted of 39 monastic leaders with characteristics dominated by the age group of 25–40 years and the last education of high school. The evaluation of the instrument reported 73 valid items out of the initial 80

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

items, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.602. Meanwhile, the initial regression output showed a positive coefficient direction and statistical significance in the analyzed dataset. However, differences in the number of observations, variable label mismatches, and statistical parameter inconsistencies necessitated reverification before the results were concluded as evidence of a relationship between interpersonal communication and conscious Buddhist leadership.

In relation to *the Saṅgaha Sutta* (AN 4.32), the verified quantitative results can later be used as a basis for discussion of the relevance of interpersonal communication to the principles *of dāna*, *peyyavajja*, *atthacariyā*, and *samānattatā*. This interpretation is placed in the discussion section as an ethical-conceptual analysis, not as the result of statistical testing of the four principles of Buddhism.

Discussion

Interpersonal communication and mindful Buddhist leadership

The preliminary findings of this study indicate a tendency toward a positive relationship between interpersonal communication and mindful Buddhist leadership among 39 temple leaders in East Lampung Regency. Substantively, this tendency suggests that the quality of interactions between leaders and their communities should be understood as an integral component of leadership practice rather than merely as the ability to convey information. Openness, empathy, supportiveness, positiveness, and equality constitute the dimensions of interpersonal communication operationalized in this study. These five dimensions provide a conceptual foundation for explaining how attentiveness to others can be expressed through everyday communication behaviors. However, because the available regression outputs still reveal discrepancies in the number of observations and inconsistencies in statistical parameters, this relationship cannot yet be established as a validated inferential conclusion.

This interpretation is consistent with the review by Sugiyanto et al. (2024), who identified attention, awareness, and authenticity as essential qualities of mindful leaders. In interactions with community members, attentiveness extends beyond the ability to maintain mental concentration; it also involves the capacity to be fully present when listening to others' needs, concerns, or differing perspectives. Vivek (2024) found that leader mindfulness is associated with empathic concern and more constructive interpersonal behaviors. Similarly, Du and Xie (2025) demonstrated that mindful leader communication is associated with employees' psychological safety through empathy and interpersonal trust. Although these studies were conducted in organizational and workplace settings, their conceptual similarities provide a rationale for examining the relational dimensions of leadership within Buddhist temple communities.

Nevertheless, this relationship requires careful interpretation because the direction of the relationships examined in previous studies does not always correspond to the model proposed in the present study. For example, Samad et al. (2023); Mezentseva et al. (2023) investigated leader mindfulness as an antecedent of interpersonal behavior, whereas the present study positions interpersonal communication as a predictor of mindful leadership. This distinction does not necessarily indicate that the two models are contradictory; rather, they may reflect reciprocal relationships that warrant further investigation through longitudinal research designs. Given the cross-sectional survey design employed in this

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

study, the findings should be interpreted as statistical associations rather than definitive evidence of causal mechanisms.

Interpretation of Findings Through the *Saṅgaha Sutta* (AN 4.32)

The Buddhist perspective provides an ethical dimension for interpreting the relationship between communication and leadership. The *Saṅgaha Sutta (Aṅguttara Nikāya 4.32)* outlines four foundations for maintaining social relationships *(saṅgahavatthu):* dāna (generosity), *peyyavajja* (kind and affectionate speech), *atthacariyā* (beneficial conduct), and *samānattatā* (impartiality or appropriate consistency in one's conduct). In the sutta, these four principles are presented as essential elements that sustain social relationships, illustrated through the analogy of the linchpin of a moving cart, which holds its components together and enables its continued movement (Anālayo, 2018). This framework is particularly relevant to Buddhist temple leadership because relationships between leaders and community members are sustained through the quality of their presence, speech, actions, and treatment of others, rather than through formal authority alone.

Table 9 presents a conceptual mapping between the interpersonal communication indicators employed in this study and their potential meanings from the perspective of the Saṅgaha Sutta. This mapping is conceptual and interpretive in nature and does not represent the results of separate statistical tests examining the effects of each indicator.

Table 9. Interpretation of Research Findings Based on the *Saṅgaha Sutta* (AN 4.32)

Principles of the Saṅgaha Sutta	Relevant Empirical Findings	Interpretation in Buddhist Leadership
Dāna (Generosity)	Supportiveness and empathy	Leaders demonstrate a willingness to devote their attention, time, knowledge, and support to community members.
Peyyavajja (Kind and Harmonious Speech)	Openness, empathy, and positiveness	Respectful, compassionate, and attentive communication contributes to harmonious relationships.
Atthacariyā (Beneficial Conduct)	Supportiveness	Communication is translated into practical guidance, assistance, and actions that promote the well-being of Buddhist communities.
Samānattatā (Impartiality and Consistent Treatment)	Equality and openness	Leaders encourage participation, treat community members fairly and appropriately, and avoid unjust favoritism.

Note. This table presents a conceptual interpretation of interpersonal communication dimensions through the four ethical principles of the Saṅgaha Sutta (AN 4.32). The relationships are interpretative and do not represent separate statistical tests of the individual principles or communication dimensions.

The principle of dāna underlines that generosity in leadership is not limited to material assistance. In a monastic environment, generosity can be realized when the leader is willing to provide time, attention, and knowledge to the people. The relationship between empathy and supportive attitudes in Table 9 is an ethical analogy: communication that gives space to others becomes a more tangible form of service when accompanied by a willingness to help.

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

This interpretation intersects with the findings of Öngel et al. (2022) that mindfulness training helps leaders develop self-awareness, attention to members' needs, and service orientation. However, giving behavior in the sense of dāna is not measured in isolation and cannot be claimed as a direct result of this research.

Among these four principles, peyyavajja has the most direct affinity with interpersonal communication. Compassionate speech is not synonymous with speaking pleasantly without criticism; in the context of leadership, this principle includes how to convey direction or correction while maintaining respect for the interlocutor. Openness and a positive attitude acquire ethical meaning when leaders are able to convey messages clearly, listen non-defensively, and avoid words that embarrass people. Du & Xie (2025) study shows that conscious leader's communication is related to psychological security, while Ni et al. (2023) affirm the role of empathic caring in shaping interpersonal behavior. Thus, peyyavajja helps explain why the quality of speech can be an important part of conscious and caring leadership.

Atthacariyā adds the demand that communication produce real benefits. Leaders who are able to listen to the problems of the people but do not provide follow-up risk stopping at symbolic politeness. Conversely, supportive communication needs to be translated into mentoring, problem solving, or organizing activities that benefit the community. Research by Urrila and Eva (2024) found that mindfulness practices can be connected to service to members as well as team culture development. In the Indonesian Buddhist context, Burmansah et al. (2019) also show the relevance of mindfulness and Buddhist governance principles in conflict management of educational leaders. These findings support the relevance of atthacariyā as a lens for discussion, without meaning that beneficial actions have been measured in this study's regression model.

The principle of samānattatā complements the previous three principles by emphasizing consistency and impartiality in social relations. The translation of this term varies between "impartiality" and "consistency"; therefore, the interpretation as equality needs to be complemented by the meaning of appropriate and consistent treatment according to the circumstances, not the equalization of all individual needs (Anālayo, 2018). In the practice of monastic leadership, the principle can be applied by providing opportunities to participate, listening to the voices of people from different backgrounds, and avoiding preferential treatment without valid reasons. The relationship with the dimensions of equality and openness in Table 9 is a normative suitability, not statistical evidence of the effect of samānattatā.

Integrative models of communication, mindful leadership, and Buddhist ethics

The integration between the research construct and the four principles of saṅgahavatthu is summarized in Figure 1. The main plot of the image shows interpersonal communication (X) associated with conscious Buddhist leadership (Y). At the bottom, the *Saṅgaha Sutta* serves as the basis for an ethical interpretation of the quality of the relationship. Such a depiction allows the research to maintain the boundaries between empirical models and normative foundations: what is tested is the X–Y relationship, while dāna, peyyavajja, atthacariyā, and samānattatā provide directions for the meaning of leadership oriented towards caring, benefit, and justice.

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

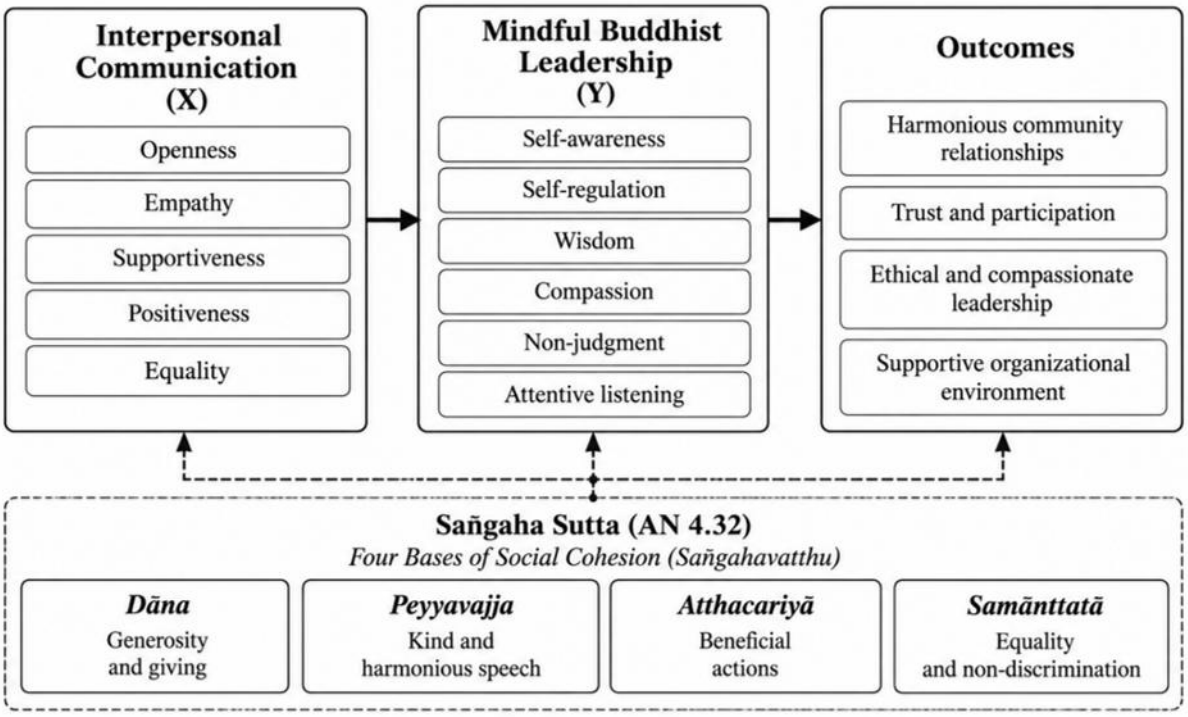


Figure 1. An Integrative Model of Research Findings and the Sangaha Sutta (AN 4.32)

Conclusion

This study shows that interpersonal communication has a positive and significant relationship with mindful Buddhist leadership in temple leaders in East Lampung Regency. Openness, empathy, supportiveness, positive attitudes, and equality are relevant aspects of interpersonal communication in building harmonious relationships and supporting leadership practices based on self-awareness, self-control, wisdom, and compassion. In the perspective of the *Saṅgaha Sutta* (AN 4.32), the findings can be interpreted through the four principles of the maintenance of social relations, namely *dāna* (generosity), *peyyavajja* (kind speech), *atthacariyā* (beneficial actions), and *samānattatā* (equal treatment). These four principles provide an ethical foundation for understanding interpersonal communication as a leadership practice that is not only oriented towards the delivery of information, but also on the maintenance of social relationships, care, and the well-being of the Buddhist community. Theoretically, this study contributes by integrating the study of interpersonal communication and mindful leadership through the perspective of Buddhist relational ethics. In practical terms, these findings confirm the importance of developing empathetic, inclusive, and service-oriented communication in the leadership of Buddhist religious organizations. However, the use of a cross-sectional survey design with 39 respondents limits the generalization and drawing of causal conclusions. Further research is suggested to involve a broader population and empirically test the principles of the *Saṅgaha Sutta* in a model of conscious Buddhist leadership.

JGSB: Jurnal Gerakan Semangat Buddhayana
Vol. 4, No.2, October 2026, Page. 123-137
DOI: https://doi.org/10.60046/jgsb.v4i2.359
E-ISSN: 3031-1985
https://ejournal.stiab-jinarakkhita.ac.id/index.php/jgsb/index

References

Anālayo, B. (2018). The Case for Reviving the Bhikkhun ī Order by Single Ordination. *Journal of Buddhist Ethics ISSN*, *25*(931–962).

Anna, A., Nyanasuryanadi, P., & Burmansah, B. (2023). The Effect of Mindfulness Practices and Principal Leadership on Teacher Job Satisfaction at Buddhist Schools. *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Multikulturalisme*, *5*(3). https://doi.org/10.37680/scaffolding.v5i3.3708

Ardianto, H., Suryanadi, J., & Burmansah, B. (2024). The Unravelling of Transformational Leadership Dimension Effects on Learning Organization Company' Employees. In S. S. Azahra (Ed.), *The Fifth International Research Conference on Management and Business (5th IRCMB)*. Management Study Program Faculty of Economics Universitas Negeri Jakarta & Indonesian Financial Management Association.

Burmansah, B., Rugaiyah, R., & Mukhtar, M. (2019). A case study of mindful leadership in an ability to develop focus, clarity, and creativity of the buddhist higher education institute leader. *International Journal of Higher Education*, *8*(6). https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v8n6p57

DeVito, J. A. (2013). Interpersonal Communication Book, The, 13/E. *New York, NY: United*.

Donald, J. N., Nguyen, H., Conigrave, J. H., Johnson, A., Adarves-Yorno, I., Cheng, R., Bedi, A., Lowe, K. B., Lyons, J. L., Devine, E. K., Tamm, G. B., & Ryan, R. M. (2026). Does Leaders' Mindfulness Benefit Followers? A Meta-analytic Review and Research Agenda. *British Journal of Management*, *37*(1), e70009. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.70009

Doornich, J. B., & Lynch, H. M. (2024). The mindful leader: a review of leadership qualities derived from mindfulness meditation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *15*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1322507

Du, S., & Xie, W. (2025). The impact of leader mindfulness in communication on employees' psychological safety. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *16*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1540820

Lee, A., Newman, A., Maio, G. R., Piplani, R. S., & Harvey, W. S. (2025). Leader-follower value congruence: A systematic review of the literature and a future research agenda. *Leadership Quarterly*, *36*(6). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2025.101922

Mezentseva, A., Gracia, F. J., Silla, I., & Martínez-Córcoles, M. (2023). The role of empowering leadership, safety culture and safety climate in the prediction of mindful organizing in an air traffic management company. *Safety Science*, *168*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssci.2023.106321

Ni, D., Zheng, X., & Liang, L. H. (2023). How and when leader mindfulness influences team member interpersonal behavior: Evidence from a quasi-field experiment and a field survey. *Human Relations*, *76*(12). https://doi.org/10.1177/00187267221128571

Öngel, G., Tabancalı, E., & Korumaz, M. (2022). Leadership Roles for Mindful Schools: Examining Relationships Between Different Leadership Roles of School Principals and School Mindfulness. *International Education Studies*, *15*(1).

https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v15n1p63

Putri, M. S. A., & Sumardjijati. (2026). Interpersonal Communication Between Shadow Teachers and Students with Special Needs in Inclusive Schools. *Informasi*, *56*(1). https://doi.org/10.21831/informasi.v56i1.98511

Samad, M. Y. A., Fauzi, F., Marhamah, M., & Rahmani, S. U. (2023). Interpersonal Communication and Situational Leadership on Teacher Performance. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, *21*(1). https://doi.org/10.31315/jik.v21i1.7360

Sugiyanto, E., Ekowati, S., Finthariasari, M., Harini, R., Yuniarti, R., & Pitra, A. (2024). The Influence of Leadership and Organizational Culture on Employee Performance Mediated by Interpersonal Communication. *Journal of Social Work and Science Education*, *5*(3). https://doi.org/10.52690/jswse.v5i3.880

Urrila, L., & Eva, N. (2024). Developing oneself to serve others? Servant leadership practices of mindfulness-trained leaders. *Journal of Business Research*, *183*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2024.114858

Vivek, O. (2024). The Ethics of Malicious Speech in Buddhist Thought: A Comprehensive Analysis of Pisunavācā and Sammā Vācā. *International Research Journal of Education and Technology*, *6*(11). https://doi.org/10.70127/irjedt.vol.6.issue12.1680