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Developing a Local Curriculum Based on Cultural Community Identity Using Soft Power Case Study of Wat Bot District Phitsanulok Province: Applications of Design-Based Research

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Abstract

This study utilized a Design-Based Research (DBR) framework to investigate the integration of cultural community identity into the basic education curriculum through the strategic promotion of soft power. The research was conducted in the Tho Tae and Tha Ngam Sub-districts of Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, with three primary objectives: (1) to analyze the localized context and indigenous knowledge systems; (2) to design and develop contextually appropriate curricula grounded in cultural identity; and (3) to evaluate the pedagogical outcomes of these interventions. The participant pool (N = 461) comprised a multidisciplinary cohort of school administrators, educators, local wisdom holders, curriculum designers, and students (Grades 1–9) during the 2024 academic year. Data were elicited through a robust suite of qualitative and quantitative instruments, including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, curriculum suitability rubrics, and standardized achievement assessments. Quantitative analysis involved the calculation of E_1/E_2 efficiency indices, descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation), and dependent samples t-tests. Findings revealed that the palmyra palm (*Borassus flabellifer*) in Tho Tae Sub district functions as a primary driver of soft power within the domain of gastronomy, while Wat Senat in Tha Ngam Sub-district serves as a cornerstone of traditional and historical soft power. The developed localized curricula, “Roo Rak Tan Tanod” and “Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat,” demonstrated high operational efficiency, yielding E_1/E_2 values of 83.04/82.80 and 83.93/83.21, respectively—exceeding the 80/80 benchmark. Furthermore, student post-test achievement scores showed a statistically significant increase over pre-test scores at the .01 level. Stakeholder evaluations indicated the highest level of agreement regarding the curricula’s efficacy, suggesting that identity-based instructional models significantly enhance both academic performance and communal cultural stewardship.

Keywords: cultural community identity, local curriculum, soft power, the application of design-based research

1. Introduction

Contemporary Thai society is navigating a landscape of volatile transformations, precipitated by the dual pressures of globalization and neoliberal capitalism. These systemic forces have catalyzed a heightened academic and civic discourse regarding cultural preservation, as the expansion of global markets increasingly destabilizes the integrity of local traditions. Consequently, the pervasive influence of capitalist frameworks has led to a progressive erosion of localized cultural identities, which face gradual obsolescence in the face of homogenization (Marlia et al., 2025; Pantazopoulos, 2025). Despite these globalizing pressures, Thailand maintains a profound cultural resonance rooted in a storied historical lineage. This heritage constitutes significant cultural capital, manifested through diverse sectors such as gastronomy, traditional arts, media, and heritage tourism. These indigenous assets have garnered international acclaim via the mechanism of soft power—a concept defined as the capacity to secure preferred outcomes through attraction and persuasion rather than via coercive or transactional imperatives (Nye, 2004). Unlike traditional "hard power," this strategic influence operates by cultivating global admiration and voluntary engagement, fostering a sense of affinity and legitimacy through the organic appeal of Thai values and aesthetics (Karnreungsiri & Satawedin, 2022; Surasit, 2023). In practice, the evolution of a nation’s soft power is

an endogenous and longitudinal process, emerging organically from its specific socio-historical context. Central to this development is community identity, which serves as the foundational socio-cultural fabric that fosters collective cohesion through shared epistemologies, traditional wisdom, and customary praxis. This identity functions as a marker of cultural differentiation, distinguishing the unique ethos of one community from another. These localized identities, which exhibit significant regional heterogeneity, are manifested through multifaceted cultural expressions—including linguistic nuances, sartorial traditions, and religious belief systems—that are systematically internalized and transmitted across generations (Sukbua et al., 2019). Beyond broader regional patterns, the Sub districts of Tho Tae and Tha Ngam within the Wat Bot District of Phitsanulok Province exemplify the localization of intangible cultural heritage. A primary marker of this communal identity is the enduring socioeconomic legacy of palmyra sugar (*Borassus flabellifer*) production, institutionalized through the annual "Tan Tanod Heritage, Wat Bot Local Products and Food Festival." This event functions as a critical mechanism for the valorization of regional commodities and the reinforcement of local economic resilience.

Furthermore, the district's spiritual landscape is anchored by Wat Senat Temple, an ancient ecclesiastical site dating back to 1232 C.E. (689 B.E.). The temple serves as a repository for sacred Buddha relics, around which the community maintains rigorous cultural continuity through prescriptive ritualistic practices. These include the annual lustration ceremonies for the relics and the *Luang Pho To* image, observed during the first and second waxing days of the fifth lunar month, respectively. Such rituals underscore the profound intersection of religious devotion and communal solidarity in Wat Bot District, necessitating sustained efforts in heritage preservation and intergenerational transmission (Sukbua et al., 2019). In alignment with the Basic Education Core Curriculum (2008), the Ministry of Education has institutionalized learning standards that prioritize decentralized, context-sensitive curriculum management. Under this framework, local educational service areas and affiliated agencies are mandated to bridge the gap between national mandates and localized sociocultural needs. This involves the systematic integration of community-specific content into school-based curricula to foster a sense of civic pride and regional identity among learners. Central to this mission is the amelioration of local curricular frameworks, which serve as blueprints for instructional design, ensuring that pedagogical content remains culturally relevant while adhering to national benchmarks (Office of the Education Council, 2021).

Moreover, the efficacy of this localized approach is predicated on transformative academic leadership and the enhancement of teacher competencies. By leveraging soft power—specifically through the cultivation of values, attitudes, and intrinsic motivation—educators can create more resonant learning environments within their institutions. The primary objective of such localized development is to ensure that educational content is pragmatically applicable to the students' lived experiences, shifting the focus toward learner-centered pedagogy. This paradigm encourages critical inquiry, experiential learning, and the synthesis of diverse knowledge sources. Consequently, the successful implementation of these curricula rests upon the professional agency and accountability of teachers and administrators, who function as the operational core of national educational reform (Office of the National Education Commission, 2022). Consequently, the preservation and sustainability of communal cultural identity necessitate a structured pedagogical framework designed to instill in youth a sense of historical stewardship and cultural appreciation. This evolutionary process facilitates the sustainable continuity of heritage through the strategic deployment of soft power, as exemplified by the distinctive cultural landscape of Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province.

Informed by this socio-educational imperative, the present study sought to articulate a localized curriculum grounded in cultural identity and the promotion of soft power. The researchers adopted a Design-Based Research (DBR) methodology—a dual-purpose approach that emphasizes process-oriented inquiry and contextual sensitivity (Jen et al., 2015). By prioritizing the iterative design of educational innovations through robust stakeholder collaboration (Dolmans, 2019), this study aimed to develop a curricular model that is both theoretically sound and culturally resonant. Ultimately, the objective was to synthesize an instructional framework that aligns local cultural capital with the practical requirements of basic education, ensuring its relevance for both the learners and the broader community.

1.1 Objectives

1) To examine the context and core knowledge based on cultural community identity through the promotion of soft power in Tho Tae Subdistrict and Tha Ngam Subdistrict, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province

2) To study the design and development of local curricula grounded in cultural community identity through soft power that are appropriate for learners and local communities in Tho Tae Subdistrict and Tha Ngam Subdistrict, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province

3) To investigate the outcomes of implementing local curricula based on cultural community identity through soft

power in basic education learning management at Wat Thong Tae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya) and Wat Senat School, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks in Instructional Model Development

The efficacy of the learning process is fundamentally predicated on the quality of instructional management. Optimized learning outcomes necessitate the deployment of instructional models that are rigorously aligned with specific educational contexts and situational dynamics. The following sections synthesize the core tenets of instructional modelling.

2.1.1 Conceptualizing the Instructional Model

An instructional model is defined as a systematic blueprint or "master plan" engineered according to robust theoretical frameworks. It encompasses a comprehensive array of components, including foundational principles, learning objectives, content structures, instructional media, and evaluative mechanisms. When effectively operationalized by educators, these models facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, cognitive development, psychomotor skills, and value systems, thereby enhancing the learner's capacity for self-expression and intellectual agency (Joyce & Calhoun, 2025; Pittayasanee, 2021).

2.1.2 Structural Components of Instructional Models

Instructional models are constituted by several critical elements that ensure pedagogical coherence as follows. First, theoretical foundations: the underlying philosophies, paradigms, or belief systems that anchor the model. Second, descriptive frameworks: the articulation of instructional characteristics that remain congruent with the established principles. Third, systemic organization: the strategic arrangement of components and their interrelationships to guide the learner toward specific teleological goals. Fourth, methodological specifications: the provision of instructional techniques and strategies designed to maximize process efficiency. Finally, classroom ecology: the resulting interpersonal dynamics between instructors and learners, and the subsequent measurable outputs of the defined process (Huitt, 2005; Khammani, 2024).

2.1.3 The Instructional Design Process

The development of a sophisticated instructional model is a multi-dimensional endeavor. According to the Dick and Carey Systems Approach, this process comprises ten systematic phases including instructional goal identification that defines the overarching purpose of the instruction, instructional analysis determines the specific skills and knowledge required to achieve the goals, learner and context analysis assess the characteristics of the target population and the environment in which learning occurs, performance objectives formulation that are writing specific, measurable behavioral outcomes, assessment instrument development is constructing tools to evaluate student achievement, instructional strategy development is designed the overarching methodology for content delivery, materials selection and development produce or source the necessary educational resources, formative evaluation that is designing and conducting ongoing assessments to refine the instruction, summative evaluation to evaluating the total effectiveness of the instructional system, and instructional revision to utilize evaluative data to iteratively improve the model (Dick et al., 2015).

2.2 Theoretical Foundations of Localized Curriculum Development

A localized curriculum is defined as an educational framework specifically engineered to align instructional delivery with the idiosyncratic context of a particular community. It integrates regional geographic profiles, historical narratives, socio-cultural traditions, and indigenous wisdom into the learning experience. The primary objective is the intergenerational transmission of these elements to ensure the preservation and vitalization of local heritage.

2.2.1 Defining the Localized Curriculum

The conceptualization of a localized curriculum involves the strategic curation of educational experiences that address the specific exigencies and sociocultural challenges of students and their immediate environment. Consequently, these curricula exhibit significant variance between communities, as they are shaped by localized determinants. The ultimate aim is to empower learners to synthesize academic knowledge with practical application for personal empowerment, vocational development, and the advancement of their community (Sukkasemsin & Srisa-ard, 2019; Thumthong, 2010).

2.2.2 The Significance of Curricular Localization

The necessity for localized curriculum development arises from the inherent limitations of standardized national

mandates. National core curricula are often broad and teleological—focusing more on abstract educational values than on the pragmatic, situational requirements of diverse regions. Therefore, it is imperative to adapt or "recontextualize" these frameworks to reflect the economic, social, and environmental realities of the learners' lives. This approach facilitates experiential learning through direct engagement with the community while providing stakeholders with the agency to participate in the democratic process of curriculum design (Thatthong, 2007).

2.2.3 Methodological Framework for Localized Development

The systematic orchestration of a localized curriculum follows a rigorous eight-stage trajectory designed to ensure quality and relevance (Ministry of Education, 2009; Kaur & Srichat, 2022; Nomnian et al., 2025; Rodnawee & Thiamtham, 2024; Srisa-ard et al., 2024) that include assembly of a steering committee, baseline situational analysis, determination of curricular components aligning course objectives with the four cardinal domains of learning such as Cognitive (Knowledge), Psychomotor (Skills), Affective (Attitude), and Procedural (Process). Moreover, production of curricular documentation that is developing instructional blueprints, including lesson plans, pedagogical handbooks, supplementary readers, and multimedia resources. Additionally, quality assurance and pilot implementation, administrative authorization, administrative authorization, administrative authorization, implementation and supervision, and summative evaluation and iterative refinement. The data derived from this phase serves as the empirical basis for continuous quality improvement.

2.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Soft Power

2.3.1 Defining Soft Power and National Branding

Soft Power is conceptualized as a strategic "mechanism" or "process" through which a nation cultivates international leverage. Unlike traditional hard power, this influence is exerted via cultural attraction, media dissemination, tourism, and diplomatic initiatives designed to internalize a specific national identity or "National Brand" in the global consciousness. This paradigm necessitates a systematic, long-term strategic trajectory with clearly articulated objectives (Nye, 2021; Pongsawat, 2024). Complementing this view, Thirawat (2022) posits that Soft Power serves as a highly efficacious diplomatic instrument. Its success is predicated on the precise identification of indigenous resources and the formulation of congruent foreign policies, alongside communication strategies that foster robust people-to-people diplomacy.

2.3.2 Constituents of Soft Power Resources

According to Wongyai and Patphol (2022), the genesis of a nation's soft power is derived from three primary dimensions: cultural assets are the historical depth of traditions, aesthetic tourism landmarks, and gastronomy. In addition, societal values, and foreign policy, and global engagement are strategic positioning through international sports, cultural diplomacy, and the creative entertainment industries.

2.3.3 The Thai Context: The "5F" Strategic Framework

Thailand possesses a rich cultural reservoir that has garnered significant international acclaim, particularly in classical performing arts, culinary traditions, Muay Thai, and cinema. To capitalize on these assets, the Thai government has institutionalized a policy to elevate its creative industries through the "5F" Framework including food to promote Thai gastronomy as a global culinary standard, film leveraging cinema and digital media to project Thai narratives, fashion integrating traditional Thai textiles with contemporary design, fighting by utilizing Muay Thai as a distinctive sporting and cultural export, and festival enhancing the global visibility of local traditions and seasonal rites. Within the Thai developmental paradigm, Soft Power functions as a multifaceted tool for national advancement—spanning economic revitalization, cultural preservation, and national security. By transforming these five cultural pillars into strategic resources, the state aims to enhance Thailand's global image and stimulate the tourism sector through "attraction-based" diplomacy (Thirawat, 2022).

2.4 Theoretical Foundations of Design-Based Research (DBR)

Design-Based Research (DBR) represents a contemporary paradigm shift in educational inquiry, evolving from the broader design research movements of the late 19th century. In this approach, researchers integrate design thinking into the formal investigative process to bridge the gap between theoretical constructs and practical application.

2.4.1 Conceptualizing Design-Based Research

DBR is defined as a systematic yet flexible research methodology aimed at improving educational practices through iterative cycles of design, enactment, analysis, and refinement. This process is fundamentally collaborative, requiring a symbiotic partnership between researchers and practitioners within authentic learning

environments to ensure that the resulting innovations are both theoretically sound and contextually relevant (Wang & Hannafin, 2020).

2.4.2 Principles and Operational Framework of DBR

The operational mechanics of DBR are governed by three cardinal principles (Wongwanich, 2020) such as problem-oriented flexibility that is the research is driven by clearly articulated goals to resolve specific pedagogical challenges, utilizing an adaptable design process that evolves according to the needs of the target population. Furthermore, researcher-practitioner collaboration emphasizing the close cooperation between the researcher—who provides methodological and analytical expertise—and the practitioner, who possesses an intimate understanding of the classroom or community context, and recursive continuity that each phase of the DBR process is interconnected and reversible, allowing researchers to revisit earlier stages to refine instruments or strategies based on real-time feedback and emerging data.

2.4.3 The Five-Stage Design Process

In the context of this study, the DBR framework is operationalized through five distinct stages including empathize that is a diagnostic phase focused on identifying the target stakeholders and understanding the nuanced problems and sociocultural contexts of the research site, define, ideate, prototype, and test.

3. Methodology

This study employed a research methodology in the behavioral and social sciences using a design-based research (DBR) approach. The research was conducted in three phases, as described below.

3.1 The Primary Phase

Study of context and knowledge based on cultural community identity through soft power is explained as bellow.

3.1.1 Site Selection and Participant Recruitment

The selection of the research locales—specifically the Tho Tae and Tha Ngam Sub districts in Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province—was governed by a purposive, criterion-based framework. Eligible sites were required to demonstrate a minimum of ten years of documented cultural identity, particularly within the domains of gastronomy and heritage tourism. Additional selection parameters included logistical feasibility, researcher safety, and a demonstrable readiness for communal collaboration. Participants (N = 15) were recruited through purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of high-level expertise. The cohort comprised school administrators and educators with a minimum of 15 years of professional tenure, alongside local community scholars possessing over 20 years of specialized knowledge in regional heritage.

3.1.2 Research Instruments and Validation

To ensure the content validity of the qualitative tools, two primary instruments were developed and subjected to expert review including semi-structured interview protocols are designed to elicit nuanced data on the contextual nuances of cultural identity, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guidelines are structured to explore the intersection of community knowledge and soft power. Moreover, the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) for both instruments ranged from 0.80 to 1.00, confirming their alignment with the research objectives.

3.1.3 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection followed a rigorous, multi-stage protocol:

1) Documentary Analysis**:** An initial synthesis of extant literature and regional records provided the theoretical and contextual foundation.

2) Ethical Clearance and Informed Consent: Formal administrative permission was secured, followed by the acquisition of written informed consent from all participants, ensuring transparency regarding research aims.

3) Field Inquiry: Primary data were gathered through semi-structured interviews at Wat Thong Tae and Wat Senat Schools, supplemented by participant observation and field notes.

4) Collective Discourse: Focus group discussions with community scholars were conducted to refine and triangulate the knowledge base regarding local soft power.

3.1.4 Data Trustworthiness and Analysis

To ensure data credibility, the study employed triangulation, cross-referencing findings across temporal, spatial, and source-based dimensions.The analytical phase utilized analytic induction (Phothisita, 2021). Documentary evidence was categorized through typological and taxonomic classification, while interview and FGD transcripts underwent rigorous content analysis. The findings are articulated through a synthesis of descriptive and

comparative narration, highlighting the structural relationships between community identity and educational innovation.

3.2 The Secondary Phase

Design and development of local curricula based on cultural community identity through soft power, which are appropriate to learners and local communities.

The selection of research areas for this phase was based on the following criteria, including target schools that demonstrated interest in developing local curricula grounded in cultural community identity in the dimensions of food and tourism, and target schools showed readiness and willingness to cooperate and participate throughout the entire research process. Based on these criteria, the research sites were Wat Thong Thae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya), Tho Tae Sub district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, and Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province.

Furthermore, the key informants consisted of a curriculum design team that composed of curriculum and instruction lecturers, school administrators, teachers, educational supervisors, and experts, totaling 10 participants. They were selected through purposive sampling using the following criteria including curriculum and instruction lecturers with at least 10 years of teaching experience; school administrators with at least 15 years of administrative experience; teachers with at least 15 years of teaching experience; educational supervisors with at least 15 years of supervisory experience; and experts with at least 10 years of expertise in learning measurement and evaluation respectively. Moreover, the research instruments included a curriculum design and development analysis form for local curricula based on cultural community identity through soft power, with an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) ranging from 0.80 to 1.00; focus group discussion guidelines on local curricula based on cultural community identity through soft power in Tho Tae and Tha Ngam Sub districts, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, with an IOC ranging from 0.80 to 1.00 (Topitak, 2020); and a curriculum suitability evaluation form for local curricula based on cultural community identity through soft power, with an IOC ranging from 0.80 to 1.00.

Additionally, data were collected through the following procedures consist of preparing official permission letters and informed consent forms, scheduling data collection sessions, explaining the research objectives, and obtaining written consent from participants; conducting the first focus group discussion with the design team to design and develop local curricula based on cultural community identity through soft power that were appropriate for learners and communities at Wat Thong Tae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya) and Wat Senat School, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, with systematic recording using the curriculum analysis form; conducting the second focus group discussion with the design team to further refine and develop the local curricula, with systematic recording using the curriculum analysis form; and conducting the third focus group discussion in the form of an expert-based seminar to enhance the effectiveness of the local curricula, using the curriculum evaluation form. Data analysis and presentation were conducted as follows including data obtained from focus group discussions were classified and systematically organized using typology and taxonomy, and analyzed through content analysis and analytic induction (Phothisita, 2021), also the findings were presented in a descriptive and comparative narrative format; data from the evaluation of curriculum quality were analyzed by determining the level of curriculum suitability using a mean score of 3.51 or higher and a standard deviation not exceeding 1.00 (Srisa-ard, 2017); and the efficiency of the local curricula based on cultural community identity through soft power was analyzed by comparing process and outcome efficiency (E_1/E_2) against the 80/80 criterion for both Wat Thong Tae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya) and Wat Senat School, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province.

3.2.1 Institutional Context and Participant Profile

The research was situated within two purposively selected academic institutions: Wat Thong Thae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya**)** and Wat Senat School. Selection criteria mandated a demonstrable institutional commitment to integrating local cultural capital—specifically in the domains of gastronomy and tourism—into the formal curriculum, alongside a high degree of organizational readiness for collaborative research. The curriculum design team ($N = 10$) was assembled through purposive sampling, ensuring a multidisciplinary synthesis of expertise. The cohort included curriculum and instruction academics (min. 10 years' experience), school administrators and educational supervisors (min. 15 years' experience), and pedagogical experts specializing in educational measurement and evaluation (min. 10 years' experience).

3.2.2 Evaluative Instrumentation and Validation

Three primary instruments were utilized to ensure the structural integrity of the developed curricula, including Curricular Analysis Protocols to facilitate the systematic design of soft-power-based modules, Focus Group

Discussion (FGD) Guidelines to tailor to the sociocultural context of the Wat Bot District (Topitak, 2020), and Curriculum Suitability Scales for the formal assessment of the proposed instructional models. All instruments maintained high Content Validity, with an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) ranging from 0.80 to 1.00.

3.2.3 The Iterative Design Process

Data collection followed a structured, tripartite Focus Group Discussion (FGD) model to facilitate recursive refinement including Phase I (Initial Synthesis) to collaborate with the design team to delineate the foundational architecture of the localized curriculum, Phase II (Refinement) utilizing feedback from the initial analysis to enhance the pedagogical alignment with learner needs, and Phase III (Expert Consensus) conducting a formal seminar to validate the curriculum's efficacy and final design.

3.2.4 Data Analysis and Statistical Benchmarks

The qualitative data underwent typological and taxonomic organization, followed by analytic induction and content analysis (Phothisita, 2021). Quantitative evaluation of the curriculum's suitability was benchmarked against a mean score ($\underline{X}$) threshold of 3.51 with a standard deviation (S.D.) of ≤ 1.00 (Srisa-ard, 2017). Finally, the operational efficiency of the curricula at both institutions was rigorously tested using the (E1/E2) (Process/Product) Efficiency Formula, targeted against the 80/80 criterion. This dual-layer analysis ensures that the curriculum is not only theoretically robust but also yields measurable learning outcomes within the local basic education context.

3.3 The Final Phase: Research Sites and Participant Demographics

This phase of the study investigated the pedagogical impact of integrating localized curricula—anchored in cultural identity and soft power—within basic education frameworks. The research was conducted during the second semester of the 2024 academic year across two distinct institutional sites in the Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province. The student participants ($N = 419$) were categorized by institutional affiliation, including Wat Thong Tae (Chang Anukul Pittaya) School comprising 162 students spanning Grades 1 through 6, and Wat Senat School consisting of 257 students spanning Grades 1 through 9. In addition to the student body, the study engaged a cohort of key informants ($N = 17$) recruited through purposive sampling. This group included seven administrators and educators from Wat Thong Tae School and ten from Wat Senat School, all of whom provided expert insights into the curriculum's implementation and operational efficacy.

3.3.1 Research Instrumentation and Data Collection

To evaluate the learning outcomes and stakeholder perceptions, a suite of validated instruments was deployed including learning achievement summative assessments to tailor to the respective grade levels (Grades 1–6 at Wat Thong Tae and Grades 1–9 at Wat Senat) to measure the acquisition of knowledge post-implementation, and psychometric opinion questionnaires inclusively two localized instruments were developed to capture participant perspectives on the curricular interventions, for example the "Roo Rak Tan Tanod" questionnaire, specific to the palmyra palm heritage curriculum at Wat Thong Tae School, and the "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" questionnaire, focused on the cultural heritage modules at Wat Senat School. These instruments were designed to triangulate academic performance with subjective engagement, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of the curriculum's role in fostering cultural stewardship through soft power (Watthanakuljaroen, 2023; Lopattananont, 2025).

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

3.4.1 Experimental Design Was the Study Applied a One-Group Pretest–Posttest Design, as Shown Below (Worakham, 2023):

Pretest (O_1) Treatment (X) Posttest (O_2)

Where:

X represents the experimental treatment,

(O_1) represents the pretest, and

(O_2) represents the posttest.

3.4.2 Experimental Timeline and Settings

The implementation phase was conducted during the second semester of the 2024 academic year. The study operationalized two distinct localized curricula include the "Roo Rak Tan Tanod" Curriculum that implemented at Wat Thong Tae (Chang Anukul Phitthaya) School, involving 162 students from Grades 1 to 6, and the "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" Curriculum implementing at Wat Senat School, involving 257 students

from Grades 1 to 9.

3.4.3 Experimental Procedures Were the Experimental Implementation

3.4.3.1 Experimental Protocol

The researchers followed a systematic One-Group Pre-test/Post-test Design to evaluate the efficacy of the identity-based curricula driven by soft power. The procedure was executed in five sequential stages, including baseline assessment (Pre-test), which is the administration of standardized learning achievement tests to all student participants to establish initial competency levels, and pedagogical intervention, which is the implementation of the validated localized curricula. These modules were deployed only after passing a rigorous efficiency screening process. Moreover, summative assessment (Post-test) following the instructional period, students completed the same achievement tests to measure knowledge gain and the impact of the cultural identity modules, comparative analysis that is a statistical comparison of pre-test and post-test mean scores was conducted using dependent samples t-tests to determine the significance of academic improvement, and perception inquiry that is administration of opinion questionnaires to school administrators and teachers (N=7 at Wat Thong Tae; N=10 at Wat Senat) to assess the perceived outcomes and quality of the curricular implementation.

3.4.3.2 Data Analysis and Statistical Framework

The data were analyzed and are presented using the following scholarly benchmarks, including curricular efficiency (E_1/E_2) defining the efficiency of the "Roo Rak Tan Tanod" and "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" models, calculated using the 80/80 criterion. This analysis was first performed with a non-sample pilot group to ensure procedural reliability before the primary experiment. Additionally, learning achievement to test the research hypothesis, a dependent t-test was utilized to compare the mean difference between pre-test and post-test scores. This data is presented through comparative tabular summaries and descriptive narration. Importantly, stakeholder evaluation, that is the perspectives from administrators and educators were quantified using mean ($\underline{X}$) and standard deviation (S.D.). These metrics provide an empirical basis for assessing the feasibility and communal impact of the curricula.

4. Results

4.1 Phase I

Results of the study on contextual conditions and knowledge based on cultural community identity driven by soft power in the Tho Tae and the Tha Ngam Sub-districts, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province.

4.1.1 Contextual Conditions of the Tho Tae Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, Included General Contexts

Tho Tae Sub-district, situated within the Wat Bot District of Phitsanulok Province, encompasses a geographical expanse of approximately 44 square kilometers. Strategically positioned in the southern periphery of the district, the sub district maintains close proximity to the municipal centre (5 km) and the provincial capital of Phitsanulok (25 km). Demographically, the area is organized into eight distinct administrative villages, supporting a residential population of roughly 1,800 households. The topographical profile of the region is characterized by a fertile lowland plain bisected by the Kwae Noi River. The terrain exhibits a distinctive fluvial morphology, with slightly elevated banks that gradually descend toward the sub district's boundaries—a landscape highly conducive to intensive agricultural production. A defining feature of this agrarian economy is the widespread cultivation of the palmyra palm (*Borassus flabellifer*), which has evolved into a hallmark of the region's cultural and economic identity through the production of specialized sugar palm commodities. The sub-district's social and spiritual infrastructure is anchored by several key institutions, including seven Buddhist temples—notably Wat Thong Tae and Wat Lao Kwan—and four educational facilities, such as the Wat Thong Tae (Chang Anukul Phittaya) and Wat Lao Kwan (Chang Anukroh) schools. These institutions, alongside the Tho Tae Sub-district Administrative Organization and the Sub-district Health Promoting Hospital, constitute the vital communal pillars that facilitate the integration of local heritage into formal educational frameworks (Kaewhorm, 2024).

4.1.2 Contextual Conditions of Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, Included General Contexts

The Tha Ngam Sub-district constitutes one of the six primary administrative divisions within the Wat Bot District of Phitsanulok Province, situated approximately 9 kilometers from the district's central hub. The topographical profile of the sub district is predominantly defined by an expansive lowland plain bifurcated by the Kwae Noi River, which traverses the region for approximately 10 kilometers. This fluvial system serves as a critical hydro-resource, sustaining both domestic consumption and the intensive agricultural activities that underpin the local

economy. The settlement patterns in Tha Ngam reflect a high degree of riparian dependency; the riverbanks are densely populated, while the outlying fertile lowlands are dedicated to diverse agrarian pursuits, including rice cultivation, field crops, perennial arboriculture, and livestock husbandry. Demographically, the sub-district is composed of 13 administrative villages, housing a total of approximately 1,889 households. The institutional landscape of Tha Ngam is anchored by several foundational pillars of social and cultural continuity, including four Buddhist temples—most notably Wat Senat—and four educational institutions. These sites, along with the Sub-district Health Promoting Hospital, serve as the primary repositories of local ecological and cultural knowledge. The intersection of these communal spaces provides the empirical basis for the specialized curriculum grounded in the cultural identity of the Wat Bot District (Chantharak, 2024).

4.1.3 The Key Findings Related to Cultural Community Identity

The palmyra palm (*Borassus flabellifer*), locally referred to as *Tan* or *Tan Tanod*, serves as a cornerstone of the biocultural identity in the Tho Tae Sub district. A robust arborescent species within the Arecaceae family, the *Borassus* is characterized by its significant height—reaching up to 40 meters—and its dioecious reproductive nature, where staminate (male) and pistillate (female) flowers are hosted on separate individuals. Physiologically, the tree is noted for its high durability; its lignified, dark exterior trunk protects a more succulent inner core. The expansive, fibrous root system provides exceptional structural stability, allowing the species to thrive in the lowland plains of Wat Bot. Its fan-shaped fronds, measuring up to 1.5 meters in width, are supported by petioles armored with serrated black spines. From a pedagogical and economic perspective, the palm's reproductive cycle is of particular interest to the local curriculum. The male inflorescences, known colloquially as "tan fingers," and the female fruit clusters (*thalai tan*), which yield between 10 and 20 fruits, represent the primary sources of raw material for local commodities. The Wat Bot District maintains an estimated population of 12,000 mature sugar palms, the majority of which are between 40 and 70 years of age. This established "natural capital" has seen a resurgence in cultivation due to its compatibility with intercropping systems—specifically alongside rice and field crops—making it a sustainable model for small-scale agrarian land use. Furthermore, the regional development precipitated by the Kwae Noi Bamrung Dan Dam has catalyzed a burgeoning tourism sector. This shift has escalated the global and domestic demand for artisanal palmyra products, effectively transforming a traditional agricultural practice into a potent instrument of community-based soft power and a vital subject for localized vocational education. Importantly, the main characteristics of the sugar palm include roots are long, cylindrical, brown roots that grow deeply into the soil and provide strong stability; trunk is straight, tall, and cylindrical, usually 18–25 meters high, and sometimes up to 30 meters, with very hard and durable wood; leaves are dark green, fan-shaped leaves grouped densely at the crown, with a lifespan of approximately three years; flowers are separate male and female flower clusters on different trees; and fruits are found only on female trees; young fruits are green and contain soft jelly-like flesh, while mature fruits are dark brown or black with aromatic fibrous flesh. Moreover, both the peel and mature palm flesh are commonly used to make traditional palm desserts and natural food coloring (Kaewhorm, 2024; Chantharak, 2024).

In addition, the historical background of Wat Senat, the Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, originally, Wat Senat was constructed concurrently with Wat Bot district. The two temples were said to be in competition with one another, with an agreement that whichever temple was completed first would signal its completion by beating a drum. The temple that finished first would be granted the honor of enshrining the Buddha's relics (Phra Borommathat) and the relics of the Buddha's principal disciples as sacred, auspicious objects of the temple. Wat Senat therefore employed a stratagem by covering the roof with white cloth to give the appearance of completion and immediately beating the drum loudly to announce that construction had been finished first. As a result, Wat Senat was granted custody of the sacred relics, which were preserved there. The historical account of the Buddha's relics enshrined at Wat Senat recounts the story of Maha Lai Lai, who was the son of a king of royal lineage, Phaya Si Sitthichai. Before his ordination, Maha Lai Lai served as a royal page to the ruler of the city of Lavo. He later committed adultery with one of the ruler's consorts and, upon being discovered, was punished by having one shoulder tattooed. From that time onward, he became known as "Maha Lai Lai" (the one with the tattooed shoulder). Subsequently, Maha Lai Lai traveled to the northern capital of Chiang Mai, where he sought ordination as a Buddhist monk. However, the monastic community refused to ordain him, and he therefore requested ordination as a novice instead, which was eventually granted. Not long afterward, the novice Lai Lai learned of a merchant vessel traveling to Lanka (Sri Lanka). He requested passage on the ship and journeyed with it until reaching the estuary leading to Lanka. There, he placed his alms bowl and staff into a shield-like vessel and floated into the city, arriving at a monastery where he sought temporary residence with an elderly monk. The novice then asked the elder monk to escort him to meet the Supreme Patriarch. Upon meeting him, the Supreme Patriarch inquired, "For what purpose have you come to reside in Lanka?" The novice replied, "I wish to request ordination

as a Buddhist monk." The Supreme Patriarch presented this request to the monastic council for consideration. The council, however, refused the ordination on the grounds that the novice bore a tattoo on one shoulder and was regarded as a fugitive, rendering him ineligible for full ordination. Upon learning of this decision, the novice Lai Lai did not persist in requesting ordination. Instead, he humbly asked only to be allowed to pay homage to the Buddha's relics enshrined within the Great Stupa. The monastic community consented and escorted him into the Great Stupa. When he reached the Bodhi tree, the novice circumambulated it clockwise three times. At that moment, a miraculous event occurred: a branch on the southern side of the Bodhi tree bent downward, allowing the novice to place it above his head. Simultaneously, the Buddha's relics manifested miraculously, floating above his head and emitting a radiant, luminous glow, clearly visible to all members of the monastic community. Witnessing this extraordinary event, the monks recognized the spiritual merit and accumulated virtue of the novice Lai Lai. Consequently, they unanimously agreed to confer full monastic ordination upon him immediately. Thereafter, Phra Maha Lai Lai traveled extensively to pay homage to the Buddha's footprint and other great stupas. Upon his return, the Supreme Patriarch compassionately bestowed upon him 650 relics of the Buddha, together with seeds from the Sri Maha Bodhi tree, instructing him to enshrine the relics and plant the Bodhi saplings in other regions so that monks, Brahmins, rulers, and the general populace might venerate them for generations to come.

Indeed, the astonishing traits of Wat Senat are thus closely associated with the archaeological and ancient monuments preserved within the temple grounds, which serve as enduring evidence of its historical, religious, and cultural significance. Wat Senat contains several important historical and religious structures, including a preaching hall of traditional Thai style, an ordination hall (Ubosot) in the Rattanakosin architectural style, a cloistered hall (Wihan Kot), a three-story bell tower decorated with stucco and colored glass, a two-story wooden prayer hall, the famous long boat Phaya Insee that carved from a large teak log and accommodating 48 rowers sacred Buddha relics, highly revered by the local community. Additionally, a twelve-sided chedi located behind the vihara, and the Great Chedi was constructed between 1994 and 2010, serving as the main reliquary monument. These features reflect the historical significance and strong religious faith associated with Wat Senat, both within and beyond the local community (Kaewhorm, 2024; Chantharak, 2024).

4.2 Phase II

Design and development of a local curriculum based on cultural community identity through soft power appropriate for learners and local communities in Tho Tae and Tha Ngam Sub districts, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province. The design and development of a local curriculum based on cultural community identity through the promotion of soft power, appropriate for learners and local communities in Tho Tae and Tha Ngam Sub districts, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, is described as follows.

4.2.1 Local Curriculum: "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" at Wat Thong Tae School (Chang Anukul Phittaya), Tho Tae Sub District, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province

4.2.1.1 Background and Significance of the Curriculum

The palmyra palm, locally known as Tan, "Tan Tanod", or "Nod", is a large palm species in the genus Borassus of the family Arecaceae. It is one of the strongest palm species and is dioecious, with male and female flowers growing on separate trees. The sugar palm can grow up to approximately 40 meters in height. Wat Bot District is an area with extensive sugar palm cultivation, with an estimated 12,000 trees, most of which are between 40 and 70 years old. In recent years, indigenous residents have increasingly replanted sugar palms because they require little land, can be grown together with rice farming and field crops, and require minimal maintenance. This practice also contributes to the conservation of palmyra palms, which are well known in the area. All parts of the sugar palm can be used for various purposes, making it a valuable provincial resource. To promote soft power rooted in cultural community identity in the area—particularly in the dimension of food culture in Tho Tae Sub district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province—it is necessary to ameliorate a local curriculum that integrates community context into school learning. This curriculum emphasizes collaboration with local knowledge holders and community sages to exchange experiences and transmit indigenous knowledge. Such a process supports and promotes local wisdom and ensures the continuation of cultural community identity through soft power in a sustainable manner.

4.2.1.2 Principles of the Curriculum

The principles encourage learning about cultural community identity through soft power in the dimension of food culture, enabling learners to develop awareness, self-value, and appreciation of their community, as well as a sense of community attachment. Moreover, to promote learners to engage in experiential learning aligned with local learning resources, to lead to the conservation, to progress continuation and further development of community

food culture, to provide education that fosters lifelong learning characteristics, and to enable learners to apply their knowledge and skills in everyday life.

4.2.1.3 Goals of the Curriculum

The goals enable learners to acquire knowledge and explicate awareness of the essentials of local wisdom as a cultural identity through soft power in food culture, as reflected in the Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod curriculum. They encourage learners and community members to recognize the main of participation in educational management with local wisdom holders and community sages actively involving in supporting education in response to the needs and expectations of stakeholders, and to enable learners and local communities to utilize cultural identity through soft power in food culture to create social value.

4.2.1.4 Structure and Content of the Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod Local Curriculum

Structure and content consist of learning units, learning content, and the number of instructional hours for each grade level.

Table 1. Structure and content of the Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod local curriculum

Grade Level	Learning Unit	Learning Content	Hours
Grade 1	Understanding the Sugar Palm	– History of the sugar palm (Borassus flabellifer) – Sources of the sugar palm – Importance and benefits of the sugar palm	3
Grade 2	Sugar Palm Gardens of Wat Bot	– Well-known sugar palm gardens – Methods of planting sugar palm trees – Care and maintenance of sugar palm gardens	3
Grade 3	Characteristics of Sugar Palm in Wat Bot	– Characteristics of sugar palm in Wat Bot District – Unique features of sugar palm in Wat Bot District – Distinctive characteristics of sugar palm in Wat Bot District	3
Grade 4	English Vocabulary and Usage Related to Sugar Palm	– Learning English vocabulary related to sugar palm – Using English vocabulary related to sugar palm – Communicating using English vocabulary related to sugar palm	3
Grade 5	Sugar Palm Production Process	– Steps in sugar palm production – Processing methods of sugar palm products – Creative development of sugar palm products	5
Grade 6	Famous Local Products of Wat Bot	– Sugar palm products – Value creation from sugar palm products – Marketing and distribution of sugar palm products	5

4.2.1.5 Instructional Time

Instructional time is the local curriculum entitled “Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod” implemented at Wat Thong Tae (Jang Anukul Phittaya) School, Tho Tae Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, which consists of a total of 22 instructional hours.

4.2.1.6 Learning Activities

Learning activities are designed to promote diverse learning experiences approaches, included inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, STEM-based learning, demonstration-based learning, collaborative and idea-sharing learning, questioning-based learning, and learning through community-based learning resources.

4.2.1.7 Instructional Media and Learning Resources

Instructional media and learning resources included learning handouts, worksheets, local experts and community scholars, photographs, images, video media, sugar palm products, sugar palm gardens, and sugar palm community enterprises.

4.2.1.8 Student Learning Is Measured and Evaluated Using the Following Criteria

Student learning consists of learning outcomes, practical skill, student work and projects, responses to questions and expression of opinions, and observation of participation and engagement in learning activities.

4.2.1.9 Roles of Stakeholders

The roles of stakeholders involved in the implementation of the curriculum include school administrators, teachers, students, the school board, parents, and members of the community. Thus, the evaluation of the effectiveness of

the "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" local curriculum at Wat Thong Tae (Jang Anukul Phittaya) School, Tho Tae Sub district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, was conducted as follows.

Table 2. Results of the effectiveness evaluation of the "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" local curriculum at Wat Thong Tae (Jang Anukul Pittaya) School, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, with 25 Grade 4 students (non-sample group)

Item	In-class Performance Score (E_1) (25 points)	Post-test Score (E_2) (20 points)
Mean	19.97	15.92
Standard Deviation	2.47	0.89
Total Score	519	414
Percentage	83.04	82.80
(E_1)/(E_2) = 83.04/82.80		

According to Table 2, the local curriculum "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" implemented at Wat Thong Tae (Jang Anukul Phitthaya) School, Tho Tae Sub district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, demonstrated satisfactory process efficiency and outcome efficiency (E_1/E_2) at 83.04/82.80. These results indicated the established effectiveness criterion of 80/80, demonstrating that the curriculum was effective in both instructional processes and learning outcomes.

4.2.2 The "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" Local Curriculum at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub District, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province

4.2.2.1 Background and Significance of the Curriculum

Wat Senat and Wat Bot Temple were established at the same time, and both of them historically competed in their construction. According to local tradition, the monastery that completed its construction first would beat a drum to announce completion and would be granted the sacred relics of the Buddha and his principal disciples to enshrine as auspicious symbols of the temple. Wat Senat employed a strategic approach by covering its roof with white cloth and sounding the drum to signify completion ahead of its counterpart. As a result, Wat Senat received and preserved the Buddha's relics. It contains several significant historical and cultural sites, including one sermon hall, one ordination hall, one gallery hall (Luang Pho To Shrine), one bell tower, one prayer hall, one long boat named Phaya Insee, the Buddha's relics, one stupa, and one great pagoda built specifically to enshrine the relics. Construction of the great pagoda also began in 1994 and was completed in 2010. It is therefore considered an ancient and well-known cultural site both within and beyond the provincial area. It is respected by community members and serves as a crucial learning resource for schools and the wider community. Preserving and passing on this cultural heritage is the main key for fostering pride among juvenile teenagers in their local identity. This initiative also supports the promotion of valuable soft power, reflecting the cultural identity associated with traditions in Tho Tae Sub district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, and ensuring its sustainability within the community. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a local curriculum for school-based learning that aligns with the community context. This curriculum should underscore collaboration with local experts and community sages to exchange knowledge and transmit local wisdom. Such an approach strengthens and sustains cultural identity through soft power in a meaningful and sustainable manner.

4.2.2.2 Principles of the Curriculum

The principles of the curriculum comprise promoting learning about community-based cultural identity through tourism-related soft power, enabling learners to ameliorate awareness, self-worth, and a strong sense of community belonging, encouraging experiential learning aligned with local learning resources, leading to the preservation, continuation, enhancing tourism-related community culture, providing education that fosters lifelong learning characteristics, and allowing learners to apply knowledge and skills in their daily lives.

4.2.2.3 The Objectives of the Curriculum

The objectives of the curriculum enable learners to acquire knowledge and awareness of the importance of local wisdom, such as a form of cultural identity, through tourism-related soft power under the curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat", to encourage learners and community members to recognize the significance of participation in educational management, and to ameliorate local wisdom through the involvement of community scholars. Therefore, the objectives of the curriculum are to respond to the needs and expectations of stakeholders and to enable learners and the community to utilize cultural identity driven by tourism-related soft power to construct social value.

4.2.2.4 Structure and Content of the Local Curriculum

The structure of the local curriculum consists of learning units, learning content, and allocated instructional hours, as presented in the table below.

Table 3. The structure and content of the "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" local curriculum

Grade Level	Learning Unit	Learning Content	Hours
Grade 1	Understanding Wat Senat	– History and reputation of Wat Senat – Background of Wat Senat – Ancient sites of Wat Senat	3
Grade 2	Distinctive Characteristics of Wat Senat	– Key characteristics of Wat Senat – Identity of Wat Senat – Outstanding features of Wat Senat	3
Grade 3	Understanding the Buddha's Relics	– History of the Buddha's relics – Stories and legends of the Buddha's relics – Characteristics of the Buddha's relics	3
Grade 4	Bathing Ceremony of the Buddha's Relics	– Tradition of bathing the Buddha's relics – Unique features of the relic bathing ceremony – Characteristics of the bathing ritual	3
Grade 5	Beliefs Related to the Buddha's Relics	– Faith and devotion toward the Buddha's relics – Sacredness of the Buddha's relics – Miracles associated with the Buddha's relics	3
Grade 6	History of Mae Takhian Thong	– Legend of Mae Takhian Thong – Beliefs related to Mae Takhian Thong – Characteristics of Mae Takhian Thong	3
Grade 7	Legends of Phaya Insee of Wat Senat	– History of Phaya Insee of Wat Senat – Beliefs related to Phaya Insee of Wat Senat	4
Grade 8	Sacred Water of Wat Senat	– Origin of the sacred water of Wat Senat – Beliefs related to the sacred water of Wat Senat	4
Grade 9	Wonders of the Buddha's Relics	– Miraculous aspects of the Buddha's relics at Wat Senat – Faith associated with the Buddha's relics at Wat Senat	4

4.2.2.5 Instructional Time

Instructional time is the total instructional time allocated for the implementation of the local curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, and is 30 hours.

4.2.2.6 Learning Activities

Learning activities consisted of a variety of instructional approaches, including inquiry-based learning and knowledge exploration, problem-based learning, STEM-based learning, collaborative learning and idea exchange, question-based learning, and learning from community-based learning resources.

4.2.2.7 Instructional Media and Learning Resources

Instructional media and learning resources included knowledge sheets, worksheets, local wisdom holders and community scholars, photographs, images, and video media, and main local sites such as Wat Senat, the Takian tree, sacred wells, and ancient boats.

4.2.2.8 Measurement and Evaluation

Student learning outcomes are measured and evaluated by using the following approaches, including learning achievement, practical and performance skills, student products or assignments, responses to questions and expression of opinions, and observation of participation and engagement in learning activities.

4.2.2.9 The Roles of Stakeholders

The roles of stakeholders involved in the curriculum implementation include school administrators, teachers, students, school committee members, parents and community members. Indeed, the efficiency of the local curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" implemented at Wat Senat School, Tha ngam Su-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, was evaluated as part of this study.

Table 4. Results of the efficiency evaluation of the local curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" at Wat Senat School, Phitsanulok Province, with 28 non-sample grade 7 students

Item	In-class Performance Score (E_1) (30 points)	Post-test Score (E_2) (20 points)
Mean	24.31	16.07
Standard Deviation	3.33	0.96
Total Score	705	466
Percentage	83.93	83.21
$(E_1)/(E_2)$ = 83.93/83.21		

Results from Table 4 indicated that the local curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" implemented at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, demonstrated satisfactory process efficiency and outcome efficiency (E_1/E_2) at 83.93/83.21, which meets the established effectiveness criterion of 80/80.

4.3 Phase III

Study of the outcomes of implementing local curricula based on cultural community identity through soft power integration in basic education. This phase focused on examining the outcomes of implementing local curricula grounded in cultural community identity and driven by soft power in basic education learning management at Wat Thong Tae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya), Tho Tae Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, and Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province.

4.3.1 The Results of Implementing the Local Curricula Based on Cultural Community Identity Through Soft Power Integration in Basic Education at Both Schools, They Are Presented as Follows

4.3.1.1 Local Curriculum: "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" at Wat Thong Tae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya)

The comparison of learning achievement in the topic "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" among students in Grades 1–6 at Wat Thong Tae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya), Tho Tae Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, is summarized below.

Table 5. Comparison of pre-test and post-test learning achievement on "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" among grade 1–6 students at Wat Thong Tae School, Phitsanulok Province

Grade Level	Achievement Test	*N*	Maximum score	$\underline{X}$	*S.D.*	$\underline{D}$	t	p-value
Grade 1	Pre-test	27	20	9.89	0.75	7.15	56.07**	.00
	Post-test			17.04	0.65			
Grade 2	Pre-test	26	20	10.07	0.73	7.19	47.49**	.00
	Post-test			17.26	0.70			
Grade 3	Pre-test	29	20	9.97	0.68	7.34	64.31**	.00
	Post-test			17.31	0.66			
Grade 4	Pre-test	25	20	9.88	0.60	7.36	57.71**	.00
	Post-test			17.24	0.66			
Grade 5	Pre-test	27	20	9.67	0.55	7.52	67.38**	.00
	Post-test			17.19	0.68			
Grade 6	Pre-test	28	20	9.82	0.67	7.43	56.96**	.00
	Post-test			17.25	0.64			

Note. **p < .01.

From Table 5, it was found that the comparison of students' learning achievement before and after instruction using the local curriculum "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" showed that the posttest mean scores were significantly higher than the pretest mean scores at the .01 level of statistical significance. This illustrated that students in Grades 1–6 at Wat Thong Tae (Jang Anukul Phitthaya) School, Tho Tae Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, demonstrated higher learning achievement after participating in the "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" local curriculum than before instruction.

4.3.1.2 Local Curriculum: "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-District, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province

The comparison of learning achievement in the "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" course among students in Grades 1–6 and Grades 7–9 at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province,

is presented as follows.

Table 6. Presents the comparison of pretest and posttest learning achievement in the "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" course among students in grades 1–6 and grades 7–9 at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province

Grade Level	Achievement Test	*N*	Maximum score	$\underline{X}$	*S.D.*	$\underline{D}$	t	p-value
Grade 1	Pre-test	28	20	9.96	0.51	7.36	62.64	.00
	Post-test			17.32	0.61			
Grade 2	Pre-test	29	20	9.93	0.70	7.31	65.02	.00
	Post-test			17.24	0.69			
Grade 3	Pre-test	27	20	9.93	0.55	7.37	67.80	.00
	Post-test			17.30	0.67			
Grade 4	Pre-test	28	20	9.96	0.69	7.25	65.54	.00
	Post-test			17.21	0.63			
Grade 5	Pre-test	27	20	9.89	0.58	7.44	67.00	.00
	Post-test			17.33	0.62			
Grade 6	Pre-test	31	20	9.94	0.68	7.45	73.05	.00
	Post-test			17.39	0.56			
Grade 7	Pre-test	28	30	11.89	0.88	15.00	99.22	.00
	Post-test			26.89	0.74			
Grade 8	Pre-test	30	30	11.80	0.89	15.10	102.99	.00
	Post-test			26.90	0.71			
Grade 9	Pre-test	29	30	11.48	0.95	15.38	91.72	.00
	Post-test			26.86	0.69			

Note. **p < .01.

From Table 6, it was shown that the comparison of learning achievement before and after instruction using the local curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" manifested that the posttest mean scores were significantly higher than the pretest mean scores at the .01 level of statistical significance. This indicated that students in Grades 1–6 and Grades 7–9 at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, achieved higher learning outcomes after participating in the "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" local curriculum than before instruction.

4.3.1.3 Local Curriculum: "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" at Wat Thong Tae (Jang Anukul Phitthaya) School, Tho Tae Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province

The results of the evaluation of the implementation of local curricula based on community cultural identity and driven by soft power in basic education at Wat Thong Tae (Jang Anukul Phitthaya) School, Tho Tae Sub district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, and Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, are presented as follows.

Table 7. Presents the results of the evaluation of the implementation of the "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" local curriculum at Wat Thong Tae (Jang Anukul Phitthaya) School, Tho Tae Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, as evaluated by school administrators and teachers

Evaluation Item	*N* = 10		Level of Opinion
	$\underline{X}$	*S.D.*	
1. Curriculum context	4.71	0.47	Highest
2. Curriculum input factors	4.71	0.47	Highest
3. Curriculum process	4.68	0.48	Highest
4. Curriculum outputs	4.68	0.48	Highest
5. Curriculum outcomes	4.75	0.44	Highest
Overall	4.71	0.47	Highest

As shown in Table 7, school administrators and teachers expressed their opinions on the evaluation of the implementation of the local curriculum "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" at Wat Thong Tae School (Jang-Anukul Phittaya), Tho Tae Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province. Overall, their level of agreement was at

the highest level ($\underline{X}$= 4.71), (*S.D.* = 0.47). When considered by dimension, the administrators and teachers rated the curriculum context at the highest level ($\underline{X}$= 4.71), (*S.D.* = 0.47). Similarly, the curriculum input factors were evaluated at the highest level ($\underline{X}$= 4.71), (*S.D.* = 0.47). The curriculum process also received the highest level of agreement ($\underline{X}$= 4.68), (*S.D.* = 0.48), as did the curriculum outputs ($\underline{X}$= 4.68), (S.D. = 0.48). Moreover, the curriculum outcomes were rated at the highest level ($\underline{X}$= 4.75), (*S.D.* = 0.44). These results indicated that the implementation of the "Roo Rak Tan (Palm) Tanod" local curriculum was highly regarded across all evaluation dimensions by both administrators and teachers.

4.3.1.4 The Local Curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat School"

The results of the evaluation of the implementation of the local curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat School" at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, as assessed by school administrators and teachers, are presented as follows.

Table 8. Presents the results of the evaluation of the implementation of the local curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat School" at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, as evaluated by school administrators and teachers

Evaluation Item	***N* = 10**		**Level of Agreement**
	$\underline{X}$	***S.D.***	
1. Curriculum context	4.68	0.48	Highest
2. Curriculum input	4.65	0.50	Highest
3. Curriculum process	4.63	0.50	Highest
4. Curriculum output	4.68	0.49	Highest
5. Curriculum outcomes	4.70	0.48	Highest
Overall	4.67	0.49	Highest

Table 8 showed that school administrators and teachers expressed their opinions on the evaluation of the implementation of the local curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" at Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province. Overall, their opinions were at the highest level of agreement ($\underline{X}$= 4.67), (*S.D.* = 0.49). When considering each aspect separately, it was found that school administrators and teachers rated the curriculum context at the highest level of agreement ($\underline{X}$= 4.68), (*S.D.* = 0.48). The curriculum input aspect was also rated at the highest level of agreement ($\underline{X}$= 4.65), (*S.D.* = 0.50). Similarly, the curriculum process aspect received the highest level of agreement ($\underline{X}$= 4.63), (*S.D.* = 0.50). The curriculum output aspect was rated at the highest level of agreement ($\underline{X}$= 4.68), (*S.D.* = 0.49), while the curriculum outcomes aspect recorded the highest mean score, indicating the highest level of agreement ($\underline{X}$= 4.70), (*S.D.* = 0.48). Overall, the findings demonstrated a consistently very high level of agreement among administrators and teachers regarding all dimensions of the local curriculum evaluation.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The findings of this study are summarized and discussed based on the following key issues. The primary findings on the current conditions and knowledge base of cultural community identity driven by soft power in Tho Thae and Tha Ngam Sub-districts, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province. The study found that the cultural knowledge related to sugar palm (Borassus flabellifer) included its historical background, characteristics, benefits, and values, indigenous wisdom associated with palmyra palm utilization, and palmyra-based products, such as fresh palm sap, palm cakes, palm fruit in syrup, palm jelly, and candied palm shoots. These elements are considered valuable cultural assets that should be preserved and sustained for future generations. Consequently, the local curriculum titled "Knowing and Preserving the Palmyra Palm" was developed for Wat Thong Tae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya), Tho Tae Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province. This curriculum serves as a school-based curriculum that systematically integrates local knowledge of the sugar palm and promotes the cultural soft power concept in the area of food culture, enabling local youth to continue learning and valuing their community heritage.

In addition, the study identified significant cultural knowledge related to Wat Senat including its historical

background, distinctive characteristics, the history of the Buddha's relics, the tradition of bathing the Buddha's relics, the miracles and sacredness associated with the relics, the mythical Phaya In of Wat Senat, the legend of the golden iron wood spirit (Mae Takhian Thong), holy water, and the marvels associated with the sacred relics. These elements represent classified cultural heritage that requires conservation and continuation. As a result, the local curriculum titled "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" was developed for Wat Senat School, Tha Ngam Sub-district, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province. This curriculum functions as a school-based curriculum that consolidates local knowledge of Wat Senat and promotes cultural soft power through significant religious traditions, allowing youth in the community to engage in continuous learning. These findings indicated that the cultural conditions and identity-based knowledge driven by soft power in Tho Thae and Tha Ngam Sub-districts are consistent with the local context and contain valuable knowledge for the conservation and transmission of cultural wisdom, particularly in the domains of food culture and noteworthy traditions. This aligns with the concept proposed by Khamhaeng et al. (2018), who stated that community identity reflects the collective self of a community and is commonly expressed through cultural traditions and ways of life that are unique and mutually recognized by community members. Similarly, Sukbua et al. (2019) described community identity as the social and cultural roots that bind communities through shared wisdom, customs, traditions, lifestyles, language, attire, and beliefs, which are learned, accumulated, and transmitted across generations. Furthermore, this finding is consistent with the research of Pitchayaphirat and Somnuek (2025), who ameliorated a local curriculum on Geotourism for schools in the Pha Chan–Sam Phan Bok Geopark area, Ubon Ratchathani Province, and found that overall conditions, problems, and needs for local curriculum development were at the highest level.

Moreover, the outcomes of the design and development of local curricula based on cultural community identity driven by soft power. The study revealed that two local curricula were designed and developed to align with learners and community contexts in Tho Thae and Tha Ngam Sub-districts, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province. These included the provincial curriculum "Knowing and Preserving the Palmyra Palm" at Wat Thong Thae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya), and the local curriculum "Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" at Wat Senat School. The overall quality of "the Knowing and Preserving the Palmyra Palm" curriculum was rated at the highest level of agreement ($\underline{X}$= 4.60), (*S.D.* = 0.51). Its process and outcome efficiency (E_1/E_2) was 83.04/82.80, meeting the 80/80 criterion. Similarly, "the Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" curriculum received the highest level of agreement in overall quality evaluation ($\underline{X}$= 4.61), (*S.D.* = 0.51), with process and outcome efficiency (E_1/E_2) of 83.93/83.21, also meeting the 80/80 criterion. These results can be attributed to the application of design-based research (DBR) in curriculum development, in which the researchers acted as both designers and facilitators. Interventions were collaboratively designed, tested, refined, and implemented through iterative cycles to ensure suitability and maximum effectiveness for learners and users (Wang & Hannafin, 2020). Moreover, the curricula underwent systematic quality evaluation prior to implementation, which is consistent with the study of Sukkasem (2024), who developed a soft power–based club activity curriculum to enhance English speaking skills for tourism among lower secondary students in Chiang Rai Province. The results revealed that the curriculum's suitability was rated at the highest level and was feasible for practical implementation.

The final results on the implementation of local curricula based on cultural community identity driven by soft power. The results of the implementation of the local curricula at the basic education level in Wat Thong Tae School (Chang Anukul Phitthaya) and Wat Senat School illustrated that students who studied under "the Knowing and Preserving the Palmyra Palm" curriculum demonstrated significantly higher post-test achievement scores than pre-test scores at the 0.01 level. Similarly, students in Grades 1–6 and Grades 7–9 at Wat Senat School who studied under "the Preserving the Identity of Wat Senat" curriculum showed significantly higher post-test scores than pre-test scores at the 0.01 level. Furthermore, the evaluation of curriculum implementation indicated that both curricula were rated at the highest level of agreement overall. This is likely due to the systematic and credible research processes underpinning curriculum development and implementation, which resulted in significantly improved student learning outcomes. In addition, school administrators and teachers expressed very high levels of agreement regarding the practical usefulness of the curricula for learners. These findings are consistent with the study by Thongkon et al. (2023), who developed the local curriculum "Rak (Sa) Bang Sao Thong" to enhance local knowledge and positive attitudes among Grade 7 students in Bang Sao Thong District, Samut Prakan Province. Their results showed that students' post-test scores were significantly higher than pre-test scores at the 0.01 level,

and overall curriculum evaluation was rated at a high level. Likewise, the research by Lapjit et al. (2024) on a local curriculum for mango cultivation to promote vocational skills found that learners' post-test achievement was significantly higher than pre-test achievement at the 0.05 level, and learner satisfaction with the curriculum was at the highest level.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Recommendations for the Application of Research Findings

6.1.1 The Findings

The findings indicated that the local curricula based on cultural community identity and driven by soft power, which were designed to suit learners and communities in Tho Tae and Tha Ngam Sub-districts, Wat Bot District, Phitsanulok Province, demonstrated both process and outcome efficiency in accordance with the 80/80 criterion. Therefore, these curricula should be applied in organizing learning activities within Tho Tae and Tha Ngam Sub-districts in ways that are aligned with the specific contexts of schools and learners.

6.1.2 Prior to Implementation

Stakeholders should thoroughly study and understand the local curricula before adapting them for instructional use. This is because certain learning activities are highly specific to particular school contexts and are designed to address targeted learner needs. Consequently, curriculum implementation should consider each school's educational focus and developmental goals for learners.

6.1.3 In Designing Learning Management Strategies

Teachers should carefully consider the nature of learning activities and ensure the availability of appropriate learning resources that are consistent with learners' characteristics. This will help maximize learning achievement in accordance with the objectives of the local curricula.

6.2 Recommendations for Future Research

6.2.1 Future Studies

Future studies should focus on developing local curricula based on cultural community identity and driven by soft power in other dimensions, such as film and video production, Thai fashion design, and traditional Thai martial arts. These areas may provide alternative and innovative directions for the development of culturally grounded local curricula.

6.2.2 Comparative Research on Cultural Community Identity

It is recommended that it be driven by soft power in other provinces in order to explore and identify appropriate approaches to soft power development that are responsive to diverse learners and community contexts.

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Authors' Contributions

Asst. Prof. Dr. Boonsong Kuayngern was responsible for the principal investigator, responsible for research planning, research design, data collection, data analysis, result synthesis, and report writing. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kamolchat Klomim was responsible for the correspondence, a co-researcher, responsible for research design, development of research instruments, data collection, and data analysis. Miss Linda Sisaeng was a co-researcher, responsible for data collection and data analysis. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Competing of Interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Obtained.

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Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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