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The Development of Curriculum for Vocational Promotion of Special Needs Children Based on Rice Culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province

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Abstract

This research article aimed to: (1) study the fundamental information and needs for developing a vocational curriculum for children with special needs based on rice culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province; (2) develop the vocational curriculum for children with special needs based on rice culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province; (3) implement and trial a vocational curriculum for children with special needs based on rice culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province; and (4) evaluate and improve the implementation of a vocational curriculum for children with special needs based on rice culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. The target group consisted of 15 pairs (30 individuals in total), selected through voluntary participation. The research instruments included interviews, focus group discussion guidelines, vocational skills and attributes assessment forms and curriculum satisfaction questionnaires. All the instruments were validated by experts. The limitation of this study is that it may only apply to children with special needs in schools or special education centres located in Chaloem Phra Kiat District. Consequently, the findings may not be generalisable to children with special needs in other districts or provinces. Future research should broaden its scope to encompass other categories of children with special needs. This expansion ought to be accompanied by the development of educational media, innovative tools, or technology integrated with the curriculum to enhance engagement and accessibility for these learners. Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis, and quantitative data were interpreted using statistical methods. Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis, while quantitative data were analysed using percentages, means (x), and standard deviations (S.D.). The research findings are summarised as follows.

The results of the needs assessment indicated a common expectation among the participants. In the area of local food, there was a desire to promote careers in traditional Thai dessert-making. For handicrafts, the preferred activities were those with simple processes that children could complete successfully. In the area of creative work, there was a desire to support the production of low-cost, locally made souvenirs using community-sourced materials. Emphasis was placed on hands-on training conducted by local wisdom holders who shared knowledge and provided experiential learning opportunities.

The curriculum development results revealed that the curriculum consisted of ten components: (1) principles, (2) goals, (3) activity guidelines, (4) activity formats, (5) course description,

(6) learning objectives, (7) activity structure, (8) learning media/resources, (9) assessment and evaluation, and (10) a student development activity plan. The draft curriculum was reviewed and deemed appropriate in the following aspects: (1) alignment with the needs for student development activities, (2) consistency with the local context by integrating community strengths into income-generating careers, and (3) curriculum implementation strategies that foster vocational skills and career-related attributes.

The curriculum implementation phase involved five steps: Step 1 – providing basic knowledge; Step 2 – selecting topics of interest; Step 3 – planning and learning from local wisdom experts; Step 4 – practical implementation, where students followed their plans systematically; and Step 5 – presentation and discussion of the outcomes. Student assessments were conducted throughout and after the implementation. The results showed that both students' and parents' overall vocational skills were at a good level, vocational attributes were also at a good level, and satisfaction with the curriculum development activities was at a high level.

Curriculum evaluation and revision indicated that overall vocational skills and attributes were at a good level, and satisfaction levels were high. However, areas for improvement were identified: (1) the number of hours allocated for activities was limited, which affected the full development of vocational skills and attributes; and (2) the language used in the criteria for assessing students' work was overly complex, leading to misunderstandings in the evaluation process. Consequently, the assessment criteria were revised for greater clarity and usability.

Keywords: The Development of Curriculum, Vocational Promotion, Special Needs Children, Rice Culture, Vocational Skills, Occupational Attributes, Curriculum Components

Introduction

In 2015, 193 countries around the world, including Thailand, jointly established 17 global goals known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the aim of achieving them by 2030 (United Nations, 2025). A key guiding principle of the SDGs is "Leaving no one behind", which emphasises that the dignity of every human being is essential for the attainment of these goals. Therefore, development must reach every country and every sector of society, with priority given to those who are furthest behind—the most disadvantaged groups, such as children, youth, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, the elderly, indigenous peoples, refugees, and displaced people. According to the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999), amended (No. 3) B.E. 2553 (2010), Section 10, Paragraph 2, the government is obligated to provide education for children with special needs, ensuring their right and opportunity to receive appropriate basic education (The Ministry of Education, 2024).

In the context of 21st-century education, the development of career skills and entrepreneurship—as stated in Competency Area 6 of the Basic Education Core Curriculum—plays a vital role in supporting the well-being of Thai children and youth, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives (that is, "Happy Thais"). The This includes setting career goals and planning based on individual interests and aptitudes, gaining knowledge and basic vocational skills appropriate to their potential, and fostering positive work habits and innovation, all within the framework of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP). Students should be able to create employment opportunities and develop innovations that are beneficial to themselves, their families, and society. However, in practice, especially at the compulsory education level, particularly primary education, the curriculum remains poorly connected to real-life career pathways. In 2022, the data showed that children and youth aged 7–17 faced numerous barriers to education, particularly those with special needs or from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as those from low-income families, migrant children, or children of seasonal workers. These children are at a high risk of dropping out of the education system, with limited access to further education beyond the compulsory level. According to the Office of the Basic Education Commission's dropout tracking report, 43.72% of students have dropped out of the basic education system. The top three reasons were: (1) completion of compulsory education with no intention to continue (15.38%); (2) relocation (4.78%); and (3) family related necessities (4.66%) (The Ministry of Education, 2024). Without vocational skills, these children risk becoming unskilled labourers, facing unemployment, or becoming burdens to society, their families, and the nation.

For children with special needs in inclusive education settings and disadvantaged children, such as those living in extreme poverty, dropping out midway or lacking access to further education often renders classroom knowledge insufficiently applicable to real life situations. In contrast, self-help skills and vocational training are practical and can be directly applied to daily life. Several scholars (UNICEF Thailand, 2025; Wongsurit & Subphaso, 2025; Subsandee et al. 2025) emphasize that

vocational skills are both essential and critical for these groups. Promoting such skills from the primary education level can provide children with tools for self-reliance and entrepreneurship. Therefore, all stakeholders must work together to support these children by ensuring access to vocational education and training that aligns with their needs and the community context. This support enables them to overcome obstacles, live independently, and improve their quality of life.

In the project for developing learning centres in art, culture, traditions, and local wisdomaimed at fostering community values and a sense of local pride in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, it was found that many small primary schools in the area had a significant number of students with learning difficulties or limitations, including children with learning disabilities and those from extremely poor families. These students were present in all grade levels. Within the community context of Chalerm Phra Kiat District, most people work in rice farming, as the area is low-lying and rich in natural water. Rice farming has been the main occupation for generations in the region. The region is home to a variety of local rice varieties, such as Khai Mod Rin, Phuang Ka, and Chor Lumphi. Rice is processed into a wide range of savory and sweet foods that reflect local identity e.g., Kanom Ju Jun, Kanom Kuen, Kanom Yee Joi, and many others. The rice cultivation process has inspired various handicrafts and utilitarian products. Several community economic learning groups have emerged, such as the "Rice in Soil" cooperative. Additionally, local rituals and traditions are deeply interwoven with the daily lives of the people, reflecting an intelligent cultural system for problem-solving and adaptation collectively known as the Rice Culture. Consequently, promoting community-based vocational development activities that preserve and extend knowledge of rice culture especially among the younger generation, including children with special needs or disadvantages who may struggle academically can empower these children to enjoy working in areas aligned with their interests and strengths. It fosters their ability to live harmoniously with local traditions while integrating contemporary relevance into local culture, ensuring that it remains vibrant and does not disappear with time.

Research Objectives

- To study the fundamental information and needs for developing a vocational curriculum for children with special needs based on rice culture in the Chalerm Phra Kiat District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.
- To develop the vocational curriculum for children with special needs based on rice culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.
- To implement and trial a vocational curriculum for children with special needs based on rice culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.
- To evaluate and improve the implementation of a vocational curriculum for children with special needs based on rice culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

Review of Literature

Curriculum Development

Good (1973; Saylor and Alexander (1974, as cited in Chantarotron & Yatiakaravong, 2022) curriculum development as the process of modifying or improving an existing curriculum to achieve better results in terms of goal setting, content organisation, teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation, and other elements to attain newly established objectives. Curriculum change refers to a transformation of the entire system or a comprehensive change (Oliva, 1992, as cited in Maiwai, 2017) starting from the goals and methods. Such changes will impact the thoughts and feelings of all stakeholders. Curriculum improvement, on the other hand, refers to modifying only certain parts of the curriculum without altering its underlying philosophy or structure. This is based on the belief that learners have diverse backgrounds and experiences. The curriculum development process was outlined in seven steps as follows:

- **Diagnosing Needs**: Investigating the current problems, needs, and various necessities of society and learners.
- **Setting Objectives**: After diagnosing the needs of society and learners, clearly defined objectives were established.
- **Selecting Content**: The defined objectives assist in selecting content that is appropriate for the

objectives, age, and abilities of the learners. The content must be reliable and essential for learning purposes.

- **Organising Content**: The selected content must be organised with attention to continuity and level of difficulty, as well as the maturity, capabilities, and interests of the learners.
- **Selecting Learning Experiences**: Instructors or related personnel must select learning experiences that align with curriculum content and goals.
- **Organising Learning Experiences**: Learning experiences should be arranged with consideration of content and continuity.
- Determining what and how to evaluate: Deciding what should be assessed to measure learning outcomes.

It is evident that the curriculum development process requires an analysis of the differences in learners' abilities before establishing objectives and selecting and organising experiences, with an emphasis on a learner-centred approach. In addition, the developed curriculum must be evaluated.

Tyler's Model of Curriculum Development

Tyler (1949, as cited in Moran et al., 2024 & Patthanaphon, 2024) proposed an approach to curriculum development as a tool for education. A curriculum must serve to stimulate learners to study and examine the principles and reasoning of others and to develop a conceptual understanding of components and their relationships within the educational process. Furthermore, Tyler proposed that curriculum development must be based on the analysis of four fundamental questions.

- What educational purposes should schools seek to attain?
- What educational experiences can be provided to achieve these purposes?
- How can these educational experiences be organised effectively?
- How can we determine whether these purposes are being achieved?

Tyler emphasised that these four questions must be asked and addressed in sequence, making the formulation of objectives the most critical step. Tyler's concept of curriculum development follows a logical sequence as outlined below (Tyler, 1949, as cited in Moran et al., 2024; Wongyai, 2011; and Patthanaphon, 2024)

Step 1: Defining the Objectives of the Curriculum

This begins with formulating provisional objectives based on three primary sources: an analysis of society, the learners themselves, and the recommendations of subject-matter experts. The information obtained from these sources serves as the basis for setting the initial curriculum objectives. Because these initial objectives may be too numerous to implement in a single curriculum, it is necessary to screen and select only the most essential and consistent objectives for further development. Tyler recommended that permanent objectives be selected through a filtering process that eliminates objectives that are deemed insignificant or inconsistent. This should be done using principles derived from both the psychology of learning and educational/social philosophies. The refined and selected objectives are referred to as final objectives or permanent educational objectives, which guide the next stages of curriculum development.

Step 2: Selecting Learning Experiences

In addressing the second question, Tyler focused on how to select learning experiences that effectively lead to the attainment of specified objectives. The objectives, which define the desired behaviours and content, serve as the intended outcomes or "ends", while the learning experiences represent the "means" through which those ends are achieved.

Step 3: Organizing Learning Experiences

Learning experiences are typically organised into instructional units with careful consideration of time allocation and content relationships. The key criteria for effective organisation are continuity, sequence, and integration. These elements ensure that learning builds progressively and cohesively, enhancing the learner's development.

Step 4: Evaluation

This final step in Tyler's model focuses on assessing whether the organised learning experiences effectively achieved the intended objectives. Evaluation enables curriculum planners to determine

the extent to which the curriculum has succeeded and informs further improvements.

Tyler's curriculum development model is illustrated in Figure 1.

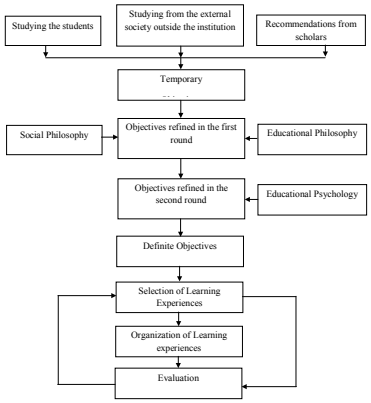


Figure 1 Tyler's Curriculum Development Model
(Source: Tyler, 1949, as cited in Moran et al., 2024)

Career Promotion Curriculum

The career promotion curriculum is an approach to developing vocational education that aligns with the local context. It brings development directly into communities, responding to the needs of both learners and the community. This approach fosters knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes toward occupations while promoting the effective utilisation of local wisdom, knowledge, and resources. Therefore, the development of career promotion curricula aimed at employability is of great significance for the following reasons (The Ministry of Education, 2024):

- This involves developing or improving vocational curricula to better suit local needs.
- This includes planning learning content that addresses the interests and needs of learners.
- This supports the development and utilisation of local resources related to occupations.
- It preserves and promotes local wisdom and knowledge while adapting them appropriately in response to changing social conditions.

Children with Special Needs

Special children or children with special needs refer to those who require special educational support. The term has been defined in various ways, depending on the type of assistance provided. For example, UNICEF Thailand (2025) defined children with special needs as those whose needs differ from those of typical children, thereby necessitating an educational approach that differs in terms of content, methodology, and assessment. Unchai (2020) stated that individuals with special needs are those who are unable to function in the same way as the general population or who cannot perform some or all activities of daily living independently due to physical or intellectual impairments, whether congenital or acquired. According to Sukkasemsin (2018), children with special needs are those who have developmental impairments in various domains physical, emotional, social, linguistic, or cognitive and are unable to perform daily life tasks like their typically developing peers. These children require specially designed educational approaches tailored to their specific conditions and needs.

Rice-Based Cultural Livelihoods

Rice is the cradle of civilization for the peoples of Southeast Asia. It is the root of the customs and traditions that bind individuals to their communities and national identities. Rice represents a shared cultural foundation that unites the people of this region. In Thailand, rice has shaped the very fabric of society, and its life cycle is intricately intertwined with daily living (Wannuan, 2020; Nimmanut, 2021). The way of life among Thai rice farmers is remarkably similar throughout the country. They must continually adapt to changes in climate, which has given rise to a rich culture of rice cultivation. This includes a deep respect for nature, expressed through beliefs, rituals and traditions. Such rituals often pay homage to Mae Posop, the Rice Goddess (Lopprasert, 2020). For instance, the Raek Na Khwan ceremony is held before the planting season begins. Farmers largely rely on self-sufficiency to ensure their food security. Most households practice subsistence agriculture, utilising the resources available in their rice fields. This includes producing palm sugar, raising draft animals such as oxen and

buffalo, and keeping livestock such as chickens and ducks for food. Local wisdom is evident in the creation of fishing tools crafted from natural materials—bamboo, nipa palm, sago, rattan, and palm leaves—used to catch fish and small animals in rice paddies. Examples include hand-crafted traps, such as tong bets placed beneath rice stubble, or manually draining ponds (wit nong) to catch fish (Muangpho et al., 2023; Jaemjanksem, 2021; Dakliang, 2022). These catches are then preserved using traditional methods, such as fermentation, drying, salting, or pickling. In addition, plants grown in rice paddies are harvested for food, and local traditions highlight seasonal practices, such as making khanom la (a traditional snack) during the Sart Duan Sip festival and storing preserved foods in large jars for future use. A spirit of sharing and mutual aid characterizes the rural culture. During communal events, such as ordinations or funerals, villagers contribute rice, money, shallots, garlic, traditional sweets, and sticky rice as offerings and support. Similarly, in weddings, community members come together to lend a hand and share resources in celebration.

Related Research

This study was a research and development project aimed at creating a career promotion curriculum. The researcher reviewed 10 studies (Ketsomboon et al., 2022; Jaemjanksem, 2021; Unchai, 2020; Sukkasemsin, 2018; Muangpho et al., 2023; Yooyen et al., 2023; Keela et al., 2023; Nimmanut, 2021; Dakliang, 2022; & Rattanaphaisankit, 2021), all of which shared similar objectives: to study basic data and needs, explore demands and necessities, gather relevant knowledge, develop the curriculum, pilot its implementation, evaluate and improve the curriculum, and assess its overall quality.

The sample groups used in the 10 studies were as follows:

- Ketsomboon et al. (2022): 16 Grade 6 students, and 13 school stakeholders including the school director, teachers, committee members, parents, and local wisdom holders.
- Jaemjanksem (2021): 30 students from Grades 1–6, and 6 stakeholders (similar roles as above).
- Unchai, (2020): 29 students and 24 school/community stakeholders.
- Sukkasemsin (2018): 15 Grade 5 students and 4 key stakeholders.
- Muangpho et al. (2023): 25 students from grades 4–6, and 12 school/community stakeholders.
- Yooyen et al., (2023): 48 students from grades 4–6 and eight teachers.
- Keela et al. (2023): 42 students from Grades 1–4 and 13 school/community stakeholders.
- Nimmanut, (2021): 13 Grade 7 students were selected by simple random sampling.
- Dakliang (2022): 29 Grade 6 students and 13 school/community stakeholders.
- Rattanaphaisankit, (2021): 15 youths aged 18–25 years. The sampling methods used in these studies included multistage sampling, cluster sampling, simple random sampling, purposive selection, and volunteer-based sampling.

The research instruments used across the 10 studies included the following:

Interview forms, questionnaires, focus group discussions, curriculum documents, evaluation forms, observation checklists, performance-based assessments, feedback logs and achievement tests. All instruments met the established quality standards, demonstrating adequate reliability and validity.

The statistical tools used for data analysis included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, $PNI_{Modified}$, dependent t-tests, and content analysis.

The findings of all 10 studies were consistent. For example:

Ketsomboon, et al. (2022) found that the local Thai dessert-making curriculum integrated both theoretical knowledge and hands-on practice, helping students connect traditional wisdom with their daily lives and apply it meaningfully.

Jaemjanksem (2021) revealed that the "Ban Phaeo's Local Treasures" curriculum used project-based learning to develop students' practical skills by encouraging collaboration and exploration of personal interests.

Unchai (2020) showed that the local curriculum on rice and food security was aligned with community conditions, needs, and readiness, and that students could apply their learning in real life.

Sukkasemsin (2018) found that the "Elephant Studies" curriculum covered all student development

domains, emphasised learner-centred and skill-based learning, and provided diverse materials and assessments.

Muangpho et al. (2023) found that the "Golden Banana at Thayang" curriculum allowed for effective implementation, active student participation, and achievement of curriculum goals.

Yooyen et al. (2023) found that the "Palm Leaf Handicrafts" curriculum promoted experiential learning through fieldwork and hands-on practice, equipping students with relevant occupational skills.

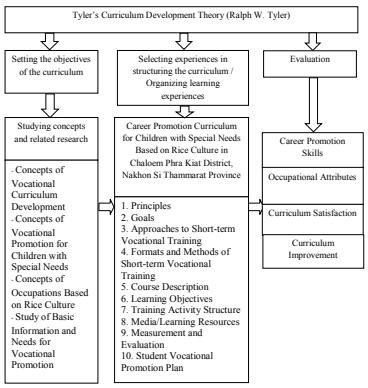
Keela et al. (2023) showed that the "Tai-Yuan Culture at Ban Khubua" curriculum was highly engaging, increasing student motivation, interest, and participation, leading to high curriculum effectiveness.

Nimmanut (2021) reported that the "Our Local Course" curriculum was well-structured in all elements, enhancing students' knowledge, skills, and appreciation of their local heritage through theory and practice.

Dakliang (2022) found that the "Thai Yuan Local Cuisine" curriculum, rooted in long-standing local wisdom, facilitated fast and effective learning for students familiar with the culture and fostered positive attitudes and practical skills.

Rattanaphaisankit (2021) reported that the "Innovative Lanna Art" curriculum emphasised hands-on, systematic work processes, creative problem-solving, and effective collaboration, achieving the desired learning outcomes.

Conceptual Framework of the Research



Data Collection

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) methodology comprising four primary phases.

Phase 1: Research (R1)

This study explores foundational data and the need to develop a career promotion curriculum for children with special needs, based on the rice culture in Chalermphrakiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

Target Group

The target group in this study consisted of Wat Bangwa School, Wat Don Traw School, and Wat Sra Khrai School in the Chaloem Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. These schools are located in areas known for traditional rice farming, which remains the predominant occupation in the region. The district has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to serve as a learning centre for the preservation, revitalisation, and transmission of local arts, culture, and wisdom in collaboration with the Community Engagement Mission of Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University for sustainable local development.

From this target group, the researcher selected the sample using purposive sampling, which included three school directors, three academic heads, three homeroom teachers, three local wisdom experts, three local business owners, and 15 parents of students with special educational needs, such as children from significantly underprivileged backgrounds that hinder learning and make academic success challenging. The students were in grades 4, 5, and 6.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this research was a structured interview form designed to explore fundamental information and needs related to curriculum development. The quality of the instrument was validated by three experts, yielding an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) of 1.00. A final version of the structured interview form was developed for data collection from the research sample.

Data Collection

The researcher personally collected data from the target groups at all three schools: Wat Bangwa School, Wat Don Traw School, and Wat Sra Khrai School. Formal interviews were conducted, starting with a self-introduction by the researcher and creating a comfortable, friendly atmosphere. Clear and neutral questions were used, avoiding leading questions or those that might emotionally affect respondents. The researcher took notes and sought permission to record audio or take photographs.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained from the interviews were analysed using content analysis software.

Phase 2: Development (D1)

Curriculum development for promoting careers among children with special needs based on rice culture in Chalermphrakiat District.

Target Groups

Curriculum Development

- 3 school principals (as previously identified in Phase 1)
- 3 curriculum development experts selected via purposive sampling:
  - 1 university lecturer with academic rank (Assistant Professor)
  - 1 officer from the Primary Educational Service Area Office 1, Nakhon Si Thammarat
  - 1 local wisdom holder

For the Curriculum Trial (Non-Target Group)

20 students (10 pairs) in Grades 4–6 from Ban Plai Khlong School (Semester 1, Academic Year 2022), selected through volunteer sampling

Research Instruments

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guidelines for assessing curriculum appropriateness and alignment. The tool was validated by three experts, each item receiving an IOC of 1.00, and then finalised for data collection.

Draft Curriculum, developed based on findings from Phase 1, included: Principles, Objectives, Activity Guidelines, Activity Formats, Course Descriptions, Learning Objectives, Activity Structures, Learning Materials/Resources, Assessment and Evaluation, as well as Student Development Plans

The curriculum content was synthesised following Tyler's curriculum development model and then translated into a lesson plan comprising Basic Knowledge, Topic selection, Planning, Implementation, Presentation and Discussion, as well as evaluation.

Career Skills Assessment Form – one set covering five skills:

- Communication and Interpersonal Skills
- Work Process Skills
- Problem-Solving Skills
- Research Skills
- Management Skills

The tool was validated by experts, revised accordingly, and interpreted as follows (Nimmanut 2021):

Average Score	Interpretation
3.50 – 4.00	Very good
2.50 – 3.49	Good
1.50 – 2.49	Fair
1.00 – 1.49	Needs improvement

Occupational Attributes Assessment Form

One set with six items: Honesty, Diligence and Perseverance, Responsibility, Sacrifice, Discipline, and Positive Attitude toward work.

The evaluation criteria were interpreted as follows (Jaemjanksem, 2021):

Average Score	Interpretation
2.50 – 3.00	Good
1.50 – 2.49	Fair
1.00 – 1.49	Needs improvement
1.00 – 1.49	Needs improvement

Curriculum Satisfaction Questionnaire – 1 set, 5 aspects, 13 items:

Activities, instructional media, evaluation, benefits received evaluation criteria (Nilphan & Tuanjai, 2022):

Average Score	Interpretation
4.50 – 5.00	Highest satisfaction
3.50 – 4.49	High satisfaction
2.50 – 3.49	Moderate satisfaction
1.50 – 2.49	Low satisfaction
1.00 – 1.49	Lowest satisfaction

Data Collection Procedures

Curriculum drafts and lesson plans were sent to experts for validation and IOC calculation.

The researcher acted as a moderator for the focus group, collecting data on curriculum components and suggesting improvements.

The draft curriculum was piloted with non-target student groups.

Career skills, occupational attributes, and satisfaction tools were tested (try-out), and Content Validity (IOC between 0.60 and 1.00) and Cronbach's alpha were calculated.

- Career Skills: $\alpha = 0.961$
- Occupational Attributes: $\alpha = 0.956$
- Satisfaction: $\alpha = 0.970$

Data Analysis

Qualitative data from FGDs were analysed using Content Analysis.

Phase 3: Research (R2: Research)

The pilot implementation of the Career Promotion Curriculum for Children with Special Needs Based on Rice Culture in Chaloem Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province

Target Group: The target group included children with special needs and their parents. These individuals were identified through student support system reports from Wat Bangwa School, Wat Don Traw School, and Wat Sra Khrai School, located in the Chaloem Phra Kiat District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. Students were categorised as being at risk and facing two major problems: academic difficulties and economic hardship. A total of 30 participants (15 child-parent pairs) from grades 4, 5, and 6 during the first semester of the 2022 academic year were selected using convenience sampling.

Research Instruments Used

- Finalized curriculum and lesson plans
- Career skills assessment form
- Occupational attributes assessment form
- Curriculum satisfaction questionnaire

Data Collection Procedures

Curriculum implementation preparation included scheduling, document readiness, and participant communication.

The curriculum was implemented in five steps:

- Basic knowledge instruction
- Interest-based topic selection
- Planning and local wisdom learning
- Execution
- Presentation and discussion

After completion, all data were collected using the three instruments and validated for further analysis.

Data Analysis

Mean ($\bar{X}$), standard deviation (S.D.), and Content Analysis were used. The same interpretation scales from Phase 2 were used.

Phase 4: Development (D_2)

In Phase 4, the researcher evaluated and improved the Career Promotion Curriculum for Children with Special Needs Based on Rice Culture in Chaloem Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

Target Group

The target group consisted of three school directors, three academic heads, three homeroom teachers, three local wisdom experts, three business owners, and 15 parents of students with special educational needs, as identified in Phase 1.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this step was a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide, focusing on the following topics:

- Results of the vocational skills assessment
- Results of the occupational attributes assessment
- Satisfaction survey results regarding the curriculum

The aim of this study was to evaluate the appropriateness and alignment of the curriculum

components for practical use. The quality of the instrument was verified by three experts, with the questions yielding an IOC value of 1.00. A finalised FGD guide was then developed for use in data collection from the research sample.

Data Collection

The researcher acted as a moderator during the focus group discussions. The discussions centred on the results of the vocational skills assessments, occupational attribute assessments, satisfaction with the curriculum, its appropriateness, alignment with curriculum components, and suggestions for curriculum improvement.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained from the focus group discussions regarding curriculum suitability were analysed using content analysis.

Curriculum Improvement

The career promotion curriculum for children with special needs, based on rice culture in Chaloem Phra Kiat District, was improved after the trial implementation. The researcher observed various behaviours and activities during implementation, collected feedback, and noted any issues or shortcomings encountered. Data from the focus group discussions were analysed and used to refine and enhance the curriculum, ensuring its completeness and improving its quality for future applications.

Research Ethics

This study was reviewed and approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University.

- Ethics Approval Code: REC No.053/2565
- Certificate of Approval: COA No.053/2565

Results

Data Analysis

The research titled "The Development of Curriculum for Vocational Promotion of Special Needs Children Based on Rice Culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province" employed both quantitative and qualitative data analyses. For quantitative data, the researcher used statistical methods, including mean ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviation (S.D.). Content analysis was employed for the qualitative data.

Research Findings

The results of the study on basic information and needs, conducted through interviews with school directors, heads of academic departments, homeroom teachers, local wisdom scholars, business owners, and parents of students who require special educational support, revealed a desire to promote careers that involve simple, non-complicated processes that students can successfully undertake. The focus is on fostering fundamental vocational skills and essential attributes for career development by utilising local information from the Chaloem Phra Kiat District to create value-added occupations. These careers should make use of local raw materials or allow for self-production, enabling students to generate additional income and apply their skills in daily life. Emphasis is placed on hands-on practice and direct experience through local learning resources and Indigenous knowledge holders. The study also identified specific career paths based on the needs presented by stakeholders, such as souvenirs made from local materials and local culinary culture (Figure 2).

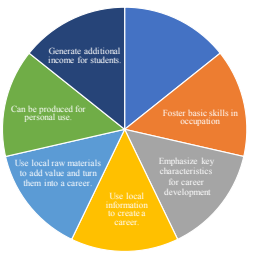


Figure 2 Results of the Study on Basic Information and Needs for Developing a Career Promotion Curriculum for Children with Special Needs Based on Rice Culture in Chaloem Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province

Results of the Curriculum Development

Furthermore, the activity plans are as follows.

- Student Development Activity Plan 1: Innovation from bulrush – "Bulrush Hats"
- Student Development Activity Plan 2: Culinary

culture – "Sushi-style Khao Yum (Southern Thai Rice Salad)"

The learning activities were organised with the involvement of local wisdom scholars who provided knowledge and hands-on practice sessions. The process consists of six steps: Providing Basic Knowledge, Choosing a Topic of Interest, Planning, Hands-on Practice, Presentation and Discussion, and Assessment and Evaluation.

This approach aims to encourage students and parents to collaborate and engage in a creative process through experiential learning, led by local wisdom scholars. Additional suggestions include adjusting the duration of the activities to better match their nature and refining the criteria for assessing student work to be more concise and written in simple language for ease of understanding in the evaluation process, as shown in Figure 2.

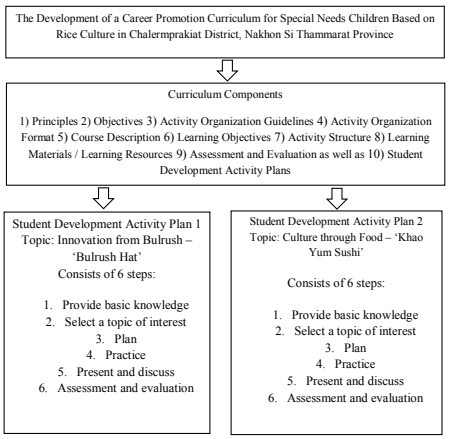


Figure 2 The Results of the Development of a Career Promotion Curriculum for Children with Special Needs Based on Rice Culture in Chaloem Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province

The Results of the Curriculum Implementation

The researcher set the following objectives.

To assess the learning outcomes during the implementation of the curriculum according to the designated activity plans, in order to use the evaluation results for further development of the trainees and ensure they achieve the goals set in the student development activity plans. The assessment and evaluation guidelines were as follows.

During the implementation of each student development activity plan, evaluation was conducted through the observation of participation behaviour and interaction during activities. This data was used to determine whether the learning objectives of each activity plan were achieved.

The results showed that students and parents demonstrated excellent cooperation and mutual assistance, highlighting teamwork among students and parents, between students, and among parents themselves. Local wisdom scholars facilitated the activities, continuously encouraging the learning process and providing opportunities for students and parents to ask questions throughout the sessions.

Regarding curriculum evaluation, assessment and evaluation were conducted after the completion of the activities using the following tools: a vocational skills assessment form, a career-related attributes assessment form, and a curriculum satisfaction questionnaire. The results are presented in Tables 1–3.

The results of the vocational skills assessment showed that the students' overall vocational skills were at a good level. Similarly, the parents' overall vocational skills were at a good level. When considering each aspect individually, the vocational skills assessment results were consistently good, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 The Results of the Vocational Skills Assessment After Implementing Career Promotion Activities for Children with Special Needs Based on Rice Culture

Occupational Skills	Students			Parents		
	N = 15			N = 15		
	x	S.D.	Interpretation	x	S.D.	Interpretation
Communication and Interpersonal Skills	2.80	0.41	High	2.93	0.26	High
Work Process Skills	2.60	0.51	High	2.80	0.56	High

Problem-Solving Process Skills	2.53	0.52	High	2.53	0.64	High
Knowledge-Seeking Skills	2.87	0.52	High	2.67	0.49	High
Management Skills	2.73	0.46	High	2.73	0.46	High
Overall	2.71	0.49	High	2.73	0.50	High

The evaluation results of the students' occupational characteristics revealed that, overall, the students' occupational characteristics were rated at a good level. Likewise, the parents' overall assessment also indicated a good level of satisfaction. When considered by individual aspects, most occupational characteristics were rated at a good level, with a few items rated at a fair level, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 The Evaluation Results of Occupational Characteristics After Implementing Career Promotion Activities for Children with Special Needs Based on Rice Culture

The Characteristics for Occupational Performance	Students			Parents		
	N = 15			N = 15		
	x	S.D.	Interpretation	x	S.D.	Interpretation
Honesty	2.67	0.49	High	2.67	0.49	High
Diligence and Patience	2.80	0.41	High	2.93	0.26	High
Responsibility	2.33	0.49	Fair	2.60	0.51	High
Sacrifice	2.60	0.51	High	2.80	0.41	High
Disciplines	2.73	0.46	High	2.87	0.35	High
Positive Attitudes toward the Career	2.27	0.46	Fair	2.53	0.52	High
Overall	2.57	0.50	High	2.73	0.44	High

The evaluation results of satisfaction with the curriculum development activities found that the overall satisfaction level of students was high. Similarly, the overall satisfaction level of parents regarding curriculum development activities was also high. When examined by specific aspects, the evaluation of the characteristics related to professional conduct was found to be at a high level (Table 3).

Table 3 Analysis Results of Satisfaction Levels toward Curriculum Development Activities for Career Promotion for Children with Special Needs Based on Rice Culture

Satisfaction with Career Promotion Activities for Children with Special Needs Based on Rice Culture	Students			Parents		
	N = 15			N = 15		
	x	S.D.	Interpretation	x	S.D.	Interpretation
Activity Organization	4.06	0.77	High	3.79	0.68	High
Activity Materials	3.87	0.63	High	3.82	0.61	High
Measurement and Evaluation	4.05	0.69	High	4.03	0.48	High
Benefits Received	4.07	0.74	High	3.98	0.75	High
Overall	4.02	0.72	High	3.88	0.69	High

The Results of the Evaluation and Improvement of the Curriculum Implementation

The findings were as follows:

Curricular Evaluation Results

The overall results of the students' vocational skills assessment were good. Similarly, the parents' overall vocational skills were assessed at a good level. When considered by individual aspects, vocational skills remained consistently at a good level.

The overall assessment of students' career-related attributes was at a good level. Likewise, the career-related attributes of the parents were evaluated at a good level. When examined in detail, most aspects were assessed at a good level of quality.

The students' overall satisfaction with the curriculum development activities was high. Parents' overall satisfaction with the curriculum development activities was also high. When considered by individual aspects, satisfaction related to career-related attributes was also at a high level.

Curriculum Improvement

Key areas for improvement following the pilot implementation of the curriculum are as follows.

Assessment of Vocational Skills and Career-related Attributes

Because the activity was conducted over only two days, the time available was quite limited. As a result, some activities aimed at enhancing students' vocational skills and career-related attributes could not be fully completed, which prevented the expected development from occurring. Some activities could not be completed within the given time frame.

Assessment of Students' Work

Local wisdom scholars and participating parents assessed the students' work. However, the criteria used for evaluating the work included language that was too complex, leading to misunderstandings and difficulties in assessment. Therefore, the assessment criteria were revised to be simpler, clearer, and more concise to align more accurately with the learning objectives.

Evaluation of the Career Promotion Curriculum Trial

It is recommended that the evaluation of the pilot implementation of the career promotion curriculum be conducted separately for each occupation type. This would allow for more detailed and specific insights into the areas that require improvement.

Discussion

From the Development of a Career Promotion Curriculum for Children with Special Needs Based on Rice Culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, the researcher discussed the results according to the objectives as follows:

The study of basic information and needs for curriculum development revealed a demand for promoting careers with simple steps that children can successfully complete. The focus is on promoting basic vocational skills and essential career attributes using local data from the Chalerm Phra Kiat District to create value-based occupations. The curriculum encourages the use of community raw materials or self-produced materials to generate additional income for students and apply in daily life. Emphasis is placed on hands-on practice through direct experience from local learning sources and local wisdom. All stakeholders share the expectation that, regarding local food, career promotion should focus on making traditional snacks such as Khanom Khee Ma Pong Che, Khanom Thong Muan, Khanom Pong, and Khao Yam. For handicrafts, careers promoted should involve simple steps that children can complete, such as making simple souvenirs, packaging three-colour rice bags, straw bookmarks, straw-tying ropes, and straw hats. In the field of crafts, there is a desire to develop souvenir crafts or popular low-cost items made from community materials or self-produced items. The curriculum should be short-term and workshop-based, with local wisdom experts providing knowledge and practical experience to the children and their families. This aligns with Tyler's curriculum development concept (Tyler, 1949, as cited in Wongyai, 2011), particularly Component 1, which concerns clearly defining educational objectives. This involves surveying needs, analysing curriculum data gathered

from personnel records, or synthesising documents related to educational goal setting, drawing from three foundational sources for decision-making: societal studies, learner studies, and expert content recommendations. The data from these sources help define curriculum development goals. Consequently, the findings from studying basic data and needs for curriculum development correspond with the research of Nunsing (2025), Jatuporn (2023), Jaemjanksem (2021), Muangpho et al. (2023), Keela et al. (2023), and Khaokhiao et al. (2022). These three studies investigated the basic data and needs for career promotion curriculum development from stakeholders and students, highlighting a desire to develop learner activities that promote local careers. The expectation is that students will learn about local specialties and district products, including basic vocational skills and essential career attributes, using what exists in their own locality that interests them. This helps them create careers and generate income for themselves and their families. Moreover, learner development activities emphasise allowing learners to choose to study according to their interests, abilities, and aptitudes, aligning curricula with learners', community, local, and societal needs.

The components of the developed curriculum were consistent and included: 1) curriculum background, 2) curriculum principles, 3) curriculum objectives, 4) activity guidelines, 5) activity formats, 6) learning objectives and activity structure, 7) media/learning resources, 8) assessment and evaluation, and 9) career promotion activity plans. The learner development activities created under the career promotion curriculum for children with special needs based on the rice culture contained important components: 1) principles, 2) goals, 3) activity guidelines, 4) activity formats, 5) course descriptions, 6) learning objectives, 7) activity structure, 8) learning media/ resources, 9) assessment and evaluation, and 10) two learner development activity plans. The learning process involved local wisdom experts and followed six steps: 1) providing basic knowledge, 2) selecting topics of interest, 3) planning, 4) practising, 5) presenting and discussing, and 6) assessing to promote vocational skills and career attributes using local specialties for career creation. Additionally, these learner development activities were developed through the following process: 1) using basic data study results to analyse school needs regarding learner activity formats, learning activities, and assessment; 2) analysing curriculum content to create a curriculum consistent with the local context of Chalerm Phra Kiat District, using local community specialties to build careers and income for students and families; and 3) implementing curriculum activities to promote vocational skills and career attributes by inviting local experts and wisdom keepers to provide knowledge on careers, marketing strategies, accounting, costs, profits, and cultural rice information, including field visits to learning sites outside school. This experiential learning allows students to observe and practice, gain knowledge, and create works to support their careers. Assessment and evaluation were aligned with learning objectives and real-life conditions, consistent with Tyler's curriculum development model (Tyler, 1949, as cited in Wongyai, 2011) and Component 2, which states that curriculum components must be ready to deliver learning experiences that achieve curriculum goals. The curriculum development steps included: 1) context analysis, 2) temporary goal setting, 3) screening educational goals, 4) setting final goals, 5) organising activities and experiences, and 6) educational evaluation. The findings correspond with those of Yooyen, Thongni, & KBunsong, (2023); Nimmanut, 2021; Sukkasemsin (2018) & Keela et al. (2023), who showed that most learner development activities promoting local careers contain key components such as principles, goals, activity guidelines, formats, course descriptions, learning objectives, activity structures, learning media/resources, assessment and evaluation, and learner activity plans. These activities promote vocational skills and career attributes using local district specialties developed through the processes of analysing basic data, aligning content with local context, and organising learner development activities to promote vocational skills and career attributes. As a result, learner development activities for promoting local careers align with community conditions and student needs, enabling learners to fully realise their potential. This is consistent with the Basic Education Core Curriculum of 2008, which aims to develop learners' knowledge and vocational

skills based on the belief that everyone can learn and develop to their full potential.

For the assessment of learning during curriculum implementation, the planned framework was followed to provide data for improving trainees' performance in relation to the goals of learner development activity plans. The assessment guidelines included observing learner participation and interactions during each activity in the learner development plans to gather information on how to achieve the learning objectives. It was observed that students and parents cooperated well and helped each other, demonstrating teamwork among students and parents and between both groups. Local wisdom experts supervised the teaching process, continuously encouraging learning and allowing students and parents to ask questions at any time during the process. Additionally, curriculum evaluation was conducted after completing all learning units using vocational skills assessments, career attribute evaluations, and satisfaction surveys, aligned with Tyler's curriculum development theory (Tyler, 1949, as cited in Wongyai, 2011), Component 3. This requires continuous learning experiences in terms of time, content, and flexibility for learners, with periodic assessments to provide information to improve curriculum activities. These findings align with those of Ouckaravivatkun et al. (2022); Ketsomboo et al., 2022; Dakliang, 2022 & Rattanaphaisankit, 2021, who showed that students learned the importance of careers, factors for career success, product value enhancement, product design, marketing strategies, income-expense accounting, and cost-profit calculations. Students were interested, cooperative, enthusiastic, happy, and eager to learn and research for application in their careers. Local experts and wisdom keepers were invited to provide knowledge and activities for the students.

The evaluation and improvement of curriculum use found the following:

- The overall vocational skills assessment was at a good level.
- The overall career attribute assessment was at a good level.
- Overall, student satisfaction with the curriculum development activities was high.

From discussions on curriculum improvements, the results showed the following:

As only two days were allocated for activities, time was limited, preventing the full development of vocational skills and career attributes, as some activities could not be completed within the time.

Regarding the assessment of student work by local wisdom experts and parents involved, the assessment criteria language was too complex, causing misunderstandings. Therefore, the criteria were revised to be simpler, clearer, and more concise to align with the objectives.

The evaluation of the career promotion curriculum pilot should be conducted separately by occupation to identify detailed and clear areas for improvement.

These findings correspond with Tyler's curriculum development concept (Tyler, 1949, as cited in Wongyai, 2011), Component 4, which states that curriculum development requires clear assessment and evaluation, using results to improve the curriculum to meet goals and reduce problems in future uses. This aligns with the research of Ketsomboon et al., 2022; Jaemjanksem, 2021; Unchai, 2021; Sukkasemsin, 2018; Muangpho et al., 2023; Yooyen et al., 2023; Keela et al., 2023; Nimmanut, 2021; Dakliang, 2022 & Rattanaphaisankit, 2021. Curriculum implementation results were generally good, with improvements needed in the following areas:

The limited number of hours allocated for learning activities, mostly practical, restricts full skill development due to time constraints and prevents the achievement of set goals.

The assessment criteria language was too complex, causing misunderstandings and requiring additional time for interpretation, delaying activities.

Research Recommendations

Recommendations for Implementing Research Findings

The research results on vocational skills showed that students had a low level of knowledge-seeking skills. Therefore, activities should be organised to encourage students to study and research independently, allowing them to choose their own learning resources instead of having teachers assign them. Students should be provided opportunities to further explore knowledge through libraries and computer rooms.

The research results on professional characteristics found that students have low levels of discipline and self-sacrifice. Therefore, activities or integrated learning plans should be implemented to promote discipline and self-sacrifice among students in their vocational projects.

The research results on students' satisfaction with the development of the vocational promotion curriculum for special needs children based on rice culture in Chalerm Phra Kiat District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, found that students feel happy, enjoy themselves, and are enthusiastic about participating in activities, especially learning activities through direct experience from external local learning sources and knowledge from local experts and village sages. Therefore, schools should promote and support learning activities from local experts, village sages, and external local learning sources to increase students' enthusiasm for learning.

Further development is needed to diversify coconut-based products to add value to the products and promote income generation for the community.

The content of activities should be diversified, and the role of selecting learning resources should shift from teachers assigning to students choosing their own learning resources.

Recommendations for Further Study

Research and development of mentoring and coaching models should be conducted to enable instructors or teachers to create more student development activities.

There should be research and development to promote students' vocational skills and professional characteristics by shifting the learning management approach from project-based learning to other methods, such as problem-based learning and enquiry-based learning.

A comparative study should be conducted between students from agricultural family backgrounds and those who do not, to compare the differences in vocational skills and professional characteristics between the two groups.

A comparative study should be conducted by implementing the developed curriculum with diverse groups of children with special needs, both in school contexts and in different local areas, to compare similarities and differences in learning outcomes. Furthermore, longitudinal research should be conducted to track the long-term impact of the curriculum on the vocational skills, self-reliance, and community participation of children with special needs.

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