

Rebuilding Community Connections: Expanding the Role of the House of Mahasvasti Museum in Youth Engagement and Cultural Preservation



An Interactive Qualifying Project By:

Ek-amon Srijomkwan, Panapat Tangwannawit, Prempra Sudnoreekool,
Arisa Ozawa, Peerapol Maliwong, and Chindachai Siritantithum

Department of Chemistry Chulalongkorn University

Sponsored by

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aphilak Kasempholkoon,
the owner of the House of Mahasvasti Museum

Advisors

Professor Dr. Supawan Tantayanon
Thippa Praneeprachachon
Asst. Prof. Dr. Numpon Insin
Dr. Panawan Vanaphuti,
Asst. Prof. Siripastr Jayanta
Asst. Prof. Dr. Esther Boucher-Yip
Caitlin Neer

Abstract

The Mahasawat Canal holds significant cultural and historical value, but modernity and generational gaps have weakened the community's connection to its identity. This research aims to strengthen that connection by designing engaging activities for youth and organizing community workshops to foster pride and awareness of cultural heritage. The study found that while many community members may have limited historical knowledge, most of them are eager to learn. Interactive learning strategies were found to be effective for primary school students, whereas competitive activities better engaged secondary school students. Additionally, stakeholder interviews highlighted the importance of making history engaging, contributing to the success of the "Wax Seal Letter" workshop in promoting historical awareness. Based on these findings, this research recommends integrating history education into school curriculum and community activities to help preserve the cultural heritage of the Mahasawat Canal for future generations.

คลองมหาสวัสดิ์มีมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมและประวัติศาสตร์ที่มีคุณค่า แต่ความทันสมัยและช่องว่างระหว่างวัย ได้ลดความเชื่อมโยงของชุมชนกับอัตลักษณ์ของตนเอง งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อเสริมสร้างความเชื่อมโยงดังกล่าวผ่านการออกแบบกิจกรรมที่น่าสนใจ สำหรับเยาวชนและการจัดเวิร์กชอปชุมชนเพื่อส่งเสริมความภาคภูมิใจและความตระหนักในมรดกทางวัฒนธรรม ผลการศึกษาพบว่า คนในชุมชนจำนวนมากอาจมีความรู้ทางประวัติศาสตร์ที่จำกัด แต่พวกเขามีความกระตือรือร้นที่จะเรียนรู้ กลยุทธ์การเรียนรู้แบบโต้ตอบจึงมีประสิทธิภาพกับนักเรียนระดับประถมศึกษาขณะที่กิจกรรมที่มีการแข่งขันสามารถดึงดูดนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาได้ดีกว่า นอกจากนี้การสัมภาษณ์ผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียยังเน้นย้ำถึงความสำคัญของการทำให้ประวัติศาสตร์เป็นเรื่องที่น่าสนใจ ซึ่งนำไปสู่ความสำเร็จของเวิร์กชอป "จดหมายตราครั่ง" ในการส่งเสริมความตระหนักรู้ด้านประวัติศาสตร์ จากข้อค้นพบงานวิจัยนี้เสนอแนะให้บูรณาการการศึกษาประวัติศาสตร์เข้ากับหลักสูตรในโรงเรียนและกิจกรรมของชุมชน เพื่อช่วยอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมของคลองมหาสวัสดิ์ให้คงอยู่ต่อไปสำหรับคนรุ่นหลัง

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งานวิจัยฉบับนี้สำเร็จลุล่วงไปได้ด้วยคำแนะนำต่าง ๆ จากคณาจารย์ และบุคลากร ภาควิชาเคมีประยุกต์ (BSAC) คณะวิทยาศาสตร์ จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย ร่วมกับสถาบัน Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) และความร่วมมือช่วยเหลืออย่างดียิ่งจากผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสีย ได้แก่ รองศาสตราจารย์ ดร. อภิสิทธิ์ เกษมผลกุล เจ้าของพิพิธภัณฑ์เรือนมหาสวัสดิ์ ที่สละเวลาให้คำแนะนำ คำปรึกษา รวมถึงข้อเสนอแนะต่าง ๆ อันเป็นประโยชน์อย่างยิ่งต่อการดำเนินการวิจัยในครั้งนี้ ขอขอบพระคุณผู้เชี่ยวชาญตัวแทนชุมชนที่เข้ารับการสัมภาษณ์ ที่ให้ความกรุณาให้ข้อมูล และเสนอแนะในการพัฒนารูปแบบการอนุรักษ์วัฒนธรรมและการให้ข้อมูล และนักเรียนระดับประถมศึกษา จากโรงเรียนบ้านคลองมหาสวัสดิ์ (ตั้งตรงจิตร 17) และนักเรียนระดับมัธยมศึกษา จากโรงเรียนมัธยมปurnaवास ในจังหวัดนครปฐม ในการมีส่วนร่วม และให้ข้อมูลแก่คณะผู้วิจัย ในท้ายที่สุดนี้ คณะผู้วิจัยขอขอบพระคุณอย่างสูงยิ่ง ทุนการวิจัยที่ได้รับจากรองศาสตราจารย์อภิรักษ์ เกษมผลกุล สังกัดสาขาวิชาภาษาไทย คณะศิลปศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล ที่ได้ให้ทุนสนับสนุนการวิจัยครั้งนี้มา ณ ที่นี้ด้วย

Executive Summary

Introduction and Background

Mahasawat Canal is a historically and culturally rich community, but modernization and generational shifts have weakened its connection to its heritage. Many local residents, especially younger generations, lack awareness of the canal's history and significance. Recognizing this challenge, our project aimed to revitalize historical and cultural engagement by developing interactive activities, workshops, and community-driven initiatives to foster a deeper appreciation for Mahasawat Canal's identity.

The House of Mahasvasti Museum, a key cultural institution in the community, holds extensive historical resources but struggles with accessibility and awareness among locals. To bridge this gap, the team sought to bring historical education directly into the community through engaging and interactive methods tailored to different age groups.

Objectives and Methods

This project focused on three key objectives:

1. Understand the current historical awareness of local people in the Mahasawat Canal community and their willingness to participate in community activities
2. Foster learning by creating activity prototypes for increasing historical and cultural appreciation of elementary school students
3. Identify the activity that can engage all the locals in the community

To achieve these objectives, the team conducted surveys with the local shopkeeper and students and interviewed experts in community development. Additionally, the team tested history-based learning activities in schools and piloted a community workshop at Baan Saladin Floating Market to evaluate its effectiveness and sustainability.

Findings

Our research revealed 6 key findings, and we have classified them according to the 3 objectives.

Objective 1: Understand existing local awareness

- Finding 1: The majority of local residents, including both adults and students, have limited historical knowledge of Mahasawat Canal. Surveys showed that self-assessed knowledge scores were low, indicating a gap in historical awareness that may impact local community identity.
- Finding 2: Elementary students and working-age adults are more enthusiastic about participating in historical activities, while secondary students show less interest. Learning through activities and community events could serve as a tool to engage residents, particularly focusing on young generations to preserve historical knowledge.

Objective 2: Foster learning in youth about Mahasawat history and heritage

- Finding 3: Interactive learning activities, such as Kahoot and storytelling, significantly improved elementary students' engagement and knowledge. Pre-test and post-test results showed a strong improvement in understanding Mahasawat Canal's history.
- Finding 4: Secondary students were more motivated by competition-based learning. Survey results indicated that incorporating elements like digital platforms (e.g., TikTok) and prizes (e.g., monetary rewards and certificates) could increase participation in historical activities.

Objective 3: Identify an activity related to Mahasawat Canal history for all

- Finding 5: Successful community activities should make history engaging and relatable. Insights from external community projects highlighted the importance of inspiration and motivation in sustaining long-term historical awareness.
- Finding 6: The “Wax-Sealed Letter” workshop successfully increased historical appreciation among residents and tourists. Participants engaged actively, reflected on Mahasawat Canal's historical value, and demonstrated a strong willingness to learn. Survey results indicated that the workshop was highly effective, making it a viable long-term activity for raising community awareness.

This study underscores the need for targeted historical education strategies, focusing on interactive learning for younger students and competitive or digital engagement for older students, while ensuring sustainable community participation through meaningful activities.

Recommendations

To ensure lasting impact, the team propose the following recommendations:

- Integrate “Wax-sealed letter” workshop into tour programs at Baan Saladin. – The “Wax-Sealed Letter” workshop should be incorporated into Baan Saladin’s tourism programs to attract visitors and provide an economic incentive for locals.
- Establish a regular opening day for the House of Mahasvasti Museum. Introducing a fixed monthly or annual opening day, such as the “Mahasawat Canal Heritage Day”, would encourage community visits and awareness.
- Use interactive learning activities for Mahasawat Canal history teaching for elementary students. Foster understanding and awareness for elementary students through interactive learning activities.
- Integrate competition-based learning activities for secondary students. Encourage secondary students to participate in history related activities and learn more about historical topics.

By implementing these strategies, this project establishes a sustainable model for cultural preservation in the Mahasawat Canal community, ensuring that the canal’s history and heritage remain relevant for future generations.

คลองมหาสวัสดิ์เป็นชุมชนที่มีความสำคัญทางประวัติศาสตร์และวัฒนธรรมมาอย่างยาวนาน อย่างไรก็ตาม ความทันสมัยและความเปลี่ยนแปลงระหว่างรุ่นส่งผลให้ความเชื่อมโยงของชุมชนในท้องถิ่นกับมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมลดลง โดยเฉพาะคนรุ่นใหม่มีความรู้และความตระหนักเกี่ยวกับประวัติศาสตร์ของคลองมหาสวัสดิ์น้อยลง โครงการนี้จึงมุ่งเน้นการฟื้นฟูความผูกพันทางประวัติศาสตร์และวัฒนธรรมผ่านกิจกรรมแบบมีส่วนร่วม เช่น การจัดกิจกรรมการเรียนรู้ประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น กิจกรรมเวิร์กช็อปที่ขับเคลื่อนโดยคนในชุมชน เพื่อส่งเสริมให้เกิดความภาคภูมิใจในอัตลักษณ์คลองมหาสวัสดิ์ พิพิธภัณฑ์เรือนมหาสวัสดิ์ ซึ่งเป็นสถาบันทางวัฒนธรรมที่สำคัญในชุมชนมีแหล่งข้อมูลประวัติศาสตร์ที่หลากหลาย แต่ยังประสบปัญหาด้าน

การเข้าถึงและการรับรู้ของคนในท้องถิ่น เพื่อแก้ไขปัญหานี้ โครงการวิจัยนี้ได้พยายามนำการเรียนรู้ทางประวัติศาสตร์ออกสู่ชุมชนผ่านวิธีการที่น่าสนใจและเหมาะสมกับแต่ละช่วงวัย

โครงการนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์หลัก 3 ประการ: (1) ประเมินระดับความรู้ทางประวัติศาสตร์ของชุมชน และสำรวจความสนใจในการเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมทางวัฒนธรรม (2) พัฒนากิจกรรมการเรียนรู้แบบมีส่วนร่วมสำหรับนักเรียนระดับประถมศึกษาและมัธยมศึกษา เพื่อส่งเสริมความเข้าใจในประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น (3) สร้างรูปแบบเวิร์กช็อปที่ยั่งยืนในชุมชน เพื่อให้เกิดการมีส่วนร่วมในระยะยาวและอาจนำไปสู่ประโยชน์ทางเศรษฐกิจในอนาคต

เพื่อบรรลุวัตถุประสงค์ดังกล่าวข้างต้น คณะผู้วิจัยได้ดำเนินการสำรวจและสัมภาษณ์ ได้แก่ รองศาสตราจารย์อภิรักษ์ เกษมผลกุล (ผู้สนับสนุนโครงการ), คุณชวน ชูจันทร์ (ผู้ริเริ่มพัฒนาตลาดในชุมชน) และกลุ่มลูกหว่า (กลุ่มเยาวชนที่ประสบความสำเร็จในการอนุรักษ์วัฒนธรรม) นอกจากนี้เรายังทดสอบกิจกรรมการเรียนรู้ทางประวัติศาสตร์ในโรงเรียนและทดลองจัดเวิร์กช็อปที่ตลาดน้ำบ้านศาลาดินเพื่อประเมินประสิทธิภาพและความยั่งยืนของโครงการ

จากการศึกษาพบข้อค้นพบที่สำคัญดังนี้:

วัตถุประสงค์ข้อที่ 1

(1.1) ชุมชนมีความตระหนักทางประวัติศาสตร์ค่อนข้างน้อย

(1.2) คนวัยทำงานและนักเรียนระดับประถมศึกษาสนใจเรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่นมากขึ้น อย่างไรก็ตามนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาส่วนใหญ่ไม่ค่อยสนใจรูปแบบการเรียนรู้แบบดั้งเดิม

วัตถุประสงค์ข้อที่ 2

(2.1) วิธีการเรียนรู้แบบมีส่วนร่วมช่วยเพิ่มการมีส่วนร่วม – เทคนิคเล่าเรื่อง (Storytelling) และเกม Kahoot! ได้รับความสนใจจากนักเรียนประถมศึกษา ในระดับดีมาก

(2.2) กิจกรรมที่มีการแข่งขันสามารถดึงดูดความสนใจของนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาได้ดีกว่า

วัตถุประสงค์ข้อที่ 3

(3.1) รูปแบบกิจกรรมเวิร์กช็อปที่สร้างความยั่งยืนในชุมชนต้องมีความน่าสนใจและเชื่อมโยงกับชุมชนภายนอก เพื่อสร้างความแรงบันดาลใจและแรงจูงใจในการตระหนักรู้ประวัติศาสตร์ในระยะยาว

(3.2) เวิร์กช็อปชุมชนช่วยส่งเสริมการตระหนักรู้ทางวัฒนธรรม – กิจกรรม "จดหมายเหตุครั้ง" ซึ่งผสมผสานการเรียนรู้ประวัติศาสตร์กับกิจกรรมเชิงปฏิบัติ ช่วยเพิ่มความสนใจของผู้เข้าร่วมที่มีต่อประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่นในระดับดีมาก อย่างไรก็ตาม ความยั่งยืนในระยะยาวยังเป็นปัญหา เนื่องจากการมีส่วนร่วมของคนในชุมชนในการจัดกิจกรรมยังมีข้อจำกัด

เพื่อให้โครงการส่งผลในระยะยาว มีข้อเสนอแนะดังต่อไปนี้:

(1) สร้างรูปแบบเวิร์กช็อปชุมชนที่เป็นระบบ – กิจกรรม "จดหมายเหตุครั้ง" ควรได้รับการบรรจุในโปรแกรมการท่องเที่ยวของตลาดน้ำบ้านศาลาดิน เพื่อดึงดูดนักท่องเที่ยวและสร้างรายได้ให้กับคนในชุมชน เพิ่มโอกาสในการเข้าถึง พิพิธภัณฑ์เรือนมหาสวัสดิ์

(2) ควรกำหนดวันเปิดทำการประจำเดือนหรือประจำปี เช่น "วันมรดกคลองมหาสวัสดิ์" เพื่อกระตุ้นให้ชุมชนเข้าร่วมและรับรู้ถึงความสำคัญของพิพิธภัณฑ์

(3) ส่งเสริมโครงการอนุรักษ์วัฒนธรรมที่ขับเคลื่อนโดยเยาวชน – การเชิญนักเรียนมัธยมศึกษาและนักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยมาเป็นผู้จัดเวิร์กช็อป สามารถช่วยเพิ่มความสนใจและความต่อเนื่องของโครงการอนุรักษ์วัฒนธรรมในระยะยาว

(4) บูรณาการกิจกรรมเกี่ยวกับประวัติศาสตร์เข้ากับโรงเรียนในท้องถิ่น – ควรใช้วิธีการเล่าเรื่องแบบมีส่วนร่วมและสื่อดิจิทัล เช่น การแข่งขัน TikTok, การเขียนเรียงความ และการสร้างสรรค์งานศิลปะ เพื่อดึงดูดความสนใจของนักเรียนให้มีส่วนร่วมในการอนุรักษ์วัฒนธรรม ดังนั้นโครงการจึงมุ่งเน้นการสร้างรูปแบบการอนุรักษ์วัฒนธรรมที่ยั่งยืน สำหรับชุมชนคลองมหาสวัสดิ์ เพื่อให้ประวัติศาสตร์และมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมยังคงมีความสำคัญและเป็นที่รู้จักของคนรุ่นต่อไปในอนาคต

Table of Authorship

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Appendix A,B	Chindachai	Chindachai
Editor		
Primally Word Reviewer		Ek-amon
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Chapter 1 Introduction

Local culture and history can change how residents perceive their neighborhood, improving the residents' connection to the community and encouraging them to preserve the cultural heritage of their own community (Saunders, 2020). However, the value of local culture and history is being diminished by modernization and generational barriers limiting its appeal among adolescents. Advances in technology impact traditional values, weakening the sense of connection people feel with their communities due to less physical interaction (Wannit & Sonphonngam, 2023). This leads to a loss of cultural identity and a weakening of community unity, negatively affecting relationships of the people in the community. Reconnecting people to history is therefore essential to maintain the unity and connection of the community (Buse et al., 2019).

The House of Mahasavasti Museum¹, a local cultural and historical museum dedicated to the Mahasawat Canal community², is a private institution with the aim to sustainably encourage local cultural and historical appreciation. The museum is owned by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aphilak Kasempholkoon³, a professor at Mahidol University⁴, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand. Currently, the House of Mahasavasti Museum plays a role as a cultural hub and is the center of the community's heritage and traditional knowledge which strongly supports the community. However, as a private institution, the museum faces challenges in drawing interest among the local as well as accessibility mostly for the locals. These barriers hinder the museum's ability to foster a sense of community and weaken the overall impact of its meaningful efforts.

According to the above-mentioned limitation, the goal of the project is to raise awareness of Mahasawat Canal history and culture in the locals, so that they can see the importance of preserving cultural heritage. Raising awareness regarding local history and promoting cultural practices can help bridge the gap between modern progress and traditional values, leading to improvement in the community. Eventually, it can lead to a more sustainable community with preserved cultural identity.

¹ เรือนมหาสวัสดิ์

² ชุมชนคลองมหาสวัสดิ์

³ รศ. ดร.อภิสิทธิ์ เกษมผลกุล

⁴ มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดลฯ

From the goal, the team believes that it is best to bring out the House of Mahasvasti Museum's rich historical and cultural knowledge and bring them to the community, targeting all age groups of local people and especially the younger generations. This can increase local culture and history awareness and appreciation, enhancing the sense of pride of the community.

The team has set 3 objectives to achieve this goal.

1. Understand the current historical awareness of local people in the Mahasawat Canal community and their willingness to participate in community activities
2. Foster learning by creating activity prototypes for increasing historical and cultural appreciation of elementary school students
3. Identify the activity that can engage all the locals in the community

The project aims to improve local culture and history awareness in the Mahasawat Canal community, particularly among youths, by fostering community engagement through history-related activities. After exploring current historical knowledge, the team utilized the information from the House of Mahasvasti Museum to develop engaging history-related activities. Finally, the team tested the community engagement initiatives to find effective methods to foster cultural appreciation in youths. The data and insights gained while conducting research and testing history-related activities helped us to formulate recommendations for the House of Mahasvasti Museum, Baan Saladin community center and local schools. This data can potentially illustrate the perception of younger generations regarding local history and culture. Additionally, limitations encountered in community engagement initiatives gave us insights into how to improve the activities and allowed us to recommend to related parties and future researchers.

Chapter 2 Background

2.1 Mahasawat Canal Community

Mahasawat Canal (Figure 1), also known as Khlong Maha Sawat, is a historic waterway constructed during the reign of King Rama IV⁵ (King Mongkut) in 1859. The canal spans 28 kilometers and was created to connect the Chao Phraya River⁶ and the Tha Jeen River⁷, significantly reducing travel time to Phra Pathom Chedi⁸, which houses the Lord Buddha's relics. The project was completed on May 1, 1860, and was overseen by Chao Phraya Thipakornwong Mahakosathibodi (Kham Bunnag)⁹ and Phra Phasi Sombat Boribun¹⁰. At 14 meters wide, it was the largest canal of its time. (Kasempholkoon, 2020).

Figure 1

The Photo of Mahasawat Canal



⁵ พระบาทสมเด็จพระจอมเกล้าเจ้าอยู่หัว

⁶ แม่น้ำเจ้าพระยา

⁷ แม่น้ำท่าจีน

⁸ พระปฐมเจดีย์

⁹ เจ้าพระยาทิพากรวงศ์มหาโกษาธิบดี

¹⁰ พระยาพิสมรสมบัติบริบูรณ์

Note. From Mahasawat Canal Tour, by Siam Luxe (n.d.), retrieved February 18, 2025, from <https://www.siam.luxe/excursions/mahasawat-canal-tour/>

King Rama IV envisioned the canal as a multipurpose infrastructure. Firstly, the canal supported agriculture and water management in the surrounding areas. Secondly, it boosted the economy by enabling boats to transport goods efficiently and fostering trade in the 19th century. Khlongs, or canals, like the Mahasawat Canal, have long been an essential part of Thai society; they reflect their significance in transportation, agriculture, and commerce. (Faculty of Information and Communication Technology, Mahidol University, 2018)

The canal also fostered the growth of settlements along its banks, with villagers from various places in Nakhon Pathom coming to reside there. To support these communities and travelers, King Mongkut commissioned seven pavilions along the canal, spaced 100-wa (around 200 meters) apart. Each pavilion was named according to its function, such as the Salaya Pavilion¹¹ for writing medical related texts and books, and the Thamsop Pavilion¹², later renamed to be Thammasop Pavillion¹³, for making funeral arrangements.

With over a century of history, the Mahasawat canal continues to provide numerous benefits to the surrounding community. It remains a vital resource for irrigating nearby farms and serves as a transportation route for goods. Additionally, the canal has become a popular tourist destination and a hub for local markets offering diverse experiences for visitors. (Mahasawat Canal Tour, n.d.) (Nakhon Pathom Ban Sala Din the Way of Living in Mahasawat Canal Community, n.d.).

The Mahasawat Canal community, located at Ban Saladin in Nakhon Pathom, is a prominent agricultural tourism attraction. Boat tour showcases local traditions, such as producing rice crackers, which are also known as Khao Tang. Various other attractions alongside the canal include the Lotus field, Baan Fuk Kao (a local vegetable orchard), and Wat Suwannaram Temple (Kapook, 2020).

¹¹ ศาลายา

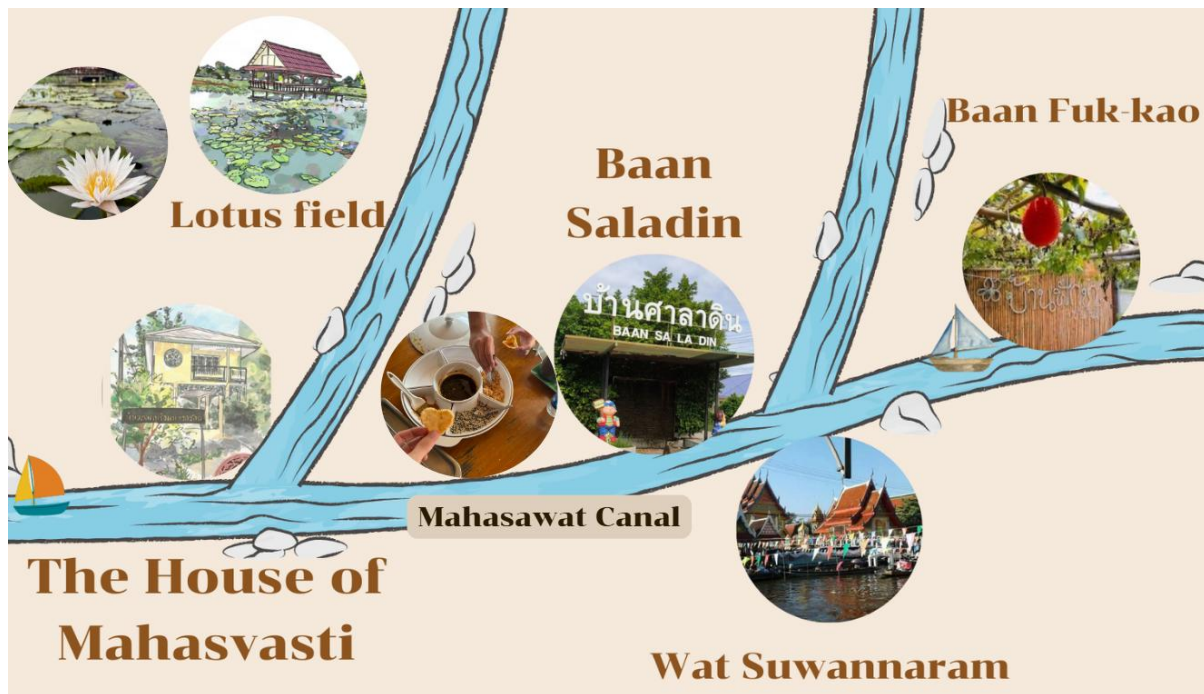
¹² ศาลาทำศพ

¹³ ศาลาธรรมสพน์

These places of interest are depicted in Figure 2 (*Places of interests in the Mahasawat Canal related to culture and agricultural tourism*).

Figure 2

Places of interests in the Mahasawat Canal related to culture and agricultural tourism



The Baan Saladin Community Center is a community center that promotes sustainable tourism and acts as a vantage point for boat tours. Visitors can engage in cultural activities, experience traditional lifestyles, and explore high-quality local products. The Baan Saldadin Community Center also hosts a floating market which features local farmers' products, famous goods from Nakhon Pathom Province, and a variety of delicious food, which all can be enjoyed in a natural canal-side setting.

Managed by local leaders, Baan Saladin Community Center unites the villagers in self-sustained operations without government funding. This independent approach ensures fair and sustainable income distribution within the community, reflecting the resilience and ingenuity of the Mahasawat Canal community (MUSEUM Thailand, n.d.)

Apart from the Baan Saladin community center that promotes sustainable tourism, there is also a prominent institution that has a major role in promoting the conservation of historical heritage: **“The House of Mahasvasti Museum”**

2.2 The House of Mahavasti Museum

The House of Mahasvasti Museum was founded in 2020 by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aphilak Kasempholkoon to celebrate the 160th anniversary of the Mahasawat Canal. Established as a non-profit institution, the museum aims to preserve and promote the canal's rich cultural and historical legacy. Funded through Dr. Aphilak Kasempholkoon's personal contributions and donations from educational organizations, the museum serves as a repository for regional history and literature, providing valuable insights into the community's traditions and heritage (Kasempholkoon, 2020). The museum is located 3.8 kilometers west of the Baan Saladin community center, approximately eight-minute drive away by car.

Figure 3

Picture featuring exterior architecture of The House of Mahasvasti Museum



Dr. Aphilak Kasempholkoon envisioned the House of Mahasvasti Museum as a platform connecting contemporary society with its historical roots. The museum narrates the canal's role in shaping local trade, agriculture, and cultural exchange. These initiatives aim to ensure that the canal's legacy remains accessible and relevant to future generations (Kasempholkoon, 2020).

As envisioned, the museum plays a critical role in preserving historical and cultural identity. Its exhibitions document 160 years of canal history, offering a valuable educational resource for both locals and visitors. By showcasing elements of the canal's heritage—such as its construction, influence on literature, and impact on daily life—the museum fosters a deeper understanding and sense of pride among community members (Kasempholkoon, 2022).

Furthermore, as a hub for cultural tourism, the museum also contributes to the region's economic vitality being the part of the boat tour activity and promoting local traditions. When visiting the museum as a part of the boat tour, visitors can explore artifacts, seeing or touching them under Dr. Apilak's guidance, learning more about the Mahasawat canal history. (The House of Mahasvasti, 2024). Additionally, the museum promotes traditional agriculture, local crafts, and culinary arts, through exhibits encouraging visitors to engage with and support these practices. Thus, these initiatives not only preserve cultural heritage but also support the local economy aligning with sustainable development goals by fostering economic growth while preserving cultural and natural resources (Kasempholkoon, 2022; The House of Mahasvasti, 2024).

As for the museum's current efforts, Dr. Aphilak, the owner of the House of Mahasvasti Museum, constantly plans and organizes history-related activities to actively expand and deepen its cultural offerings and community engagement. Proposed initiatives include interactive online exhibits, cultural festivals, and integrating local history into school curricular. These efforts aim to reinforce the museum's position as a center for cultural and educational development, ensuring that the legacy of the Mahasawat Canal continues to inspire future generations (Kasempholkoon, 2020; The House of Mahasvasti, 2024).

Overall, The House of Mahasvasti Museum plays an essential part in preserving the history and culture of the Mahasawat Canal Community. Building on its mission to preserve the canal's legacy, the museum serves as a dynamic hub for cultural preservation, education, and sustainable development. Through meticulously curated exhibits, interactive displays, and immersive experiences, the museum preserves and raise the awareness of the canal's critical role for visitors. These efforts not only illuminate the canal's 160-year history but also inspire pride among community members by celebrating their shared identity and traditions. The museum embodies Dr. Aphilak Kasempholkoon's vision of bridging past and present by

fostering a deep connection between contemporary society and the canal's historical and cultural heritage.

2.3 Mahasawat Canal Community Cultural Identity

The team has identified the main cultural identity of the Mahasawat Canal community from background research and it is mostly based on **agricultural tourism** with various interesting attractions along the canal like the Lotus flower field or Baan Fuk Kao local vegetable orchard. Apart from agricultural tourism, the team also investigated minor traditions such as local products and folklore or tales regarding trees.

The Mahasawat Canal plays a significant role in supporting the local economy through agricultural tourism. Boat tours along the canal invite visitors to witness breathtaking natural scenery, local traditions, and the vibrant community life that defines the region. In addition to promoting economic growth, activities like traditional boat tours utilize eco-friendly practices, ensuring minimal impact on the canal's ecosystem while offering visitors an authentic experience.

Various agricultural tourism attractions are presented along the Mahasawat Canal. Visitors can experience boat tours along the canal to visit each place and experience the traditional practices and beautiful natural scenery.

Some attractions and activities that are highlighted are explained in detail in this list. (Mahasawat Canal Agricultural Tourism Boat Tour Community Enterprise, n.d.)

1) Lotus flower field

The lotus flower field is another unique spot that allows many tourists to view the incredible view and experience. There is also an option to let the tourists board a small boat and paddle along through the field. This also gives knowledge to visitors about the significant meaning of lotus flower to Thai culture and tells them about how lotus is cultivated and harvested.

2) Baan Fuk Kao: local vegetable orchard

Fuk Kao is a nutrient-rich fruit with a spiky orange-red skin, known for its high antioxidants, beta-carotene, and lycopene, known as a famous fruit in the community. The complimentary Fuk Kao juice, known for its cooling properties, adds to the welcoming experience for tourists. Additionally, the shop provides valuable insights into Fuk Kao cultivation, along with demonstrations and sales of various Fuk Kao-based products, including beverages, desserts, and skincare items.

3) Baan Saldin community center: rice cracker demonstration

The main activity at Baan Saladin is the demonstration of rice cracker or “Khao Tang” in Thai. It is the tradition of central Thailand where deep fried rice is made into a delicious snacks that tourist can enjoy with delicious seasoning, sauce, and pork floss on the spot. Aside from the rice crackers, tourists can also enjoy and sightsee the community floating market there as well.

The above list summarizes all the tourism highlights in the local community of Mahasawat Canal which can illustrate the local activities that are related to the tourism and culture of the community. Understanding these characteristics can show us the uniqueness of the community and let us comprehend the importance of cultural preservation that will support the identity of Mahasawat Canal community

Apart from tourism, local products and literature of Mahasawat Canal community is also explored. Local agricultural products are seasonal fruits like pomelo, mango, guava, jackfruit, golden fried banana. Apart from that, local dishes made from traditional recipes such as Lotus leaves Miang Kham is interesting and unique to the community. (Siam Visual Education Center by Faculty of Liberal Arts Mahidol University, 2024).

Mahasawat Canal literature mostly involves many folklores about local plants around the canal. There are also poems and guides on the usage of each specific plant around Mahasawat Canal. These tales not only provide the usage of plants but also provide literary entertainment. The team took interest regarding the tales involving local plants and think that it could also be one means of promoting the history and culture.

After understanding the cultural identity of the Mahasawat Canal community, particularly its connection to agricultural tourism, the team further explored and conducted background research about the broader concept of Thai culture and how it has influenced and shaped the community.

2.4 Role of Thai culture in Mahasawat Canal community

Thai culture significantly influences the people in the community, their way of life, and the community's identity. Understanding the essence of Thai culture is crucial for gaining deeper insights into this project, as Thai culture shapes community identity. The two main part of Thai culture that influences the Mahasawat Canal Community are **religious beliefs** and **having settlement near water**.

Religious beliefs, particularly Buddhism, play a major role in this cultural identity, with most community events being related to Buddhism and merit making activities held at temples. One of the most significant events in the community is the Loy Krathong Festival held at the local temple like Wat Ma Kluer, during which residents gather near the Mahasawat Canal to pay respect to the water goddess. This celebration brings together people from across the community to enjoy and share in the festivities. A unique tradition of this event involves monks traveling by boat along the canal to perform Buddhist rituals “Alms Giving Ceremony”¹⁴ where people offer food to the monks for merits.

¹⁴ ประเพณีตักบาตร

Figure 4

Team members attending Loy Krathong Festival at Wat Makluer, participating in “Alms Giving Ceremony” with the monk travelling by boat, a longstanding tradition of Mahasawat Canal



Note. The picture was taken by our team during an exploration of Thai culture around the Mahasawat Canal community on November 15, 2024

Thai culture heavily depends on and thrives around waterways. Due to its geographical location, which features abundant waterways, the Mahasawat Canal community's culture and identity are closely tied to them. For example, the long boat competition, where dozens of teams gather during holidays to compete for prizes, highlights this reliance on waterways. Additionally, the floating market exemplifies Thai culture's deep-rooted connection to waterways, a tradition that dates to ancient times.

2.5 Role of technology in integrating modern lifestyle and Thai culture

Thai culture has a longstanding history and a unique character that has evolved over centuries. While its roots are ancient, Thai culture continues to develop alongside changing lifestyles. The introduction of technology and modern living influences Thai culture, shaping the community in both positive and negative ways.

Recognizing both the advantages and challenges of technology is crucial in understanding its impact on cultural identity. As technology becomes increasingly integrated into daily life, particularly among younger generations, it plays a significant role in shaping community dynamics.

With advancing technology and borderless communication, cross-national cultural exchange can impact traditional values. In some cases, technology reduces human interaction, which may weaken the sense of community and lead to decreased appreciation for cultural heritage and historical tourism among youths. (Wannit & Son Phongam, 2023). Reports also indicate that technology contributes to social isolation and a decline in real-life interactions, further affecting traditional cultural practices (Ahmad Ali, 2023).

Despite concerns, technology has the potential to help preserve culture and history. If utilized properly, digital tools such as AR technology, virtual exhibitions, and websites can make heritage more accessible and engaging (Ahmad Ali, 2023). Social media can also play a role in raising awareness and promoting cultural initiatives, helping to reach a wider audience, particularly younger generations.

While technology alone cannot create a sustainable community, proper utilization of technology can complement existing efforts by increasing interest in local history and tourism. By integrating digital tools thoughtfully, the Mahasawat Canal community can enhance cultural engagement while fostering a stronger connection to its heritage.

2.6 Past examples: Successful endeavors encouraging youths to preserve Thai culture

Encouraging youth to preserve Thai culture is also an important aspect of the project because youths are the next generation leaders of the community, thus they play such a strong role in the preservation of local culture in the community. This section will highlight the importance of education in promoting cultural preservation, identifying the key strategies that could engage youths in Mahasawat Canal Community.

Youths will be the leaders of the new generation in our society, and they are the generation that experienced technology the most. Understanding the importance through previous successful examples can be beneficial in understanding and adapting the model to design our project in the Mahasawat Canal community. Previous successful attempts and the efforts that are made in Thailand include these **two examples** and both focuses on **supporting education**.

Firstly, promoting Thai art and culture through supporting young Khon artists by AP Thailand group (Figure 5). Khon is a world-renowned Thai masked dance with a long-standing history tied to both the royalty and the local people of Thailand. Khon is also considered one of the most prominent cultural heritages in Thailand that is unique to Thai identity and promotes tourism in Thailand. (Bangkok Post Editorial Team, 2023)

Figure 5

AP Thailand Group Encourages the “Young Khon Artists” Preserving “Thai Khon” as a National Cultural Heritage (Bangkok Post Editorial Team, 2023).



The second example is that the government also takes various initiatives to support the preservation of Thai culture and identity through creating career opportunities for young people. Encouragement through initiatives from the Ministry of Culture in providing aid to many areas and aspects of Thai culture preservation, funding for quality films, and training programs in media production, engage Thai youths in arts and culture. This not only fosters appreciation but also creates economic opportunities, ensuring cultural heritage thrives (Elite+ Editorial Teams, 2023).

As mentioned earlier, both examples choose to support education in youths. Therefore, these past two successful endeavors can be viewed as an example to validate the team’s idea of focusing on **fostering education** regarding history for Mahasawat youths. Fostering the learning of local culture and history can make more young people realize the importance of local history and culture of the community. This could be a major step in supporting the project goal, which is to raise awareness of Mahasawat Canal history and culture among the locals

2.7 Raising awareness of local history and culture can lead to sustainable community

The impact that our project will make lies in the aspect that raising awareness of local history and culture can lead to a more sustainable community. Raising awareness of local history and culture can foster and revitalize the sense of pride in the community. This sense of pride encourages residents to preserve their cultural heritage for the future generations.

As people become more aware of their history and cultural identity, they are more likely to take an active role in preserving their heritage. This is particularly significant for the Mahasawat Canal community, where cultural identity is deeply intertwined with agricultural tourism, contributing to both cultural continuity and economic sustainability.

The team has researched a successful example of a community that has successfully preserved history and culture, and even further reinforced a sustainable cultural tourism style by promoting a strong sense of community through community workshops. The prime example of this is "Lookwa Group"¹⁵ a small group of passionate young volunteers in Phetchaburi¹⁶, who has made a significant impact. Members of the Lookwa group, including the founder, Teacher Chumlong Buasuwan¹⁷, have revitalized Phetchaburi's traditional arts and crafts. Their commitment to protecting and adapting these cultural treasures help to preserve the province's identity while motivating future generations to value and carry on these traditions. By turning nearly forgotten practices into lively, community-focused initiatives, they ensure that Phetchaburi's artistic heritage continues to thrive and remain relevant (VITHEENON, 2020).

Key strategies that "Lookwa" group utilizes to make people realize the importance of historical values and see pride in their own roots is focusing on the younger generation. They cultivate a sense of pride in their own community for the younger generation by letting youths be the organizer of the community workshop that brings tourists and locals together to experience the cultural identity and create economic incentives. This can make the identity of the community stronger and unify the local people to create a sustainable community.

¹⁵ กลุ่มลูกหัว

¹⁶ จังหวัดเพชรบุรี

¹⁷ ครูจำลอง บัวสุวรรณ

Furthermore, improving the economic capabilities of the community through promoting cultural tourism can improve and lead the community towards sustainability.

To conclude, raising the awareness of local culture and history is essential to encourage local people to preserve the cultural heritage of their own community leading to sustainable development. Lookwa group is a prime example that encapsulates the idea of preserving cultural identity while developing a sustainable community.

Chapter 3 Methodology

The goal of this project is to raise the awareness of the significance of local culture and history within the community. This goal is set to address the problem of limited public interest and accessibility of the House of Mahsvasti Museum for the local people in the Mahasawat community. The team hope that these efforts can raise awareness about Mahasawat Canal history and culture and eventually lead to more appreciation in cultural heritage.

The goal will be achieved through engaging in history-related activities designed for elementary school students and community workshops that create a sense of pride in the community. Eventually, our team wants to make the activities and workshop sustainable, in a way that the local people can come together to organize these activities. The sense of pride in the community that is encouraged by community activities will then create a sustainable community while preserving the traditional culture and history.

The team aim to achieve this goal by setting the following three objectives:

1. Understand the current historical awareness of local people in the Mahasawat Canal community and their willingness to participate in community activities
2. Foster learning by creating activity prototypes for increasing historical and cultural appreciation of elementary school students.
3. Identify the activity that can engage all the locals in the community

The study focuses on identifying the awareness of local culture and history that is present in the community, to identify the key strategy of improving historical knowledge in the community. Then, the team utilized the data from the House of Mahasvasti Museum to create activity prototypes that are engaging for elementary school students to enhance historical learning and reach younger audiences. Lastly, for objective 3 the community workshop would be initiated and tested, in which the team will follow the successful model of Lookwa group in Phetchaburi province. It is expected that the community workshop would encourage local people to cherish their local traditions and cultural heritage for future generations, while also showcasing the rich culture of Mahasawat Canal community to tourists.

Through these objectives, the project aims to raise awareness of local history and culture leading to rebuilding the sense of pride of the community in Mahasawat Canal community. Focusing on improving historical learning in youths that would be the leader of the next generation and bring local people together with community workshops, culminating in a sustainable community with preserved cultural heritage.

3.1 Objective 1

Understand the current historical awareness of local people in the Mahasawat Canal community and their willingness to participate in community activities

The goal of the project is to raise awareness of the significance of local culture and history within the community. Therefore, it is essential to first evaluate the extent of awareness that the locals currently have regarding local history and community.

To accomplish this objective, the team utilized semi structured interviews and surveys to gather data from local people focusing on local shopkeepers in the community market. Specifically, for the first objective, the team interviewed 14 local shopkeeper and passerby in Baan Saladin Community Center Market, and the results was achieved by face-to-face interviews.

Interviews and surveys focused on the aspect of historical knowledge assessment and their perception on learning history through activities. The results have given us an understanding of the viewpoint and current knowledge that the local community has on the aspects of local history and their willingness to learn. Paired with the data of willingness to learn of elementary and secondary students from objective 2, the obtained data can provide insights into initiating the history-related activities and community events that match the needs of the community.

The team chose to analyze the data by visualizing results through bar graphs and pie-charts to illustrate the level of awareness regarding the history of Mahasawat Canal of locals and their perception on the history-related activity which led us to know about their willingness to learn.

3.2 Objective 2

Foster learning by creating activity prototypes for increasing historical and cultural appreciation of elementary school students

The activity prototype is designed to teach elementary students about the knowledge of the history and culture of Mahasawat Canal and the House of Mahasvasti Museum in an enjoyable and informative way, which may spark history-related interests among the younger generations.

The activity began with a pre-test, 5 short questions about Mahasawat Canal history and traditions, to collect the data on students' prior knowledge about the community. Next, the team conducted an interactive storytelling activity that engaged the student which promote active learning about Mahasawat Canal history and culture. Afterwards, the elementary students played a Kahoot! game that subtly introduced historical facts and stories about Mahasawat Canal and the House of Mahasvasti Museum. Although history itself might not interest elementary students enough, using games ensured that students remained engaged while learning. Finally, there was also a group activity where the students were divided into groups to create a drawing to present what they have learned and share with the class, which can deepen their understanding about Mahasawat history.

After the session, the team conducted post-test and activity evaluation to measure the impact of the activity and the satisfaction of the activities. The post-test questions are the same as pre-test. Please note that the team did not give direct answers when students finished their pre-test. As for the evaluation, a short survey was utilized to assess their satisfaction and the knowledge gained from the activity.

To summarize outcomes of objective 2, the team gained insights about historical improvement for elementary student participants through analyzing and comparing pre-test and post-test scores. The team also gained insights about elementary students' satisfaction and most importantly, the willingness to participate in this kind of activity in the future.

To foster learning, the team also recognizes the need for integrating history-related activities into secondary schools for more sustainable and continued learning. Thus, the team had conducted a survey on 56 secondary school students at the "Matthayom Puranawas" School

to gather insights into students' preferences, including the types of historical activities they find engaging and the incentives that would encourage participation. This research helped to refine the activities to better meet the needs of the youths in different age groups. This served as data for designing an alternative learning method suitable to engage older students in the future.

3.3 Objective 3

Identify the activity that can engage all the locals in the community

This objective aims to identify history-related activities that can engage all of the local people of Mahasawat Canal Community. The team consulted experts on community developments and gained various insights and ideas on activity design. Eventually, the team established a community-driven workshop that engages the locals in preserving and promoting the historical and cultural significance of the Mahasawat Canal. By creating an interactive learning space, the workshop will serve as both a platform for cultural exchange and a sustainable source of economic and educational benefits for the community.

The team interviewed with Lookwa group, the experts in community workshop and cultural preservation, and Dr.Aphilak, the owner of the House of Mahasvasti. Moreover, the team also participated in the the “Khrang Rak” workshop¹⁸, which involved participants doing the wax seal on flower gift card souvenirs, at the House of Mahasvasti. Later, the team helped Dr.Aphilak in organizing this workshop for 17 Ubon Ratchatani¹⁹ university students that had come for an educational visit.

Based on our interview with Lookwa Group, the experts in community workshop and cultural preservation, the team found that preserving local culture requires actively showcasing what makes the community unique. The activity needs to be both engaging and meaningful to encourage participants to form deep connections with the community, appreciating its history and culture.

¹⁸ กิจกรรม “ครั้งรัก” ณ เรือนมหาสวัสดิ์ เป็นกิจกรรมที่คิดค้นโดย รศ.ดร.อภิรักษ์ณ เกษมผลกุล ผู้เข้าร่วมจะได้ประสบการณ์ในการประทับตราครั้งบนการ์ดของขวัญดอกไม้ เพื่อเป็นของที่ระลึกในการมาเข้าชมเรือนมหาสวัสดิ์

¹⁹ อุบลราชธานี

Moreover, after the team conducted the “Khrang Rak” workshop at the House of Mahasvasti, the team gained insights that workshop can capture the attention and engagement of participants. The team then saw the workshop as an opportunity that can be improved upon. The team decided to add more historical value to the existing activity by designing it to be more connected with Mahasawat canal and the value its offer to the local residents.

The improved workshop features an interactive letter exchange, where visitors receive a hypothetical message from the past reflecting the way of life of the community people when the canal first established. Then, participants would respond back about the current role of the canal in their own life. This can foster the realization of the canal’s values and importance. Finally, the participants put the wax seal on the letter while the team tell the story about the area’s rich history to improve historical awareness of participants. This immersive approach deepens their connection to the past while reinforcing the cultural identity of the Mahasawat Canal community.

Beyond education, this initiative also aims to potentially create economic opportunities for the local community. The workshop could potentially generate income by promoting tourism and allowing locals to apply as workshop assistants, receiving a small allowance while gaining hands-on experience in tourism and cultural preservation. By fostering youth involvement in tourism and cultural preservation, this initiative model can be refined and expanded in the future to ensure that local traditions and cultural heritage are preserved for future generations.

Chapter 4 Results and Findings

By Analyzing the data from surveys, activities for elementary students and community workshops, the team has reached several findings regarding historical awareness of local people and strategies on how to enhance that sense of awareness.

This chapter will describe the observations regarding current historical awareness of local people and their willingness to learn. Then, the team will focus on evaluating activities that give knowledge to youths. Finally, the team tries to implement community activities in the form of a workshop to promote cultural awareness and then develop it to be a sustainable activity.

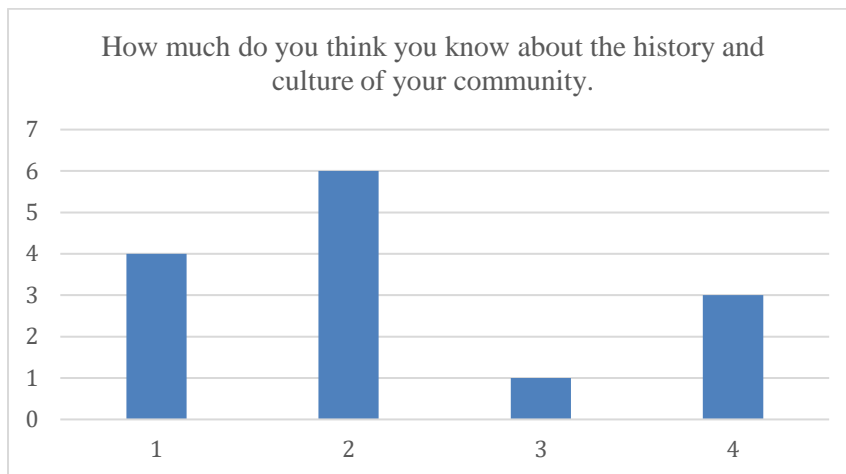
4.1 Finding on Objective 1: Understand the current historical awareness of local people in the Mahasawat Canal community and their willingness to participate in community activities.

4.1.1 Finding 1: Local people in the community currently may have limited historical knowledge of Mahasawat Canal.

Interviews and surveys were conducted to assess local residents of Mahasawat Canal basic awareness of history. The results show that most participants, the majority of whom are over 40 years old, have a low opinion of their understanding of their community's history and culture. When asked to self-assess on a scale of 1 to 4, the average score among 14 respondents was 2.21 (Figure 6), indicating a general lack of historical and cultural awareness. Supporting this argument, a test was conducted on elementary students at Ban Khlong Mahasawat School. The average score among 32 participants was 2.25 out of 5 (Figure 7), suggesting that most students also lacked knowledge of local history and culture.

Figure 6

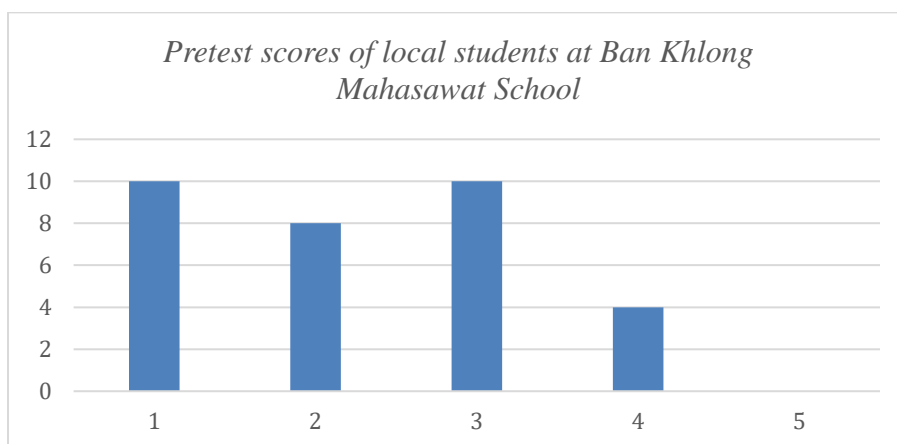
Self-evaluation of general knowledge of local history among residents of Baan Saladin floating market



Note. This bar chart represents survey participants' self-assessed knowledge of their community's history and culture. The y-axis indicates the number of respondents, while the x-axis represents the scale of 1 (lowest) to 4 (highest).

Figure 7

Pretest scores of local students at Ban Khlong Mahasawat School.



Note. This bar chart displays the distribution of pretest scores among students at Ban Khlong Mahasawat School. The x-axis the score of the pretest which is 5 short questions about Mahasawat Canal history and traditions, while the y-axis indicates the number of students in each group.

The findings suggest that local residents of Mahasawat Canal have a limited understanding of its history. Several factors may contribute to this, including restricted access to historical education and a greater focus on modernization rather than preserving local history. The absence of community-led initiatives to promote historical awareness further widens this knowledge gap. Additionally, some residents of Mahasawat Canal were unaware of the existence of the House of Mahasvasti Museum, which holds a wealth of local historical knowledge.

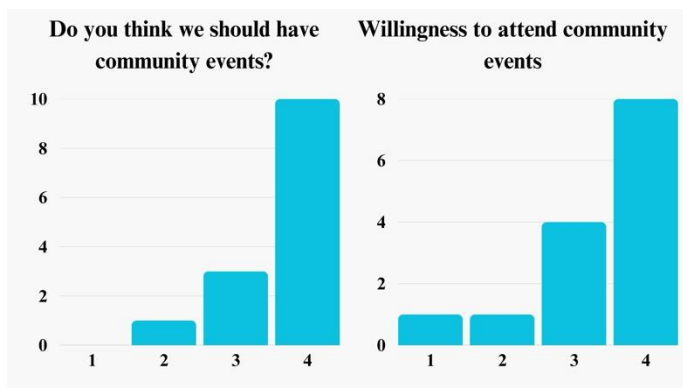
As discussed in section one, this lack of historical awareness may contribute to community instability. It may result in missed opportunities for tourism and weaken community stability. Therefore, improving the community's basic historical knowledge is essential. However, several factors may limit educational efforts, including the aging population of Mahasawat Canal. With fewer young people showing interest in local history, the risk of losing historical knowledge increases as older generations pass away, leaving no one to preserve and share the community's heritage.

4.1.2 Finding 2: Elementary students and working age are enthusiastic in participating in history related activities, while secondary students show less interest in participating.

By knowing this gap in historical awareness, fostering learning in youths and community events could serve as means to engage residents and promote local history. To explore this possibility, a survey was conducted to assess interest in community workshops. Participants, local residents at Baan Saladin Floating Market, were asked two questions: "Do you think the team should have more community events?" and "If there is a community event, would you like to participate?" They rated their interest on a scale of 1 to 4 (Figure 8).

Figure 8

A survey of residents at Baan Saladin Floating Market on their interest in local history and culture.

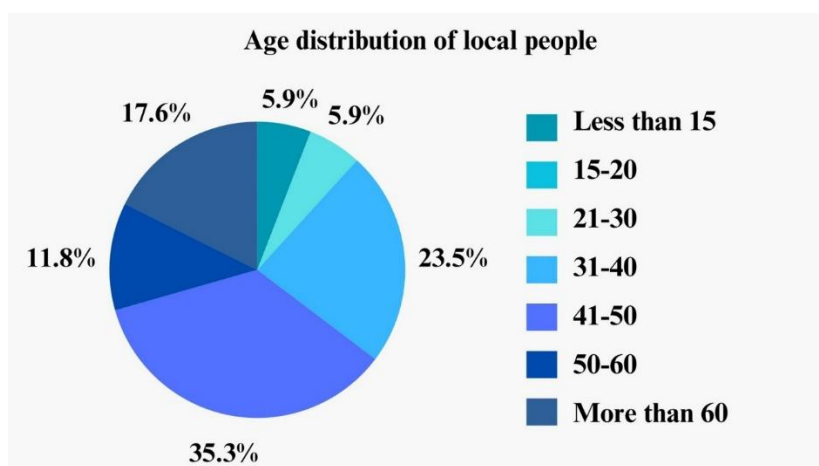


Note. This figure presents two bar charts showing community members' responses to questions about organizing and participating in community events. The left chart indicates support for more community events, with an average score of 3.64 out of 4. The chart on the right reflects the willingness to participate in events, with an average score of 3.36 out of 4. Higher scores suggest a generally positive attitude toward community engagement.

The results indicate that many residents are interested in and supportive of community activities, especially those that could generate additional income. However, most participants are adults between the ages of 40 and over 60 (Figure 9), meaning they have full-time jobs on weekdays and manage their stores on weekends, which creates time constraints and makes attending community activities inconvenient.

Figure 9

Age distribution among residents of Baan Saladin Floating Market.



Note. This pie chart represents the age distribution of residents at Baan Saladin Floating Market. Each color corresponds to a specific age group, as indicated in the legend. The chart provides insight into the demographic composition of the local population (14 precipitants).

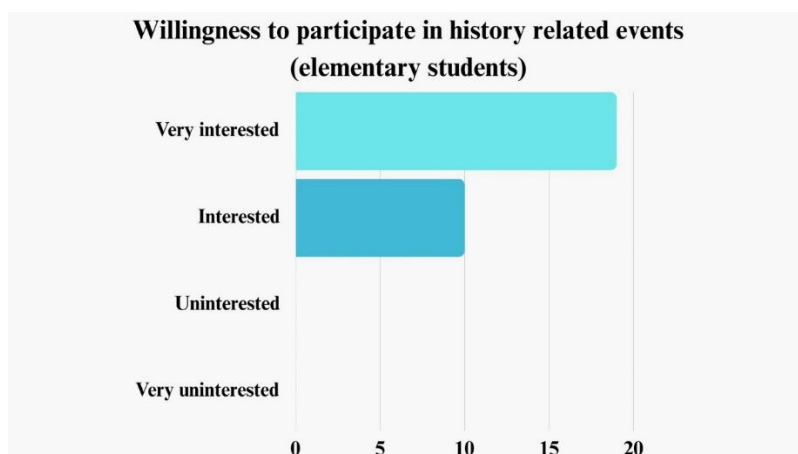
Given the time constraints faced by most adult residents, it is challenging for them to engage in structured learning initiatives. Moreover, with younger generations showing little interest in local history, there is a risk of historical knowledge fading over time.

Therefore, the team chose to primarily focus our efforts on youths, starting with conducting interactive history-related elementary school students. Then, investigating the strategy for expanding into secondary students.

A survey of elementary students regarding the question, “If there were an event about history and culture, would you like to participate?” revealed that the majority expressed interest, with an average score of 3.65, as shown in Figure 10. This suggests that students are not only open to learning about history and culture but also motivated to engage in such activities when presented in an interactive and engaging manner.

Figure 10

Interest in Participating in a History and Culture Event.



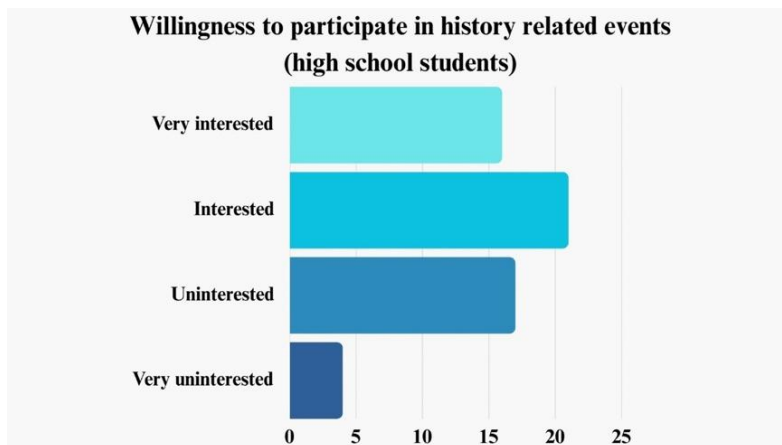
Note. This bar chart illustrates participants' willingness to attend a history and culture event. Participants were 29 elementary school students. Responses were rated on a scale from 1 to 4, with higher values indicating greater interest. The majority of responses were 3 or 4, suggesting a strong interest in such events.

On the other hand, a survey conducted with secondary students at Matthayom Purnawas school asked, "Are you interested in joining an activity about the history of Khlong Mahasawat?" As shown in Figure 11, the results indicate an average score of 2.8, suggesting a significantly lower willingness to participate compared to elementary students.

Overall, the team summarized that elementary students and working age are enthusiastic in participating in history related activities, while secondary students show less interest in participating. These results underscore the importance of focusing on younger students and working age, as they show a stronger willingness to engage with local history. This insight will guide the development of targeted historical activities that can foster a deeper connection with the local heritage. Future efforts could aim to adapt the format of activities for older students, exploring ways to increase their interest and participation.

Figure 11

Interest in Joining an Activity About the History of Khlong Mahasawat.



Note. This horizontal bar chart illustrates participants' interest in joining a historical activity about Khlong Mahasawat. The majority expressed interest, with "Interested" being the most selected response, followed by "Not Interested." A smaller portion of participants were "Very Interested," while only a few selected "Very Not Interested."

4.2 Finding on Objective 2: Foster learning by creating activity prototypes for increasing historical and cultural appreciation of elementary school students.

4.2.1 Finding 3: Interactive learning activities enhance elementary students' knowledge about Mahasawat Canal history

By enhancing students' historical knowledge and engagement, these activities help foster a deeper appreciation for Mahasawat Canal's cultural heritage among younger generations. The survey evaluation indicates high student engagement, a strong desire to participate in future historical activities, and significant knowledge gain. This result is further supported by students' improved test scores after participating in the historical activities. The evaluation of the elementary school history activity demonstrates strong positive outcomes among the 31 student participants.

Figure 12

Elementary student engagement in Mahasawat Canal history activities on 31 January 2025

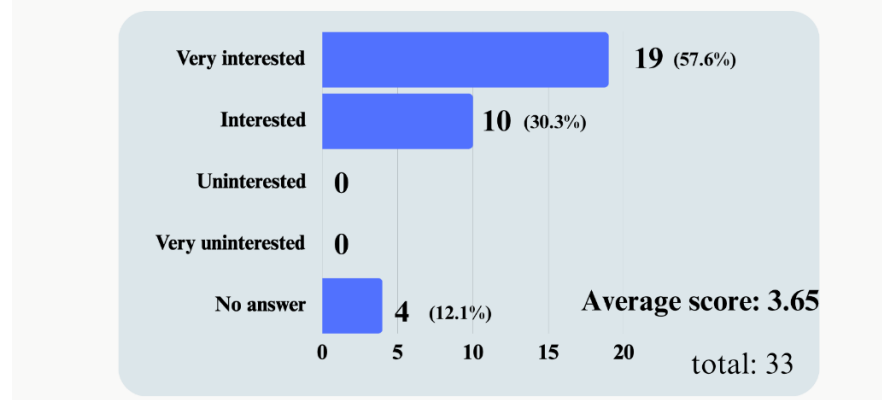


Student enjoyment was notably high, with an average satisfaction score of 3.68 out of 4, indicating that most students found the activity engaging. An even stronger positive response was observed in their willingness to participate in similar activities again, with an average score of 3.81. This suggests that the activity effectively sparked interest and motivation to learn more about history. Additionally, students reported significant knowledge gain, with an average score of 3.68 (Figure 12), reflecting that they felt they had learned a substantial amount from the activity. These results collectively demonstrate that the historical activity successfully promoted historical learning in an engaging and enriching way for elementary school students.

Figure 13

Interest in Participating in a History and Culture Activity.

If there is an event about history and culture, would you like to participate?

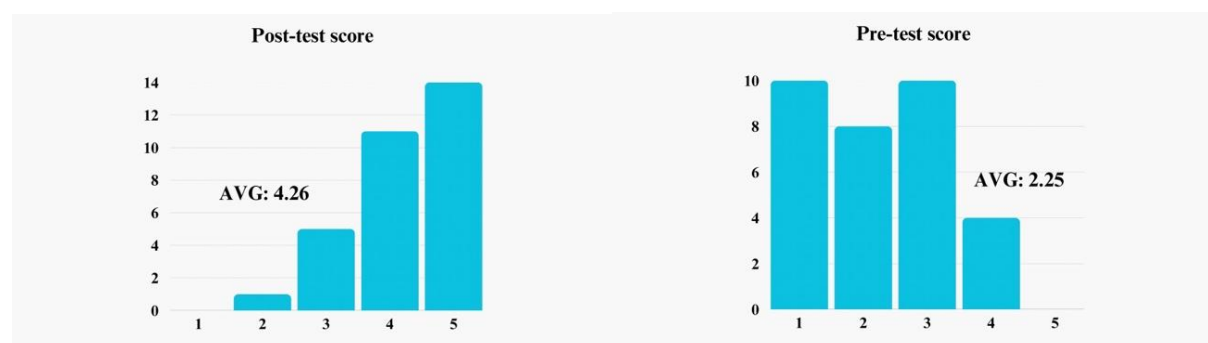


Note. This bar chart presents the level of interest among 33 respondents in attending a history and culture event. The majority (57.6%) indicated they were "Very interested," while 30.3% were "Interested." No respondents selected "Uninterested" or "Very uninterested," and 12.1% did not answer. The average score was 3.65.

The knowledge gained was further confirmed through pre-test and post-test activities, in which students were asked to identify historical images related to Mahasawat Canal. According to the bar chart in Figure 13, students scored an average of 2.25 out of 5 on the pre-test. On the other hand, their post-test results improved significantly, with an average score of 4.26 out of 5. This further reinforces the survey findings, demonstrating that the historical activities significantly enhanced students' understanding of Mahasawat Canal history.

Figure 14

Comparison of Student Scores on Pre-Tests and Post-Tests Assessing Knowledge of Mahasawat Canal History



Note. This figure displays a comparison of students' scores before and after an intervention. The pre-test results (left) show an average score of 2.25 among 32 students, while the post-test

results (right) indicate an improvement, with an average score of 4.26 among 31 students. The distribution shift suggests a positive impact of the intervention on student performance.

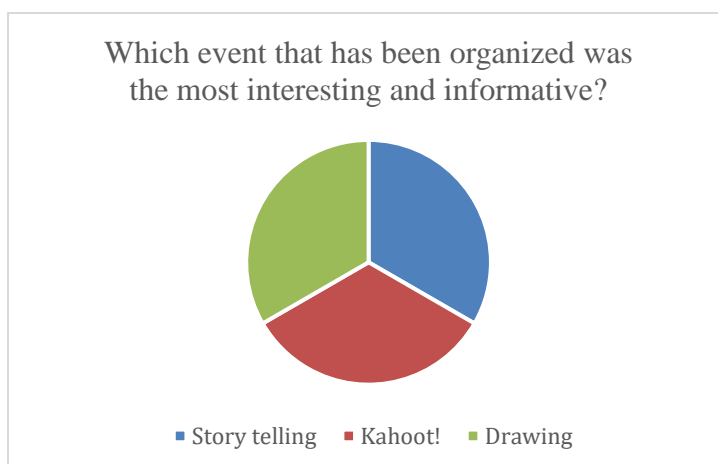
Another insight gained is that Kahoot! and storytelling activities appear to be particularly effective for this age group. Considering related questions, students answered 48 out of 62 correctly in the post-test for Kahoot and 51 out of 62 for storytelling. Observations also suggest that students enjoyed these interactive activities. However, certain activities, particularly group drawing, seemed to be more challenging for students, possibly due to the difficulty of translating historical concepts into visual representations not being suitable for elementary level.

These findings suggest that interactive and game-based approaches, such as Kahoot and storytelling, are particularly effective for this age group. Future historical activities could focus more on these methods while refining activities like group drawing providing more guidance to better suit the students' age range.

However, a post-activity survey asked students to rate, on a scale of 1 to 4, "Which event was the most interesting and informative?" (Figure 14). The results show a low variation among the activities, indicating that each of the activities had clear strengths, they also had their own limitations, which will be further discussed in the recommendations.

Figure 15

Most Interesting and Informative Activities.



Note. This pie chart represents participants' opinions on the most interesting and informative event. The three event types—Storytelling, Kahoot, and Drawing each received an equal proportion of responses, indicating that participants found all activities engaging and valuable.

4.2.2 Finding 4: Secondary school students are motivated by competition-based learning

To highlight the importance of engaging youth in historical activities, focusing solely on elementary students is not enough to create a comprehensive and lasting impact. The inclusion of secondary students is crucial, as this age group has the potential to deepen their understanding of local history and influence the cultural awareness of their peers.

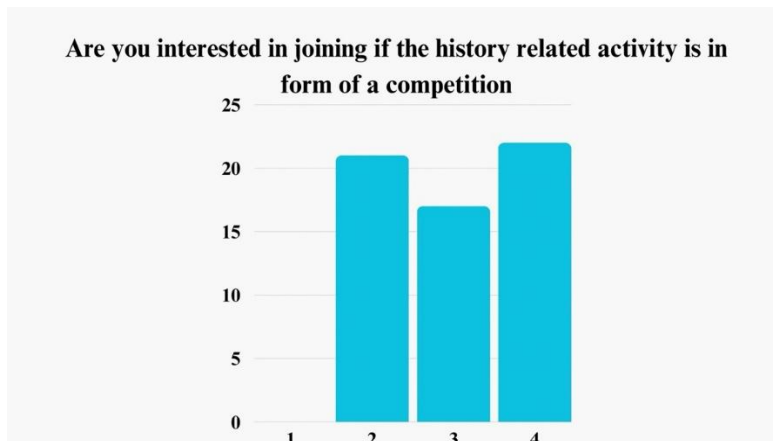
This led us to explore the idea of expanding historical activities to include secondary students through more interactive and competitive formats, such as historical-related competitions, which could foster greater engagement among these students and help sustain their interest in local history.

As for the finding that secondary students have a lower willingness to learn than elementary school students, and since our goal was to increase secondary students' willingness to learn, an incentive was required. As supported by Growth Engineering, a SaaS learning technologies company, competition plays a significant role in student engagement by stimulating the brain's reward system, improving performance in challenging tasks, and helping learners enter a state of deep focus (Cloke, 2025).

According to the methodology section, a survey was conducted to assess the level of interest among secondary students in participating in historical activities and to determine which type of activity would be most suitable. One of the key questions asked was, "Are you interested in joining if the activity is in the form of a competition about creating historical works" The results indicate a slight increase in students' willingness to participate when the activity is structured as a competition, as shown in Figure 15. This suggests that incorporating competitive elements into historical activities can be an effective strategy for increasing students' interest in learning about history.

Figure 16

Interest in Competition-Based Historical Activity.

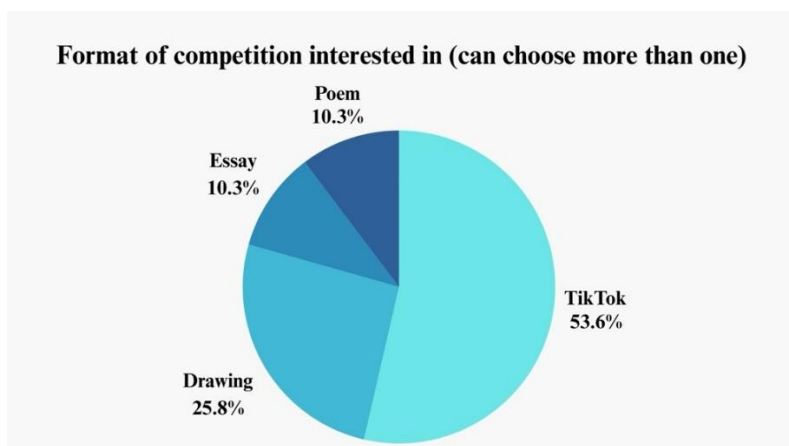


Note. This bar chart displays participants' interest in a competition-based activity related to creating historical works. The scale ranges from 1 to 4, with 1 indicating the lowest interest and 4 indicating the highest. The majority of participants selected 2 and 4, indicating a varied level of engagement with the idea.

For the question, “Which formats are you interested in? (You can choose more than one option),” TikTok received a significant number of responses as shown in Figure 16. This suggests that secondary students are more likely to participate in historical activities when they involve modern and familiar digital platforms. The popularity of TikTok as a preferred format indicates that incorporating social media-based activities could be an effective strategy for increasing student engagement and making historical learning more appealing to this age group.

Figure 17

Preferred Formats for Historical Activities.

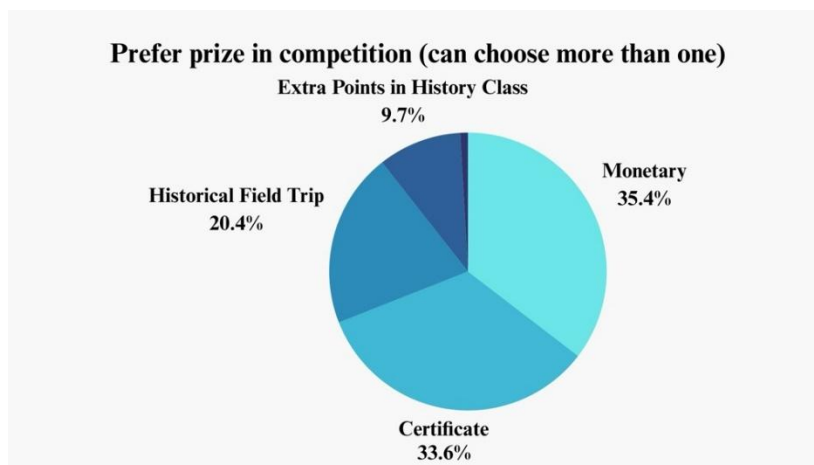


Note. This pie chart illustrates the distribution of participants' preferred formats for engaging in historical activities. Respondents could select multiple options. The most popular format was TikTok, followed by drawing, essays, and poems.

And for the last question, “If you participate in the competition, which types of prizes would you be interested in? (You can choose more than one option)” this question aimed to identify the incentives that students find most appealing. The most preferred responses were monetary rewards and certificates.

Figure 18

Preferred Prize Types for Competition Participants.



To summarize finding 4, competition-based learning is something that can be potentially introduces to engage secondary students in learning the history of Mahasawat Canal. Key strategies that should be implement involves using popular social media platform ,such as TikTok, or using certificates and monetary awards to effectively engage students in this age range.

4.3 Finding on Objective 3: Identify the activity that can engage all the locals in the community.

4.3.1 Finding 5: A successful community activity should make history come alive

The team conducted online interview with Teacher Jamlong Buasuwan, the initiator of the Lookwa group, experts in community workshop that promotes cultural preservation Additionally, after interviewing not only the Lookwa Group but also Dr. Aphilak Kasempholkoon, our sponsor of this project, the team gained valuable insights into both the

challenges and opportunities in sustaining community-driven initiatives, as well as strategies for fostering long-term engagement and support.

For instance, Teacher Jamlong Buasuwan shared how he established the Lookwa Group. From the start, he organized tourism-related activities and workshops on creating Puang Mahot²⁰, decoration of handcrafted paper. As tourists began to take interest, the economy of the whole community became better. Furthermore, it became evident that these activities could generate income and foster a sense of community. This demonstrates how well-planned community initiatives can have both social and economic benefits.

Building on this idea, community activities play a crucial role in supporting both economic and social development. When people feel connected to their community, they are more likely to contribute to its growth and sustainability. However, the success of such initiatives depends on factors like local engagement, funding, and effective planning. Without consistent efforts, the potential benefits such as economic growth, cultural preservation, and community bonding may not be fully realized.

Looking back at the Mahasawat Canal community, the House of Mahasvasti Museum has the potential to offer engaging workshops, with the “Krang Rak” workshop standing out as a promising example. This is supported by a survey conducted among university students from Ubon Ratchathani, who came to take part in the Krang Rak workshop. The 17 participants expressed high satisfaction with the activity. Additionally, they showed strong interest in incorporating additional elements to enhance the workshop experience. These findings highlight the workshop’s effectiveness while also pointing to ways it can be further improved to deepen engagement and history learning.

From that result, the team chose to improve the workshop more by choosing to integrate history knowledge into the workshop and a letter-writing activity where participants can write letters to characters from the past and reflect on the value and history of Mahasawat Canal. The design also features the drawing of the House of Mahasvasti which is the symbol of local history and culture in Mahasawat Canal.

²⁰ พวงมะโหด

Figure 19

The post card designed by our team used in the historical workshop.



4.3.2 Finding 6: “Wax-sealed letter” workshop was successful in increasing historical appreciation

The improved workshop that the team conducted on Saturday, February 8, 2025, at Baan Saladin Community Center was well-received and enhanced residents’ and local tourists’ history knowledge of Mahasawat Canal.

The **“Wax-sealed letter” workshop** features an interactive letter exchange, where visitors receive messages from the past reflecting the way of life of the people in Mahasawat Canal Community in the past. Then, an open-ended question about the value and importance of Mahasawat Canal in the present will be asked, allowing participants to respond back and foster the realization of the canal’s values and importance. Participants are encouraged to write responses, which leads to engaging storytelling sessions about the area’s rich history.

Eventually, participants get to wax seal the letter by themselves, enhancing hands on experience and making the activity more memorable.

The improved workshop helped participants understand and reflect more about the Mahasawat Canal through writing about the values and importance of the canal. Some tourists also gave donations to help support community development and local projects. Most of the participants took part in the activities willingly and with excitement, showing that they were motivated and eager to learn. Participants enjoyed taking part in activities and were interested in learning about history.

Data presented in Figure 18 demonstrates a high level of satisfaction among attendees, including both residents and Thai tourists, who engaged in reflecting on the historical and cultural significance of the Mahasawat Canal. Figure 20 shows positive feedback on all 4 aspects of satisfaction, engagement, knowledge gained, and uniqueness of the experience.

Figure 20

Satisfaction of workshops from locals and local tourists.

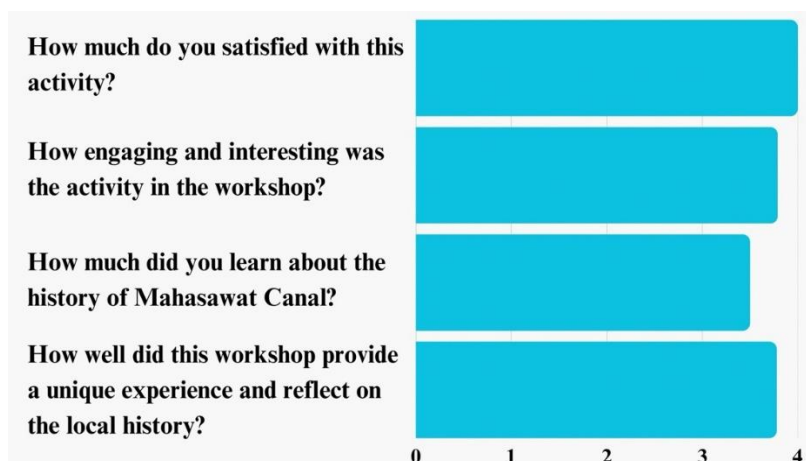
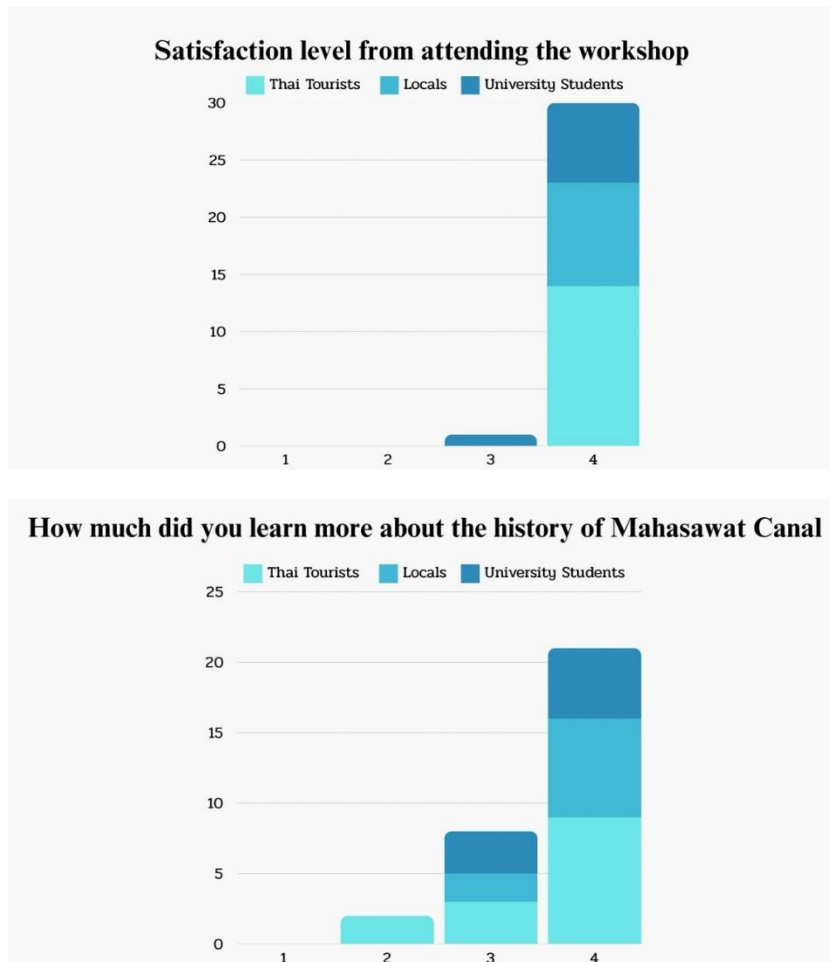


Figure 21
Overall Satisfaction and Knowledge Gained from the Activity.



Apart from receiving highly positive feedback from participants in all aspects of the workshop. The content of the letter writing workshop presented in Figure 20 illustrates that the value of the canal is greatly reflected by participants, suggesting that this activity can encourage people to realize the importance and the value of Mahasawat Canal. Thus, the workshop can be a useful tool to raise awareness about Mahasawat Canal history in the local community.

Figure 22 22

Example of responses from the local people and tourists from nearby communities around Mahasawat Canal who participated in the workshop.



Although the team faced challenges such as limited time, manpower, and resources that prevented the continuation of the workshop, the team recognizes the importance of establishing a sustainable framework to ensure its longevity for future generations. The following section on conclusions and recommendations will present strategic approaches to address these challenges and achieve this goal.

Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

In conclusion, from exploring the current understanding and awareness regarding Mahasawat Canal history and culture, the team found that people in the community had **limited understanding** of the community's history and culture. Regardless of this limited understanding, the locals have **high willingness to learn** more about their history and culture, especially elementary students and working age. In response, the team organized history related activities for primary school students, utilizing the information inside the House of Mahsvasti Museum. Our approach involved incorporating games to **make learning fun and engaging** and post-activity surveys showed that the students had **gained more knowledge and interest** in history after participating. The team also tried to discover ways to connect and engage all locals in the community by **conducting history related workshops** for community members, resulting in participants learning more about the community's culture and history. Although the team faced limitation and challenges in manpower and funding, the team aimed for the workshops to be continued by community members. Therefore, with the insights gained from research, the team formulated recommendations and plans that will further ensure the sustainability of community activities and promote ongoing learning.

Recommendations

From the result and findings, we formulated on four main recommendations.

1. Integrate "Wax-sealed letter" workshop into the tour program at Baan Saladin.
2. Establish a regular opening day for the House of Mahasvati Museum.
3. Use interactive learning activities for Mahasawat Canal history teaching to elementary school students.
4. Integrate competition-based learning activities for secondary students.

The team plan to send these recommendations to **the House of Mahasvasti Museum, local schools in the Mahasawat Canal community, and Baan Saladin community center**. The team hopes that our recommendations will be considered and implemented in the future, to foster interest in local history among youths and community members.

5.1 Recommendations for Baan Saladin community center

To further strengthen the bond between the residents and the community the team's approach is to increase the sense of community by conducting a community workshop or activity. From the findings and results from the workshop that was conducted on Saturday 8th February at Baan Saladin community center, the workshop allows both tourists and local participants to reflect on the history and value of Mahasawat Canal, but it is also faced with sustainability challenges, which are limited manpower and funding to continue the workshop.

5.1.1 Recommendation 1: Integrate “Wax-sealed letter” workshop into tour program

The team recommend integrating the “Wax-sealed letter” workshop into tour programs at Baan Saladin community center. The team found that community activities can bring people together, foster a sense of pride in community, and potentially generate economic incentives. The workshop allows not only participants but also organizers to reflect on the history and values of Mahasawat Canal.

However, a challenge arises when tourists' schedules are often managed by tour guides, which can limit their opportunities to join or participate in certain local experiences or activities. If the workshop can be included in tour programs, more visitors can participate in the workshop and potentially generate economic benefits for the local community while participants gain more understanding of the area, which is Mahasawat Canal.

The team also contacted Mrs. Wanpen, a local resident and owner of Baan Saladin Community Center who has been organizing various activities for tourists. She is interested in the recommendation to integrate the workshop into the tour programs and has agreed to consider adding the Wax-sealed letter workshop to the Baan Saladin Community Centre tour programs in the future.

If the “Wax-sealed letter” workshop can be successfully included into the tour programs, it will make both locals, visitors and tourists more aware about the history of Mahasawat Canal. It will also ensure the workshop sustainability if the locals become organizers and continue the workshop activities. Additionally, the sealed letters and cards can potentially generate income

for the community, and become memorable souvenirs for participants in the workshop to take home and remember their experiences at Mahasawat Canal.

Youth involvement is also something worth considering when organizing the community workshop, as it can serve as a stage for youths to learn and express their interest in Mahasawat Canal history. To target more youths in the community, the team suggest future workshop organizers consider the timing to ensure secondary students can attend. Scheduling workshops outside of their exam periods would help increase their participation. By selecting suitable dates, more students can benefit from the activities without conflicts with their academic responsibilities. This approach not only sustains the workshops but also strengthens the connection between tourism, education, and local heritage with the youths of the community.

5.2 Recommendation for the House of Mahasvasti Museum

The House of Mahasvasti Museum was established by Dr. Aphilak Kasempholkoon to preserve the history and collection of Mahasawat Canal to honor the canal's historical heritage. The museum is now a center of learning of history, culture, and tradition of Mahasawat Canal. The museum is frequently visited by people outside of the community for appreciation of the local history and educational visits. As a private institution, it also needs a prior appointment before visiting.

5.2.1 Recommendation 2: Establish a regular opening day for the House of Mahasvasti Museum

The team recommend establishing a regular opening day for the House of Mahasvasti Museum. Our findings indicate that many people are unaware of the museum itself though some recognize it when associated with Dr. Aphilak Kasempholkoon. The team also found that many locals and tourists that have participated in our community workshop have expressed their interest in visiting the museum and are willing to learn more about Mahasawat Canal history. However, because the House of Mahasvasti Museum is a private institution that needs prior appointments before visiting, many locals do not have ready access to the museum.

If the House of Mahasvasti Museum can establish a regular or fixed opening date, which may be held monthly or annually, the residents then visit the museum more regularly and learn more about their history and heritage. For instance, the museum can have a fixed opening date which opens the museum to all the local people in the community on 1 May as “Khlong Mahasawat Day” because the construction of the Mahasawat Canal finished on 1 May, which makes it more related to the history and heritage of Mahasawat Canal.

5.3 Recommendation for local teachers

The team proposes incorporating history related and cultural activities into the school history lesson, along with engaging activities such as storytelling and interactive games like Kahoot! Additionally, the team has shared the data and materials collected from our activities with Ban Khlong Mahasawat School and the Mahasawat Canal community to encourage them to adopt and present these activities to other schools, helping to foster a deeper appreciation for local history and culture.

Furthermore, promoting the learning of local history and culture among secondary students is essential for strengthening the connection between youth and their communities. Incorporating content creation competitions—such as TikTok videos, essay writing, and artwork—into educational programs can enhance students' understanding of history while also developing their critical thinking, teamwork, and digital skills. These activities allow students to creatively share the community's stories from fresh and modern perspectives.

The team hope that local teachers who are interested in continuing the integration of history-related activities into school can inspire students to take an active role in preserving the cultural and historical legacy of Mahasawat Canal. This engagement not only strengthens their sense of identity and belonging but also helps ensure the community's heritage is passed down to future generations sustainably.

5.3.1 Recommendation 3: Use interactive learning activities for Mahasawat Canal history teaching for elementary students

The team recommend using interactive learning activities for Mahasawat Canal history teaching. From the activities that were conducted at Ban Khlong Mahasawat School, six students from Chulalongkorn University were able to gain valuable knowledge and more understanding about the history and culture of the Mahasawat Canal through hands-on learning. Incorporating these activities into formal education will help students develop a deeper connection to local history and culture.

Organizing history related activities for elementary school students will allow the organizers to truly understand and appreciate the history of Mahasawat Canal, recognizing its significance and values. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for future generations to pass down this knowledge, ensuring its preservation and continuity. This can create a sustainable learning cycle within the community.

To enhance engagement, the team propose using interactive teaching methods such as interactive storytelling and Kahoot! which have been found to be the most effective approaches for elementary students. These methods encourage active participation and improve knowledge retention while making cultural education more enjoyable and sustainable. Passive approaches, such as lengthy lectures, should be avoided to maintain students' interest and motivation.

Furthermore, the team recommend involving the locals in the Mahasawat Canal community as organizers for this history-related activities. This participation will not only help preserve the community's cultural heritage but also allow residents to gain a deeper understanding of their own history and traditions.

5.3.2 Recommendation 4: Integrate competition-based learning activities for secondary students

The team recommend integrating competition-based learning activities for secondary students, by hosting a content creation competition such as TikTok videos, essay writing, and artwork, which can deepen their understanding of history while developing teamwork, creativity, and digital skills. Another benefit is making participants feel connected to the community by focusing on local history and strengthening the bond between students and their community.

Students can learn more about the people and places that have shaped their surroundings, fostering a sense of pride. Additionally, these competitions provide opportunities for students to apply their learning in a practical and relevant context. Sharing their work with the community through school events, local media, or online platforms gives them a sense of purpose and accomplishment. These activities can inspire students to actively preserve and share the cultural heritage of Mahasawat Canal, ensuring its legacy is passed down to future generations.

To ensure the success of these competitions, the team recommend a collaborative approach between schools and community organizations. Community partners can provide access to historical resources, mentorship from local experts, and technical assistance for digital content creation. Schools can integrate the competitions into existing courses, offer them as extracurricular activities, or incorporate them into interdisciplinary projects. Showcasing student work through public exhibitions or online platforms will further amplify the impact of these initiatives and contribute to raising community awareness of local history. By integrating these creative competitions into the educational landscape, the team can empower the next generation to become active participants in preserving and celebrating their local history.

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Appendix A

Note. The data collected in this survey will be used for research on " Rebuilding Community Connections: Expanding the Role of the House of Mahasvasti Museum in Youth Engagement and Cultural Preservation." This research is conducted by a research team from Chulalongkorn University. All responses will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed or used for any purpose other than this research.

Survey Questions for: (1) A survey of local residents at Baan Saladin Floating Market on their interest in local history and culture.

Demographic Information

Age group: [Open-ended]

Do you live near Khlong Mahasawat? [Yes/No]

Community and Historical Awareness (Scale: 1 - Least to 4 - Most)

- How well do you know Ruean Mahasawat?
- How often do you visit Khlong Mahasawat?
- How frequently have you participated in community activities?
- Do you think community activities should be organized?
- If community activities were organized, would you be interested in participating?
- How much do you know about the history and culture of your community?

Survey Questions for: (2) Survey of interest in participating in historical activities of Khlong Mahasawat

Demographic Information

Age group: [Open-ended]

Community and Historical Awareness (Scale: 1 - Least to 4 - Most)

- Are you interested in participating in activities about the history of the Mahasawat Canal??
- If the event is in the form of a competition about the creation of historical works (such as TikTok, essays, drawings, poems), will it increase the interest of participation?

What styles are you interested in? (Choose more than 1 item)

- TikTok
- Essay
- Draw a picture
- Poem
- Other

If you participate in the competition, what kind of prize are you interested in? (Choose more than 1)

- Prize money
- Certificate
- Historical field trip
- Special points in history
- Other

Additional suggestions

Survey Questions for: (3) Questionnaire for development to promote historical value for "Krang Rak" activities.

Demographic Information

Age group: [Open-ended]

Do you live near Khlong Mahasawat? [Yes/No]

Community and Historical Awareness (Scale: 1 - Least to 4 - Most)

- Satisfaction with love activities?
- If this activity is supplemented by adding the use of local leaves/trees to convey historical stories How much will it increase the interest and memorability of the activity?
- If this activity is supplemented by adding the use of the seal of Ruen Maha Sawasdee or ancient Thai letters to convey historical knowledge, how much will it increase the interest and memorability of the activity?

- If this activity is supplemented by adding various drawings, how much will it increase the interest and memorability of the activity?
- If this activity is supplemented by choosing to make a letter to yourself in the future and stamp it. How much will it increase the interest and memorability of the event?
- If this activity is supplemented by photographing Polaroid, putting it in the card will increase the interest and memorableness of the event?

Additional proposals about activity development guidelines

Survey Questions for: (4) Mahasawat Canal History Workshop Feedback Form

- **English Or Thai?**
 - Thai Tourist
 - Tourist
 - People in the Khlong Mahasawat community
 - Student

Thai Tourist (Scale: 1 - Least to 4 - Most)

- How satisfied are you with your overall experience at the Khlong Mahasawat History Workshop?
- Participation and learning How interesting are workshop activities?
- How much did you learn about the history of Khlong Mahasawat today?
- Values and individuality How well does this workshop provide a unique experience and reflect local history?
- Impact on perspective How much does this workshop change your perspective on Khlong Mahasawat?Management and comfort
- How do you rate the management and operation of the workshop (e.g. signposts, information, accessibility, convenience of the place

Tourist (Scale: 1 - Least to 4 – Most

- How would you rate the overall satisfaction level from the activities?
 - How engaging did you find the activities at the workshop?
 - How much did you learn about the history of Mahasawat Canal today?
 - Did the workshop provide a unique and authentic experience of local history?
- How engaging did you find the activities at the workshop

Appendix B

Interview summary of lookwa group

Organizing a community development workshop should start with setting clear goals on what benefits the community should gain and identifying the right target audience, such as students, local residents, or the elderly. The workshop content should align with the community's way of life, such as handicrafts, local cuisine, or technology that can help improve the area. Learning methods should be simple and engaging, including demonstrations and hands-on activities, with knowledgeable instructors leading the sessions. Additionally, community members should be encouraged to participate both as teachers and learners to promote knowledge exchange. If the workshop focuses on local culture or wisdom, promoting it to attract external participants could be beneficial. Moreover, the workshop can be integrated into local schools to provide students with hands-on learning experiences. Lastly, continuous evaluation and improvement should be conducted, along with encouraging participants to apply and share their newly acquired knowledge.