

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL HERB PRODUCT, ACCORDING TO THE CREATIVE ECONOMY CONCEPT, OF PIYAMIT TUNNEL 1 COMMUNITY, BETONG DISTRICT, YALA PROVINCE, THAILAND

Jarinrat Vorravongpitak, Yala Rajabhat University  
Apsorn E-sor, Yala Rajabhat University  
Nantha Chankaew, Yala Rajabhat University  
Laor Mamah, Yala Rajabhat University

## ABSTRACT

*This research aims to develop local herbal products based on the creative economy at Piyamit Tunnel 1 community, Betong District, Yala Province. This research and development is participatory action research. Data was collected from 5 people of Piyamit 1herbal corporative using a purposive sampling method. The tools of this research are group interview and in-depth interview with descriptive writing, the results can be shown as follow; 1) Development plan: the group wants to develop an herbal inhaler because it is a product that is convenient to buy and requires branding as "Keeree1981" 2) Development operation: they want to use "Adenosma indianum (Lour.) Merr root" and "Sibpaedchen," the raw material of herbal inhaler and Borneol liquid inhaler under the brand "Keeree 1987". The logo is the graphic mountain with Piyamit Tunnel. The red color represents the Sinitic, green color represents the military uniform of Malaya communists and the naturalness of herbal materials – while communications presented 2 video clips communicating the distinctive uniqueness of the products. 3) Development result: the products we're interested in by tourists visiting Piyamit Tunnel, buying for personal use and as a souvenir, increased the group's revenues by 25%. The satisfaction level of project participations including production knowledge, cost and price analysis, brand design, the supports on raw materials, packages, and video footage used in communications was at the highest level.*

**Keywords:** Local Herbal, Piyamit Tunnel 1 Community, Creative Economy

## INTRODUCTION

The medicinal plant has been in human life for a long time. Humans use herbal medicine to cure and alleviate sickness or body recovery. Each area has the identity of local herbal, some are the same, and some are different depending on the way of treatment. Also, the practice of using each herb depends on experience and accumulated knowledge of the ancestral who expertise and pass to family members from generation to generation, primarily herbs are easy to find maybe around the house or in their own town. Using herbs can be done at home. However, the complex medicinal herbs require skilled practitioners or indigenous healers who have learned herbal remedies and have experience treating patients with herbs before. Some herbs are a complex extraction compound it is challenging to use (Pengngummuang, Jansuta, Sangdech & Somkhow, 2019). Currently, the government pays attention to support herbal as a home remedy for health care. Interestingly, consumers are more alert to the use of natural products. In the end, health and beauty manufacturers use herbs as an ingredient in their products, focusing on the health consumer market, and it is growing steadily (Wichaipon, Makka & Vikraipat, 2021).

Betong District, Yala province, is located in the southernmost of Thailand, surrounded by the mountains located in Malaysia. Therefore the weather is almost cool all year round. In the past, Betong District had a Malaya Communist party, a Chinese-Malay who took up arms to fight political and settle political army base here. This place became a tourist attraction known as the "Piyamit Tunnel" when the political situation unraveled the communists down their weapons to rely on the Bodhisombara and change the status to "Thai Nation development cooperators" established the Piyamit village. For this circumstance, the Thai government has come to help develop infrastructure and careers and saw the potential of promoting tourism in Betong District. The budget was approved to build an international airport in Betong District and raise Betong as a project model. "The Triangle of Stability, Prosperity, and Sustainability (Kaewngam & Jongwilaikasaem, 2019). Betong District is also the third-highest cross-border trade city in the South after the Sadao Customs House and Padang Besar, respectively (Department of Foreign Trade, 2021).

The local herbal business of Tunnel Piyamit 1 was initiated during the period of establishment of Thai Nation development cooperators staying hidden as communists of Malaya. For them, it was inconvenient to do activities outside. Therefore, they had to learn more various skills, especially medical skills. That was why the communists of Malaya sent their members to learn about medical skills and local herbal from China. The traditional Chinese doctors applied the treatment with local wild herbal. After the communist group was changed to a group of Thai Nation development cooperators, the wild herbal knowledge passed to the next generation and their grandchild for remedy. Then the government paid attention to promote tourism development. The successors produced 3 products as the first period: Lingzhi mushroom, healing high blood pressure, diabetes, high blood lipids, wild pepper root, treating gout, dyspepsia, cancer prevention, and Da Si Wang, treating liver disease, jaundice, nourishing the brain, increasing vitality. The identity products of Piyamit 1 are wild stink bean roots with properties of kidneys detoxify, lower blood sugar. Also, Wu Zhao Ma Tee (5-clawed dragon) treats kidney disease strengthens the kidneys diuretic. After the mentioned products succeeded, many more products were developed. Initially, the packaging was just a clear plastic bag with a sticker later, the Betong Community Development Office came to help build the packaging. The beautiful screen packaging looks trustworthy for distribution. It has been registered as an OTOP product and received a community product standard mark (CMU) under the brand "Piyamit Tunnel 1, currently located at Baan Piyamit 1, Tanomaro Subdistrict, Yala Province.

The benefit of the health of Piyamit Tunnel herbal 1 is prevention and remedy, this is consistent with health tourism (Praprom & Laipaporn, 2021), but the process of using herbal is quite cumbersome and inconvenient for modern lifestyles. Therefore, it's bought mainly by elderly Chinese customers who take care of their health and obsesses with herbal tea. The sale target is stable. Thus, the group wants to develop new potential products to increase revenue for the group. Therefore, this is the first step of the local herbal development based on the creative economy of the Piyamit Tunnel community. This is to drive and develop the economy with creativity, added value for products and services (Oontornpan & Polpak, 2018) based on local wisdom, daily living, culture, raw materials, area characteristics, etc. to develop contemporary products and unique and able to add value for the Piyamit Tunnel community, Betong District, Yala Province with stability, prosperity and sustainability.

## Objective

To develop an herbal product of Piyamit Tunnel 1 community, Betong District, Yala Province, based on creative economic guidelines.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A creative economy is based on people's creative imagination to create something new, different from the existing one (Wijaya, Rahyuda, Yasa & Sukaatmadja, 2019). The products of innovative economy concepts are also crucial in supporting tourism (Budhia, Lestari, Suasiha & Wijaya, 2020). Additionally, the creative economy help to develop the economy and enhance the competition ability at the international level, regional level, and local level (Munro, 2017; Boccella & Salerno, 2016). The Organization for Cooperation for Trade and Development or UNCTAD (2008) has said that the creative economy grows and drives economic development based on innovative ideas. It can create jobs opportunities and generate income, while Patluang, (2011) discussed the initiated creative economy process, divided jobs into two sub-parts as follows:

1. Process of creating knowledge, creative idea, and technology consist of essential knowledge and technology. The basic knowledge comes from ancient wisdom and new knowledge, but it describes the as wide range. Therefore, to directly practice the basic knowledge has to change into old technology and new technology. It determines the method and production process

2. The process of commercializing creativity and technology, which includes innovation. Before offering to customers, this could be a new product or service, unique production process, new raw material, organization, etc.

While E-sor, Sunsana, Keatnaremon, Promsriya & Jeharrong (2018) mentioned that economic development follows the guideline of creative economic that divided into 3 steps 1) development planning, is the study of wisdom, expertise, and business identity. This could be the knowledge, daily living style, culture, raw materials, local characteristics, etc., that stand out from competitors. It can determine the direction of development; 2) the implementation of the development action. It is a product development as per the specified plan. The things that develop would be product pattern, brand, packaging, target market, price, marketing promotion, etc. 3) Summary of development results: The product presentation to the customer and studying the success of the organization's goals such as sales and profits, etc.

Chollatep (2013) conducted research about the guideline of how to apply the creative economic concept. It was found that creating a creative economy requires academic knowledge, creative work, and the use of intellectual property to be a primary factor and also using the accumulation of knowledge, technology, and innovation to create products with value-added. The standard quality of resources should be valuable, rare, irreplaceable, and inimitable. When combined together, the ability in competition is more enhancing. Creativity leads the product with more value and sustainable business. This is consistent with the Institute of Small and Medium Enterprise Development (2012) context about the creative economy. They mentioned the word "identity," which refers to the unique characteristics of products and services, different from other products or services such as raw materials, products, brands logo, packaging, communication, marketing promotions, etc.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research and the development collected data by group interview, development operation, and in-depth interview. This research was divided in three phrases which were development plan, implementation development, and result summary of creative economic development as the following:

1. The development plan based on creative economics. It was conducted by a group interview with people operating in Piyamit 1 herb corporative. They were the chairman, vice president, marketing, production department, and financial department, total of five people. This interview aims to study the direction of local herbal development products in line with

creative economic, which consists of demand of local herb development products, local herbal product identity, target market, and brand.

2. The development operation in economics was about detail and the factual of products in line with creative economics. However, the development operation focuses on outcomes, branding and logo, and communication.

3. The development result based on a creative economic was derived from in-depth interview with the manager of a group of Piyamit 1 Herbal corporative. This is to study the occurring result as commercial part and how satisfaction of participants joining the project.

In terms of developing and testing reliability data, the researcher had studied documents, textbooks, and research about the creative economy to designed research tools; thus, the three marketing and business experts were selected to criticize the conformity and research objectives, the suitability, and ability to communicate. There was a trail with a group identical to the target group study of five people. The result from the trail was used to improve the tool for more effectiveness. The information was analyzed, synthesized, compared, and written a rational description using data triangulation of Denizen method in terms of data collection, target groups, and period.

## RESULTS

The results can be classified into three parts as per research design, development plan, operation development, and development result based on creative economic development found that;

The development plan based on creative economic, from group interview of operation person in Piyamit 1 Herb corporative which were chairman, vice president, marketing department, production department, and financial department, to study the direction of local herbal development products in line with creative economic found that;

### **The requirements of the local herbal product development and product identity, including target market**

From the interview with the persons who operate the Piyamit 1 Herb Cooperative, they were required to develop 3 herbal products: 1) Essence Chicken Soup. This is because there is a medicinal plant, namely "Dali Wang," in the group. It is the primary raw material for making the extracted chicken soup. The properties of Dali Wang are to help nourish, increase energy, reduce blood lipid. Therefore, the target market is the manpower who wants to boost their energy. 2) Herbal inhaler because it is a convenience product, easy to buy and sell. It's made from local herbs "Adenosma Indiana (Lour.) Merr. root" and "Sibpaedchen" are the primary raw materials, their properties able to increase blood circulation and breathe more fluently. The market target is the people who need soothing inhalation products for relief of dizziness and refreshing. 3) Herbal for a foot bath focuses on exhausted tourists from walking around the Piyamit Tunnels. It's made from wild pepper roots and Sibpaedchen, the primary raw material for production properties to help relieve pain, swelling, and sprains. After brainstorming and voting, the group chose to produce herbal inhalers at 80%.

### **Branding and logo design**

The group suggested three options to name brand 1) "Piyamit Tunnel 1" because it is consistent with exiting herbal product 2) "Keeree1987" because it is the year of member came down from the mountain to join with government and changed status to "Thai nation development cooperators" 3) " Keeree 428" because this is the month and date (April, 28th) of joining government and changed status to " Thai Nation development cooperators. It can be noticed that the elder group selected option 1 because they are traditional, don't like to

change. Still, the young generation wants to change to option 2 or 3 because the old brand is outdated and duplicated with the other Tunnel Piyamit group. However, the poll shows that the brand "Keeree (1987)" is highly voted at 60%.

The development operation in economic, the researcher operated in product development according to the mapping plan. However, the development operation focuses on products, branding and logo, and communication.

## Products

The researchers developed an herbal inhaler for the community of Piyamit Tunnel 1, by inviting a speaker to cooperate in testing local herbal "Adenosma Indiana (Lour.) Merr. Root and "Sibpaedchen" mixed together with the main material of inhaler products until the formula is on set, all the raw material, and packaging distributed to the group. However, since herbal inhalers have the same basic ingredient formulas as borneol liquid products, the researcher team has supported more raw materials and packaging for making "borneol liquid." Support the production of 100 pieces of borneol liquid and 100 more herbal inhalers, set training course of borneol liquid production and herbal inhalers. This training course was organized on February 20th, 2021, at Piyamit Tunnel 1 Community Office, Tanomaro Subdistrict, Betong District, Yala Province.

## Branding and logo design

Referring to the meaning of "Keeree1987," which was the year members came to join the government and change status to "Thai Nation Cooperators" began the group of Piyamit Tunnel. From this concept, the logo was designed as Graphic Mountain with Piyamit Tunnel city gate, used red and green color. Red color represents Sinitic people, and green color represents military (Communist Malaya) and can be implied to natural herbal material. However, the researchers' team designed 3 logos for a group of Piyamit Tunnel 1 considerate, criticize, select and suggestion and brought all information to improve the logo again, added details of ingredients, properties, establishment and distribution, and telephone number. Printed label for borneol liquid and herbal inhaler 100 pieces of each for the group. Please see the product logo label and packaging as picture 1 and picture 2



**FIGURE 1**  
**LOGO OF BRAND "KEEREE (1987)"**



**FIGURE 2**

**LABEL AND PACKAGING OF BORNEOL LIQUID AND HERBAL INHALER**

**Communication**

There are 2 video clips created to present what product identity and made perception to customers and motivate them to buy. This is also a media of learning resource for the group of Piyamit Tunnel community. 1) The first video clip of borneol liquid and herbal inhaler "Keeree 1987" (water source & midstream). It is about ingredients and properties of materials in borneol liquid and herbal inhaler production: menthol, borneol, camphor, black pepper, clove flower, nutmeg, star anise, cinnamon, and dried peel of bergamot. Eucalyptus oil including local ingredients, which are "Adenosma Indiana (Lour.) Merr. root" and "Sibpeadchen" in package 2). The second video clip, borneol liquid and herbal inhaler "Keeree 1987" (downstream) focused on promotion and motivation of using products presented by a model in working age with ambition. Hard-working and rush time are the causes of exhaustion, and they want to relieve stress by using the products. For the mentioned reasons, the borneol liquid and herbal inhaler are positioning as the healer of sickness.

The development result based on creative economics. The in-depth interview with the manager of Piyamit 1 Herbal corporative (Sachen, Interview, March 14, 2021) about distributing borneol liquid and herbal inhaler "Keeree (1987)" at a corporative shop, the products attracted customers who visited Piyamit Tunnel. They appreciated the properties and scent of herbal products. They were relaxing after inhaling and relieved from tired and itchy with acceptable price, herbal inhaler 39 Baht, borneol liquid 59 Baht. However, they can buy the product as souvenirs for family and friends. The 200 pieces sold out shortly that makers can increase the group's revenue to 25%. However, the group intends to produce more, but the situation of COVID-19 causing fewer tourists to visit. The production has to be put off for a while. The satisfaction from participating in the project is the highest level. They appreciate production knowledge, price analysis, and brand design, including the support of raw materials, packaging, and video clips used in communication.

## DISCUSSION

The discussion can be classified according to the research design.

1. Focusing on the development plan based on creative economics, the research result found that the group of Piyamit Tunnel 1 community chose to develop herbal inhaler because it is convenient products that easy to buy. This can be discussed that the vital characteristic of an easy buy product is an acceptable price. The customers easy to makethe decision of buying the products (Kotler & Armstrong, 2017). This is consistent with the research of Trilertlunjakorn and Sukkumnoed (2019), who had in-depth study the customer characteristic of buying herbal inhalers. It was divided into 3 groups 1) Suitable price, this group focuses on price and promotion of herbal inhalers 2) Safety first. This group emphasizes the importance of properties, standard certification, and expiration date. 3) The group focuses on usage. This group focuses mainly on the use according to the benefits of the inhaler, not paying attention to other features.
2. The development operation in creative economic found that the production presented "Adenosma Indiana (Lour.) Merr. root" and " Sibpaedchen," the identity local ingredients mixed with the primary raw material of herbal inhaler. The logo was designed as Graphic Mountain with Piyamit Tunnel city gate, use red and green color. Red color represents Sinitic and green color represents army (Communist Malaya) and implies natural herbal material. It can be discussed whether the creative economy is economic growth and driving the economy by using creativity. It's a value-added of products or services, under the principle of finding a distinctive identity and synthesized factors to use it as inspiration for creativity and development (Pongwirithon & Pakvipak, 2015). This is consistent with the research of Taikham and Sungrugsa (2015) conducted the research about the creative product development models to increase the value of community in Ratchaburi Province. The results showed that the entrepreneurs in the community can use local resources, local identity, local wisdom, etc., combined together and able to create new products that increase the group's revenue and communities. The same as Sangiamsak and Sukserm (2018) research is about the demand of buying creative products from Thai wisdom. The results found that customers value the products which color and patterns that clearly present the source.
3. The development result based on creative economic found that the Borneol liquid and herbal inhaler are the products most wanted for customers to buy as souvenirs. It can be discussed that the Borneol liquid and herbal inhaler has the typical feather as souvenir products, worth buying and rare. Their figure is outstanding, lightweight, and easy for transportation. The material and manpower are in the area (Tharaporn, 2021). This is consistent with the research of Rattanapan and Rattanapan, (2017), who studied souvenir design apply local intellectual wisdom to the products, using local materials to design and added value to meet market and customer requirements.

### Suggestion

#### Suggestion for further research

In COVID-19, people stay at home avoid traveling, but the distribution of products of Piyamit Tunnel Community Group relied on a storefront through the Piyamit 1 Herb Group Cooperative. Therefore, the online channel of selling products was suggested or create a brand of herbal products from the Piyamit Tunnel 1 Community Group.

#### Benefits of research

This research focuses on local medicinal plants developments in Piyamit Tunnel 1 community, Betong District, Yala Province, based on the creative economy. It aims to drive and develop the economy by using creativity to be value-added products and services based on raw materials, wisdom, way of life, culture, local characteristics, etc., to be contemporary and unique products that bring value to products businesses.

### Summary

According to the creative economy, the local herbal product development of Piyamit Tunnel 1 community, Betong District, Yala Province can be summarized as follow; 1) The development plan based on the creative economy: the producers and distributors of herbal products of the Piyamit Tunnel 1 community want to develop herbal inhalers the most. This is because the product is easy to buy. They want to have a brand, namely "Keeree 1987". 2) The development operation in creative economics: to use the "Adenosma Indiana (Lour.) Merr. root" and " Sibpeadchen" local raw material for the herbal inhaler and borneol liquid and branding, namely " Keeree 1987," the year of joining the government and change status to " Thai Nation development cooperators.". The logo was designed as Graphic Mountain with Piyamit Tunne city gate, using red and green colors. Red represents Sinitic people, green represents the communist army of Malaya and means the natural raw material of herbal. The communication, there are 2 clips video to present the product's identity 3) The development result based on the creative economy: the products were attracted customers who visit Piyamit Tunnel. They appreciated the properties and scent of herbal products, felt relax after inhaling, and were able to relieve themselves from tired and itchy. Many more customers bought them as souvenirs. Therefore, the satisfaction from participating in the project is the highest level. They appreciated production knowledge, price analysis, and brand design, including the support of raw materials, packaging, and video clips used in communication.

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