

**PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND
EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT IN YALA, THAILAND:
A COMMUNITY-BASED QUALITATIVE INQUIRY**

THESIS



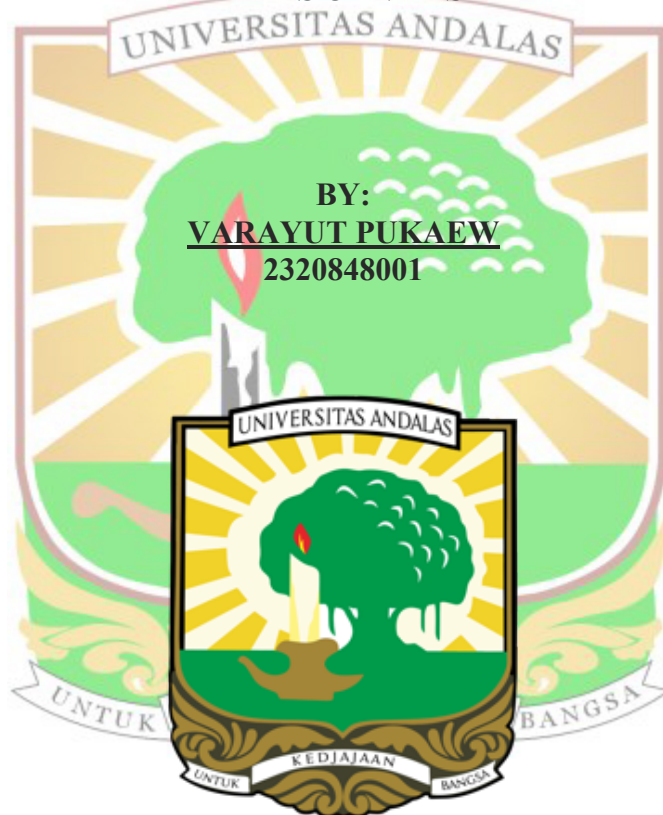
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***SUBMITTED AS ONE OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING
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ABSTRACT

Name : Varayut Pukaew
Study Program : Master of Public Administration
Title : Perceptions of Public Management and Educational Improvement in Yala, Thailand: A Community-Based Qualitative Inquiry

This thesis investigates perceptions of public management and educational improvement in Yala, Thailand—a culturally diverse and conflict-sensitive region in the country's southern border provinces. Drawing on Public Management Theory, Constructivist Theory, and Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), the study adopts a qualitative approach to examine how local stakeholders experience, interpret, and respond to education-related governance.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews with nine participants and two focus group discussions involving six individuals across various roles, including teachers, local officials, and community leaders. Thematic analysis revealed four key findings: (1) Gaps between national education policy and local realities, (2) Uneven access to teacher development and context-sensitive training, (3) Underutilization of cultural and religious institutions in formal education planning, and (4) Trust deficits and the limited participation of communities in governance processes.

The findings highlight the limitations of top-down policy implementation and underscore the importance of relational, decentralized, and culturally responsive public management. This study argues that educational reform in post-conflict regions like Yala requires not only technical interventions but also genuine partnerships with communities, trust-building efforts, and inclusive decision-making.

The thesis contributes to both theoretical discourse and practical reform, offering implications for policymakers, educators, and scholars working in multicultural and fragile contexts. It closes with recommendations for more adaptive teacher training, stronger community engagement, and governance models that honor local knowledge and lived experience.

Keywords: Yala, public management, education policy, community participation, teacher development, cultural responsiveness