

The practical learning project to promote graduate identity characteristics through activities that enhance basic skills in art and interior design (Ko Raet, Surat Thani Province)

Introduction

The Koh Rat community is a small island located in Bandon Bay. According to local accounts, approximately 200 years ago, Chinese immigrants from Hainan Island, China, traveled here using both large and small junks as their means of transportation. One group of Chinese settlers stopped at this small island, surveyed its suitability for settlement, and decided to make it their home. They established a fishing community, a tradition that continues to this day. In the past, access to the island required a boat trip from the mainland, covering a distance of about one kilometer. However, today, the island is connected by the "Chalerm Siriraj Bridge," a sea-crossing bridge. This bridge is part of a royal initiative by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX), constructed to provide a transportation route for the local community.

The Koh Rat community is situated in a location with beautiful scenery. There are nature trails, allowing visitors to observe the local way of life. The community also offers small homestays to accommodate tourists. Visitors can follow scenic routes to spot dolphins playing in the water and enjoy either the sunrise in the morning or the sunset in the evening. During low tide, it is possible to walk to Koh Rat, and locals from various areas come to collect large numbers of shellfish, shrimp, and crabs, or hunt for shellfish among the rocks.

The CMO Museum, Eco Group, and the School of Architecture at Walailak University have collaborated on a project to develop the Koh Rat community under the theme "Is Rat Enough? If Not, Follow Us to Koh Rat." Several activities have taken place, with the School of Architecture from Walailak University actively participating in a "Wall Painting" project. This initiative conveys the community's lifestyle and culture through visual storytelling, aiming to preserve and promote the local heritage for both tourists and residents. The mural serves as a tool to raise awareness of the traditional knowledge and way of life of the Koh Rat community.

The mural was created at the water tank area within Ban Koh Rat School, Don Sak Subdistrict, Don Sak District, Surat Thani Province, from May 17 to 19, 2023. During this period, students conducted field surveys to gather relevant and interesting information related to the local lifestyle. This data was analyzed and used in the design process, with active participation from both students and the Koh Rat community, ultimately leading to the mural's creation.

Results

The faculty and students conducted a field survey, gathering information from local residents regarding the history, lifestyle, and traditional knowledge of the Koh Rat community. After collecting and analyzing the data, the team developed initial draft designs, which were then presented to the community for feedback. Based on the suggestions, the drafts were revised into the final design for the Wall Painting.

During the activity, the team invited local children and staff from the CMO Museum to participate, fostering collaboration between the community, event organizers, and the university. This approach successfully promoted shared learning and strengthened community engagement.



Activity Summary

The project successfully raised awareness among community members, including children, staff, and students, about the history and lifestyle of the Koh Rat people. The Wall Painting emphasizes key features that are easy for both locals and tourists to understand, helping to communicate the community's identity. The activity was a success, achieving its objectives and running smoothly. Moreover, the approach used in this project can be adapted and applied to other communities with similar development needs.