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The Development of Social Studies Learning Management Guidelines using Community-Based and Project-Based Approaches to Promote Disciplined Behavior and Responsibility for Learning among Primary School Students in Small Schools

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Abstract

This research aimed to develop a social studies instructional model integrating community-based learning (CBL) and project-based learning (PBL) to foster disciplined behavior and learning responsibility among primary school students in small-sized institutions. A one-group pretest-posttest experimental design was employed with Grade 5 students and one teacher from Ban Koh Nok School. Research instruments included a demographic questionnaire, instructional model evaluation form, and satisfaction survey, validated through the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC). Data analysis used descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation). Findings revealed five learning management strategies developed and evaluated as highly appropriate by experts. Both teachers and students expressed high satisfaction, and the model effectively promoted disciplined behavior and learning responsibility. The study suggests that integrating CBL and PBL provides a meaningful, community-responsive approach that strengthens academic skills, civic engagement, and personal accountability. However, the study's limitation lies in its small sample size and single-site implementation, restricting the generalizability of the findings. Future research should explore the long-term impacts of the CBL-PBL integrated model on student behavior and academic outcomes across diverse educational contexts and larger sample groups. Additionally, there is a need to develop and validate assessment tools specifically designed to measure behavioral growth and social-emotional learning within CBL-PBL frameworks, as well as investigate the integration of digital technologies to enhance project sustainability and student engagement.

Keywords: Social Studies, Community-based, Project-based, Discipline, Responsibility, Small Schools

Introduction

The rapid transformation of modern society driven by technological advancement has significantly influenced how individuals learn, work, and interact. In response, 21st-century education must equip students with essential skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and civic responsibility. In Thailand, the National Strategy (2018–2037) emphasizes the need to develop virtuous, disciplined, and responsible citizens who can contribute meaningfully to their communities. Social studies education plays a crucial role in achieving this objective

by cultivating ethical behavior, community awareness, and active citizenship among students.

Despite the comprehensive curriculum outlined in the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (2008), many small schools in Thailand face challenges in delivering effective social studies instruction. These challenges include a lack of instructional resources, teacher-centered methodologies, and limited opportunities for students to engage in real-world learning experiences. Students often perceive social studies as overly theoretical and exam-oriented, which hinders their ability to apply knowledge meaningfully. Moreover, existing instructional approaches do not sufficiently address the development of responsible learning behavior and discipline skills that are essential for lifelong learning and community participation.

Research Gap

While community-based learning (CBL) and project-based learning (PBL) have been shown to enhance student engagement, critical thinking, and academic achievement ([Wanglang & Chatwattana, 2023](#); [Lim et al., 2023](#)), few studies have examined the explicit integration of both approaches within the unique context of small schools in Thailand. Many Thai small schools face compounded challenges such as multi-grade classrooms, limited teaching personnel, and resource constraints that affect the feasibility and effectiveness of implementing active learning models. Additionally, research on CBL and PBL in Thailand has often emphasized academic outcomes, with limited focus on the cultivation of disciplined behavior and responsibility for learning, which are essential for lifelong learning and active citizenship ([Ndungo et al., 2020](#); [Phumang, 2022](#)).

Furthermore, while the Thai National Strategy (2018-2037) and the Basic Education Core Curriculum (2008) underscore the development of civic responsibility and ethical behavior, there is insufficient empirical evidence on how instructional models can effectively translate these policy goals into classroom practices, particularly in small, under-resourced schools. International studies ([Shah et al., 2023](#); [Fulton & Diaz, 2020](#)) have demonstrated the benefits of integrating community engagement into learning, yet localized studies examining how these

approaches impact behavioral dimensions within the Thai educational and cultural context remain limited.

This study addresses these gaps by designing, implementing, and evaluating a CBL-PBL integrated instructional model specifically tailored for small schools in Thailand, focusing on its effectiveness in fostering disciplined behavior and responsibility for learning among primary school students.

Research Questions

- How can an instructional model that integrates community-based and project-based learning promote disciplined behavior and learning responsibility among primary school students in small-sized schools?
- How satisfied are teachers and students with the social studies instructional model that combines CBL and PBL approaches?
- By addressing these questions, the study seeks to contribute to the development of innovative teaching strategies that align with national educational goals and support the unique needs of small-school contexts.

Objectives of the Research

- To develop a social studies learning management strategy utilizing a community-based learning methodology integrated with project-based learning to foster responsible learning behavior and discipline among primary school students in small-sized institutions.
- To study the satisfaction of educators and students regarding the social studies instructional methodology that integrates community-based and project-based learning to promote responsible learning behaviors and discipline among primary school pupils in small-sized institutions.

Literature Review

Curriculum Context: Social Studies at Wat Bang Luk School

The Social Studies, Religion, and Culture curriculum at Wat Bang Luk School in Hat Yai, Songkhla aligns with Thailand's Basic Education Core Curriculum (2008), aiming to develop well-rounded learners with physical, moral, and intellectual competencies. The curriculum

emphasizes democratic values under a constitutional monarchy, communication and life skills, critical thinking, and the responsible use of technology, alongside fostering national pride, discipline, and public mindedness.

The school's mission focuses on curriculum development, student potential, effective school management, teacher development, and maintaining a safe and environmentally conscious learning environment. Desired student characteristics include national loyalty, a strong moral foundation, cultural appreciation, and community engagement. Core competencies emphasized include communication, critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, adaptability, and technological literacy. The curriculum content spans religion and ethics, civic duties, economics (including the Sufficiency Economy philosophy), Thai history, and geography, with an emphasis on integrating local context and responsiveness to community needs.

Challenges in Small Schools in Thailand

Despite the curriculum's comprehensiveness, small schools in Thailand face numerous challenges that hinder effective implementation. Academic difficulties include insufficient modern teaching materials, limited funding, and teachers' lack of technological proficiency. Personnel issues arise from high turnover, inadequate support staff, and limited professional development. Physical infrastructure is often poor, with outdated buildings and a lack of essential resources like computers. From a management perspective, low student numbers and limited community support hinder activity planning and collaboration.

To address these challenges, the Ministry of Education proposed four strategies:

- Improving management through community involvement and data-driven planning,
- Enhancing educational quality via teacher development and technology integration,
- Supporting schools with adequate resources and facilities, and
- Promoting active community participation.

International models, such as effective schools in the U.S., highlight the importance of parental involvement, teacher support, and experiential learning in improving educational outcomes.

Learning Management Models

Effective learning management plays a critical role in achieving desired student outcomes. Scholars like Laoliengdee, Khaemanee, and Joyce et al., describe learning models as systematic frameworks guided by educational theories. These include cognitive development models (e.g., Gagne's model, graphic organizers), affective models (e.g., Bloom's affective domain), psychomotor models (e.g., Dave's domain), process-skills models (e.g., inquiry-based learning), and integration models (e.g., cooperative learning). Essential elements of learning models, as identified by [Dick et al. \(2009\)](#), and [Morrison et al. \(2010\)](#), include clearly defined objectives, learner-centered activities, conducive environments, and robust assessment systems.

Social Studies Learning: Community and Project-Based Integration

A promising approach in social studies education involves combining community-based learning (CBL) with project-based learning (PBL) to foster student responsibility, discipline, and ethical engagement. This model emphasizes experiential learning through real-life projects rooted in community issues, with stages including community engagement, project implementation, reflective practice, community presentation, and evaluation with stakeholders. The approach draws on Bruner's theory of cognitive development, Ausubel's meaningful learning, and Vygotsky's constructivism, all of which highlight active participation, social interaction, and discovery learning.

The ADDIE model serves as a guiding framework for structuring learning activities, integrating ongoing feedback and iterative design. The model supports discipline and responsibility by engaging students in community-centered, project-driven tasks that reflect real-world challenges and outcomes.

Community-Based Learning (CBL)

CBL uses the community as a context for learning, known globally as Service Learning (SL), especially in countries like the U.S., Australia, and regions in Africa and Asia. CBL connects academic content with practical application, promoting ethical awareness, responsibility, and collaborative problem-solving. It

fosters skills essential to 21st-century learners and supports sustainable development through teacher - student - community collaboration. Educational theorists such as [Owens & Wang \(1996\)](#), [Flecky \(2011\)](#), and [Metro-Roland \(2018\)](#) advocate for using community settings - urban or rural - as interactive learning environments.

CBL typically follows a five-step process: preparation, implementation, reflection, engagement, and evaluation. These steps help ensure that students experience meaningful learning outcomes through direct community involvement.

Project-Based Learning (PBL) and Empirical Support

PBL emphasizes active learning through real-world projects, where students collaborate to explore issues of interest with guidance from teachers as facilitators. The process involves topic selection, project planning, implementation, reflection, community presentation, and comprehensive evaluation. Thai educators like Tisana Khammanee and Woraporn Trakulsarit, along with [Hargis \(2005\)](#), emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary and inquiry-based learning in PBL.

Types of PBL vary, including guided and independent projects, and can focus on various outputs such as research reports or community performances. Research by [Baron \(2010\)](#), and others affirms the value of PBL in promoting critical thinking, teamwork, and community engagement. Several studies support PBL's effectiveness:

- Klongdee emphasized its impact on creativity among undergraduates.
- International studies from [Koparan & Guven \(2014\)](#) report improved attitudes and performance in subjects like statistics and biology.

Combining PBL and CBL in social studies is especially effective in cultivating student responsibility and applying theoretical knowledge to authentic community issues. This integrated approach encourages inquiry, collaboration, and practical learning, making it a powerful method for educational transformation in small-school contexts. In alignment with the National Strategy (2018–2037), which emphasizes the development of disciplined, ethical, and responsible citizens ([Office of the Prime Minister, 2018](#)), and the Basic

Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (2008) that outlines the cultivation of civic responsibility and 21st-century competencies ([Ministry of Education, 2008](#)), this study responds to Thailand's policy direction for quality education in small schools. Additionally, the National Education Plan (2017–2036) and the Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017–2021) highlight equitable educational opportunities and active citizenship as key priorities ([Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2017](#)).

Recent studies have highlighted the potential of integrating CBL and PBL to enhance critical thinking, collaboration, and civic responsibility in students. For example, [Wanglang and Chatwattana \(2023\)](#) demonstrated that a PBL model using gamification enhanced 21st-century skills among Thai learners. [Lim et al. \(2023\)](#) found that PBL approaches significantly improved history learning outcomes while promoting student engagement in Malaysian schools, reflecting cross-cultural applicability in Southeast Asia.

[Jarupongputtana et al. \(2022\)](#) explored interdisciplinary community-based learning to strengthen digital citizenship among Thai pre-service social studies teachers, highlighting the role of CBL in fostering responsibility and ethical behavior. Similarly, [Shah et al. \(2023\)](#) emphasized the effectiveness of institutionalized community-based learning in enhancing student interpersonal and civic competencies, aligning with goals for discipline and social responsibility.

In addition, [Sisamud et al. \(2023\)](#) examined the use of PBL with design thinking within the Metaverse to enhance Buddhism innovation skills, reflecting how technology can complement CBL-PBL models for deeper engagement. [Jansuna et al. \(2024\)](#) combined flipped classrooms with virtual reality to improve historical learning, demonstrating technology's potential in active learning frameworks relevant to CBL-PBL.

These recent studies confirm the value of CBL-PBL models in fostering 21st-century skills and responsible learning behavior, yet there remains a paucity of empirical studies focusing specifically on the integration of these approaches within small-school contexts in Thailand to foster disciplined

behavior and responsibility for learning in social studies. This study aims to address this gap while aligning with the evolving educational landscape and technological integration to support under-resourced educational settings.

Methodology

This study employed a one-group pretest-posttest experimental design to evaluate a social studies learning management model integrating community-based and project-based learning (CBL-PBL).

Population and Sample

The population consisted of Grade 5 social studies teachers in six small schools under the Primary Educational Service Area Office Zone 2. A single teacher and a Grade 5 class from Ban Koh Nok School were selected through random sampling.

Research Instruments

- Needs Assessment Questionnaire: Collected data on teachers' needs regarding CBL-PBL integration, with IOC scores between 0.05 and 1.00.
- Instructional Guidebook: Outlined a five-step model (planning, project work, reflection, presentation, evaluation) validated by experts.
- Satisfaction Survey: A 5-point Likert scale evaluated by specialists to assess teachers' and students' satisfaction with the model.

Data Collection

The research process included conducting a needs survey with teachers, developing and refining the model based on expert feedback, providing a 7-hour training session on CBL-PBL for the selected teacher and students, implementing the model in classroom practice, and collecting feedback using the satisfaction survey.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) were used to analyze needs and satisfaction, while IOC analysis was conducted to assess tool validity and model alignment.

Limitation

A limitation of this methodology is the small sample size, involving a single teacher and one

Grade 5 class within one school, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to wider contexts. While this design allowed for in-depth observation and model refinement within a small-school setting, future studies should employ larger samples across multiple schools to validate the model's effectiveness and adaptability across diverse educational and community contexts.

Result

Development of the CBL-PBL Instructional Model

The study developed a social studies instructional model integrating community-based learning (CBL) and project-based learning (PBL) to foster responsible learning behavior in primary school students at small educational institutions. Needs assessment from teachers revealed a significant desire for implementing CBL-PBL approaches, with an average score of 4.48, emphasizing the importance of fostering responsible learning conduct across core and behavioral dimensions.

The model was structured in alignment with the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (2008), incorporating five learning methodologies: experiential learning, project-based learning, problem-based learning, skills-oriented thinking process learning, and community-centered social studies education. The instructional manual developed includes learning content, objectives, pedagogical activities, and assessment techniques, ready to be adapted into lesson plans for practical classroom use.

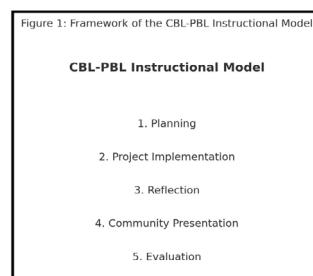


Figure 1 illustrates the structured framework of the developed CBL-PBL instructional model, detailing its five key steps: planning, project implementation, reflection, community presentation, and evaluation.

Expert Evaluation of the Model

Expert assessments of the instructional model indicated the highest level of suitability across all criteria evaluated.

Table 1 Expert Evaluation Scores on the Instructional Model

Evaluation Criteria	Mean	SD
Content Alignment	5.00	0.00
Learning Activities	5.00	0.00
Assessment Methods	5.00	0.00
Practical Applicability	5.00	0.00
Overall Suitability	5.00	0.00

Teacher and Student Satisfaction

The satisfaction survey revealed high levels of satisfaction from both teachers and students. Teachers reported a mean satisfaction score of 4.58 (SD = 0.12), while students reported a mean score of 4.52 (SD = 0.15). The highest satisfaction in both groups was with the learning activities, followed by perceived usefulness, content quality, and assessment methods.

Table 2 Teacher and Student Satisfaction Scores

Respondent	Mean	SD
Teacher	4.58	0.12
Students	4.52	0.15

Behavioral Outcomes: Pretest-Posttest Analysis

Student behavior related to responsibility and discipline was evaluated before and after the implementation of the CBL-PBL instructional model.

Table 3 Pretest and Posttest Scores on Student Behavior

Dimension	Pretest Mean (SD)	Posttest Mean (SD)
Core Behavior	3.75 (0.40)	4.43 (0.35)
Learning Responsibility	3.68 (0.42)	4.36 (0.38)

To strengthen the evidence beyond descriptive statistics, a paired-sample t-test was conducted, revealing statistically significant improvements:

- Core behavior: $t(29) = 5.89$, $p < 0.001$
- Learning responsibility: $t(29) = 6.12$, $p < 0.001$

These findings confirm the effectiveness of the

CBL-PBL instructional model in enhancing students' disciplined behavior and learning responsibility in a small-school setting.

Discussion

This research investigates the integration of Community-Based Learning (CBL) and Project-Based Learning (PBL) in teaching social studies. Seven instructional approaches were identified and evaluated by experts, achieving a perfect score, emphasizing the effectiveness of combining these models. The blend of CBL and PBL allows students to engage in hands-on activities and tackle real-world issues within their communities, enhancing higher-order thinking and skill development. This approach not only promotes academic success but also fosters social engagement and problem-solving skills, as outlined by Phinla and Phinla, who emphasized collaboration between students, teachers, and community members in learning.

The research builds on existing studies, such as [Jarupongputtana et al. \(2022\)](#), who highlighted the importance of digital literacy in community-based learning, and [Wongchantra et al. \(2022\)](#), who found significant improvements in students' environmental knowledge and ethics through CBL. Similarly, PBL was found to be highly effective in promoting 21st-century skills and creativity, as seen in studies by [Wanglang and Chatwattana \(2023\)](#) and [Lim et al. \(2023\)](#).

Teacher and Student Satisfaction: Both teachers and students expressed high satisfaction with the CBL-PBL teaching model. Teachers appreciated the structured learning activities, which systematically integrated the community into the learning process, fostering collaboration and social responsibility. Students, too, were highly satisfied, particularly with the opportunity to engage directly with real-world problems in their communities, which helped them develop critical thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. These findings align with research from [Shah et al. \(2023\)](#), who highlighted the interpersonal skills gained through community-based learning, and [Fulton and Diaz \(2020\)](#), who showed improvements across all learning outcomes when integrating global and community learning.

In conclusion, the combination of CBL and PBL

in social studies provides a powerful framework for developing both academic and social skills, promoting long-term sustainability and responsible citizenship.

Conclusion

This study developed and evaluated a social studies instructional model that integrates community-based learning (CBL) and project-based learning (PBL) to promote responsible learning behavior and discipline among primary school students in small schools. The findings demonstrate that the CBL-PBL instructional model is highly effective in enhancing students' disciplined behavior and learning responsibility while achieving high levels of satisfaction among teachers and students. The model was rated as highly appropriate by experts and successfully engaged students in meaningful, community-responsive learning activities that strengthened their academic skills, civic engagement, and personal accountability.

By enabling learners to apply academic knowledge in real-world contexts, the CBL-PBL approach fosters critical thinking, collaboration, and civic responsibility, aligning with Thailand's National Strategy (2018–2037) and the demands of 21st-century education. These outcomes affirm the model's potential to transform social studies education into an active, experiential process, particularly in small, under-resourced schools.

However, the study acknowledges limitations that must be considered when interpreting these findings. The research was conducted with a small sample size, involving a single teacher and one Grade 5 class in a specific community context, which limits the generalizability of the results to broader educational settings. Additionally, while the study demonstrates significant improvements in behavioral outcomes, further research employing larger samples, multi-site implementations, and longitudinal designs is necessary to validate and expand upon these findings.

Future research should also explore the development and validation of assessment tools for measuring behavioral growth within CBL-PBL contexts and examine how integrating digital technologies can enhance project sustainability and student engagement. By addressing these areas, educators and policymakers can further leverage the

benefits of CBL-PBL instructional models to foster disciplined, responsible, and community-oriented learners in diverse educational contexts.

Recommendations

Align Projects with Community Needs

Action Step: Teachers should conduct a community needs assessment by engaging with local leaders, parents, and students to identify real-life issues relevant to the curriculum (e.g., environmental conservation, local history documentation). This ensures projects are meaningful, contextually relevant, and foster student responsibility.

Design Structured CBL-PBL Activities

Action Step: Use the five-step instructional framework (planning, project implementation, reflection, community presentation, and evaluation) to design lesson plans. Provide students with clear project guidelines, timelines, and expected outcomes while allowing flexibility for student-led inquiry and decision-making.

Promote School–Community Partnerships

Action Step: Invite community members as co-facilitators or guest speakers during project activities, and involve them in project presentations and evaluations. This fosters collaboration and reinforces the real-world relevance of students' learning experiences.

Integrate Reflection for Responsibility Building

Action Step: Allocate structured reflection periods during and after projects where students discuss challenges, learning outcomes, and their roles in the community. Teachers can use guided reflection questions to link activities to values of responsibility and disciplined behavior.

Connect Learning to Assessment

Action Step: Develop simple, rubric-based assessment tools that measure both academic knowledge and behavioral competencies (e.g., responsibility, teamwork, civic engagement). Use these tools to provide feedback to students and inform parents and the community about student progress.

Plan for Sustainability and Scalability

Action Step: Document project processes, challenges, and successes to refine future iterations and share with other teachers in small schools through workshops or professional learning communities (PLCs). Seek administrative support for scaling the model within and across schools.

Future Research Directions

- Long-Term Impact: Investigate the sustainability and long-term impacts of student-led projects on both community improvement and student personal growth.
- Assessment Tool Development: Create and validate comprehensive tools specifically designed to measure behavioral competencies within CBL-PBL contexts.
- Technology Integration: Explore the use of digital tools and platforms to enhance engagement and scalability of CBL-PBL projects in small-school settings.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest.

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