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International Journal of Operations and Quantitative Management (ISSN 1082-1910) started in 1995 and is published quarterly (March, June, September, and December). It is a double-blind refereed journal. The journal provides an international forum for discussion of advancements in Operations Management, Operations Research, Quantitative Management and Management Science.

A blue banner with a circular image on the left showing hands working on a laptop. To the right, the text says "Ready to submit?" followed by "Start a new manuscript submission or continue a submission in progress" and a black button with a white arrow and the text "Go to submission site".


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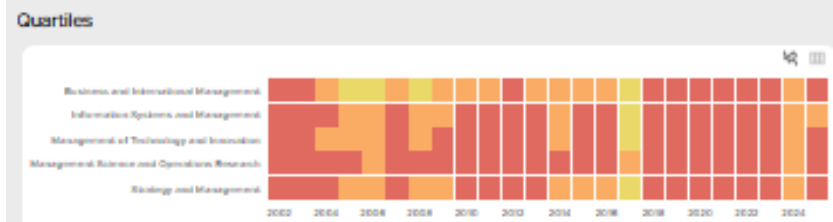
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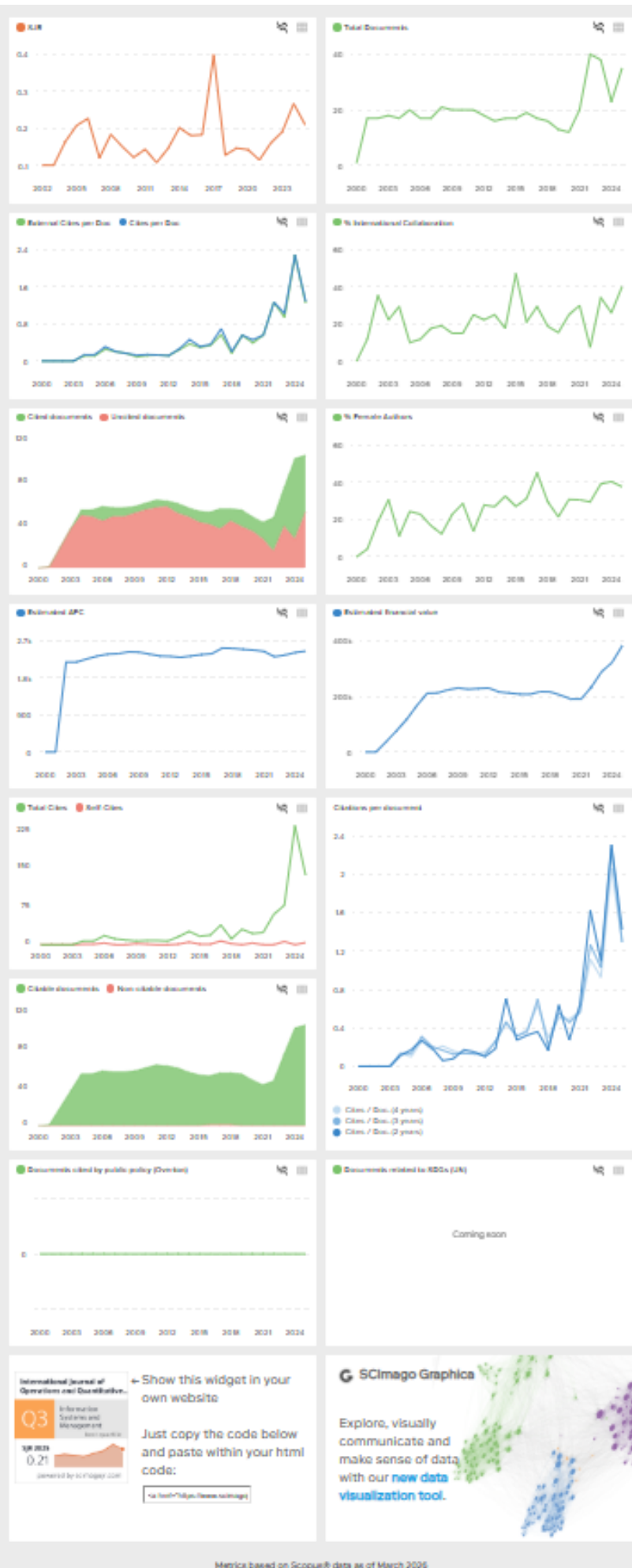
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Dear Authors

**Praiporn Saengchan, Samanan Rattanasirivilai, Kanjana Kamtan and Phenphak Promson**  
Graduate School, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand.

It's my pleasure to inform you that, after the peer review, your paper, "**Empowering Community Enterprises through Academic Engagement: Policy, Management, and Participation in an Urban Context**" has been ACCEPTED to publish with IJOQM, ISSN 1082-1910 (Online) It will be published in Vol. 31 No.3 (2025).

I believe that our collaboration will help to accelerate the global knowledge creation and sharing one step further. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

**Editor in Chief**  
**Prof. Dr. Sallahuddin B Hassan**  
School of Economics, Finance, and Banking (SEFB),  
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## Certificate of Exemption in the Consideration of Research Ethics

Certificate Number: COE. 2-335/2025

This research proposal was already considered by Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University Ethics Committee. Ethics Committee agreed to implementation of the proposal of this research without review by Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University Ethics Committee.

**Protocol Title:** Participation of Educational Institutions in the Development of Community Enterprises in accordance with the Policy and Management Guidelines for the Development of Dusit District Bangkok

**Study Code:** 68-358-2-1

**Institution:** Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

**Principal Investigation:** Praiporn Saengchan, Samanan Rattanasirivilai, Kanjana Kamtan and Phenphak promson

Sign.....

(Assoc.Prof.Yothin Sawangdee)

Chairman of Ethics Committee Panel 2

# Empowering Community Enterprises through Academic Engagement: Policy, Management, and Participation in an Urban Context



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*This study explores the critical role of academic institutions in fostering community enterprise development within the unique urban context of Dusit District, Bangkok, Thailand. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research examines the policy and administrative dimensions that influence institutional participation and identifies key enabling factors for sustainable growth. Quantitative analysis reveals a significant positive relationship between community enterprise strength, business networking facilitated by educational institutions, and the level of skill development within these enterprises. Qualitative insights underscore the transformative potential of academic partnerships in knowledge transfer, innovation, and community empowerment. However, a gap exists between governmental policies and their actual implementation, hindering effective participation. The research proposes policy recommendations for bolstering academic institutions as Community Anchor Institutions, including tailored support mechanisms, accessible resources, and streamlined regulations. Furthermore, the study advocates for fostering collaborative ecosystems, encouraging innovation, and bridging the gap between academic expertise and community needs to ensure long-term success and sustainable urban development.*

**Keywords:** Academic Engagement, Community Enterprise Development, Urban Development, Business Networking, Government Policy.

## Introduction

Amidst the volatile and challenging economic and social transformations, driving national development towards stability, wealth, and sustainability requires robust and

resilient mechanisms at the grassroots level. Community enterprises have been widely recognized as an essential instrument for strengthening the grassroots economy (Anusonphat, 2024), creating employment, generating income, and enhancing the quality of life for local populations through the utilization of local resources and wisdom, internal capacity-building, and the promotion of community participation (Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion, 2020). However, community enterprises still encounter significant challenges in competing within the modern market, which is driven by technological advancements and rapidly evolving consumer demands. Access to contemporary knowledge, modern management practices, funding sources, appropriate technologies, and diverse marketing channels remains an ongoing issue that requires continuous improvement (Sriphong, 2024).

In this context, educational institutions, particularly those in higher education that serve as hubs of knowledge, technology, and innovation, have the potential to act as important “academic mediators” (Pongariya & Tangtrongpaioj, 2023). All of the knowledge, technology, professional skills, and external collaborative networks can be connected to systematically and sustainably support the development of community enterprises (Durugbo, 2016). Therefore, the role of academic institutions is not limited merely to providing instruction or conducting academic research. The scope can also be expanded to engage with communities in order to create social innovations that effectively address real problems at the local level. This can be achieved through the design of appropriate processes that align with the unique context of each community (Chaikham et al., 2022).

Dusit District in Bangkok, which serves as the primary study area for this research, is a unique urban zone characterized by its diverse population in terms of culture, economy, and social structure. The district consists of both long-established communities that preserve traditional wisdom and newly developed areas with modern technological demands. Several prominent educational institutions are located in the Dusit District. The examples are Rajamangala University of Technology Phra Nakhon, Phranakhon Commercial Technological College, Vajiravudh College, as well as numerous government agencies. These institutions hold significant potential as sources of knowledge and resources for the development of community enterprises in the area. Nevertheless, the involvement of these educational institutions in the development of community enterprises in Dusit District still lacks clear frameworks, supportive policies that align with the local context, and systematic mechanisms for collaborative management. From these reasons, development efforts remain inconsistent and insufficient in addressing the diverse needs of the community in a truly effective manner.

Although the Thai government has consistently placed importance on the development of community enterprises by establishing relevant policies and development plans, such as the 20-Year National Strategy (2018–2037) and the National Economic and Social Development Plan, both plans highlight the significance of strengthening the grassroots economy and promoting collaboration among the government, private sector, educational institutions, and civil society. In fact, several limitations practically continue to hinder the achievement of intended outcomes. These include the lack of integrated information linking community needs with the capacities

of educational institutions, discontinuity in development projects, the absence of clear monitoring and evaluation systems, and insufficient mechanisms to incentivize educational institutions to take on a more active role.

Consequently, this research aims to investigate appropriate models of educational institution participation in the development of community enterprises within an urban context characterized by diversity and complexity. The objective is to inform the design of policy and management approaches that promote sustainable collaboration. Understanding the specific forms of collaboration within the Dusit District, which is an area that possesses both unique advantages and constraints, will contribute to the creation of new knowledge that can be effectively applied to other urban settings.

Furthermore, the role of educational institutions will be strengthened in genuinely contributing to social and community development, creating shared value between academia and local communities, and serving as a model of development driven by multi-sector collaboration.

Accordingly, this research focuses on addressing the following key questions; 1) What forms of participation should educational institutions adopt in promoting the development of community enterprises in urban areas? 2) How do policy and administrative factors influence the participation of educational institutions? and 3) What policy-oriented approaches can be employed to enhance the participation of educational institutions in the development of community enterprises in urban contexts?

The objectives of this research are; 1) To examine the forms of participation of educational institutions in the development of community enterprises in Dusit District, Bangkok, 2) To investigate policy and administrative factors that influence the participation of educational institutions in the development of community enterprises in Dusit District, Bangkok, and 3) To develop policy recommendations to promote the participation of educational institutions in the development of community enterprises in Dusit District, Bangkok.

## Literature Review

The Community Enterprise Development is a complex process involving economic, social, and cultural dimensions (Scoones, 2015). The key components of community enterprises include the use of local resources and wisdom, the strengthening of internal capacities, and the promotion of community participation (Durugbo, 2016). The Community Enterprise Development is therefore not merely about generating income but also about building sustainability and fostering shared ownership among local people.

Amidst the shifting economic and social dynamics, the participation of educational institutions has become an increasingly significant issue in the context of community enterprise development. Educational institutions, particularly at the higher education level, play an essential role as sources of knowledge, technology, and innovation (Etzkowitz, 2003). The transfer of appropriate knowledge, skills, and technologies can enhance the capacity of community enterprises, increase their competitiveness, and add value to their products and services (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Nevertheless, the

participation of educational institutions must be carefully designed to align with the local context and the genuine needs of the community.

Recent empirical investigations have substantiated several dimensions of community enterprise effectiveness while simultaneously revealing critical implementation challenges. A bibliometric analysis conducted between 2014 and 2023 identified the evolution of community-based enterprise theory through 2,847 publications, with particular emphasis on co-creation mechanisms and value chain integration. This analysis revealed that while community enterprises demonstrate potential for sustainable income generation, their capacity to foster shared ownership among local populations varies significantly according to contextual factors including institutional capacity, financial access, and social cohesion (Sharma & Shenoy, 2024).

Empirical evidence from Indonesia's Village Fund policy implementation (2015–2023) provides quantifiable outcomes regarding government-supported community economic development. The policy, allocated funds and demonstrated measurable effectiveness in poverty reduction and rural economic resilience. Specifically, the research documented reductions in village poverty rates from 14.21% in 2015 to 12.22% in 2023 outpacing urban poverty reduction trajectories and the progression of independent villages, representing a substantial systemic transformation. However, the same study identified persistent challenges: transparent fund management remains inadequate, and strategies for developing original village revenue sources to ensure post-intervention sustainability remain underdeveloped (MT, 2025).

In a parallel study from Philippines fisherfolk communities, alternative livelihood training programs sponsored by educational institutions and non-governmental organizations generated mixed outcomes. Data from participants in Dumarán and Araceli revealed that 63.89% of individuals continued their income-generating projects following training, yet approximately 47% experienced discontinuation due to financial constraints and inadequate management capabilities. Income improvements were reported by 70.67% of participating households, though gains in housing quality and educational attainment remained modest. Notably, gender differences emerged in training effectiveness perception: men and lower-income households rated program effectiveness more positively than their counterparts, suggesting that individual socioeconomic positioning moderates the realization of enterprise development benefits (Plasus et al., 2025).

Empirical research on social capital based institutional models in village-owned enterprises across Indonesian contexts demonstrated that the integration of social capital dimensions significantly enhanced local economic resilience through improved access to financial capital and community capacity for meeting basic needs. However, these positive outcomes were contingent upon institutional governance quality and the presence of established trust-based relationships within communities, underscoring the non-linear relationship between social capital investment and enterprise sustainability (Rahayu et al., 2024).

### **Participation of Educational Institutions**

The concept of participation is widely recognized as an important theory for sustainable community development (Pretty, 1995). The participation of external organizations or

institutions that can effectively transfer knowledge, technology, and analytical thinking processes to communities in ways that are appropriate and aligned with community needs is considered essential. In addition, the Stakeholder Participation Theory also highlights that any development initiative aiming for sustainable success must rely on the cooperation of all relevant stakeholders (Freeman, 1984). It particularly emphasizes the proactive role of educational institutions in transferring knowledge, enhancing competencies, and co-designing development approaches that are suitable for the local community context.

The role of higher education institutions in facilitating community enterprise development has received increased empirical attention in recent years, revealing that knowledge transfer effectiveness depends substantially on alignment mechanisms between academic offerings and local contextual needs. A study examining servant leadership practices in Malaysian higher education institutions (2020–2025) found that academic leaders exhibiting servant leadership behaviors fostered higher faculty work engagement, innovation capability, and affective commitment toward community-engaged activities. Multi-sample surveys employing structural equation modeling confirmed that trust in leadership, leader-member exchange, and psychological climate served as significant mediating mechanisms through which servant leadership translated into faculty commitment toward community involvement (Sedhu et al., 2025).

The University of North Sumatra's Business Incubation and Development Program (2023–2025) documented the process through which institutional support structures facilitate student entrepreneurship and community engagement. The program's three-year implementation strategy integrated pre-immersion training (incorporating product design, creativity, and business model innovation), immersion phases with supervised internships at small and medium enterprises, and post-immersion mentoring and business coaching. The program generated five newly established student-led enterprises with community integration, demonstrating the potential for institutional capacity-building when structured through sequential skill development and mentored experiential learning (Hutagalung et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, empirical evidence indicates that educational institution engagement with communities exhibits differential effectiveness based on institutional capacity and sustainability mechanisms. Research on ethno-STEM integration in multicultural educational contexts (2020–2025) identified significant implementation barriers despite theoretical alignment between local wisdom integration and modern STEM frameworks. Teacher readiness emerged as a critical limitation: educators demonstrated insufficient epistemic competence in transforming local knowledge into standardized STEM curricula, while contextual teaching materials and supporting infrastructure remained inadequate. The study concluded that teacher capacity development through continuous professional development programs, coupled with open-access resource repositories and supportive policy environments, are prerequisite conditions for institutional effectiveness in knowledge transfer to communities (Effendi et al., 2025).

### **Business Networking**

Business Networking is a key strategy for enhancing competitiveness, accessing new markets, and developing innovation, particularly for medium-sized enterprises, small businesses, and community enterprises. A business network is not merely a structural relationship but a system composed of interactions among organizations, entrepreneurs,

suppliers, customers, and other institutions. These interactions directly influence the exchange of resources, knowledge, and business opportunities (Håkansson & Ford, 2002). Business Networking, therefore, requires trust, cooperation, and shared values as its foundation (Gulati, 1998). In the context of small entrepreneurs and community-based enterprises, this concept aligns with the perspective of local economic development, which emphasizes forming both horizontal and vertical partnerships, such as with government agencies, educational institutions, or private sector entities, to strengthen business capacity and improve access to capital, technology, and markets.

Empirical investigations of business networking impact on enterprise competitiveness have identified positive but heterogeneous effects across different enterprise types and contexts. A structural equation modeling study conducted in the Pakistani textile sector examined entrepreneurial networking's relationship with small and medium enterprise firm performance, incorporating business model innovation as a mediating mechanism and ambidextrous leadership and learning culture as moderating factors. The analysis revealed that entrepreneurial networking demonstrates direct positive association with SME firm performance, with business model innovation operating as a significant positive mediator and both ambidextrous leadership and organizational learning culture amplifying these relationships. The results suggest that networking effectiveness is contingent upon firms' internal organizational orientations toward adaptive learning and flexible leadership structures (Arshad et al., 2023).

### **Learning and Skill Development**

Learning is a process through which individuals acquire new knowledge, skills, and attitudes from experiences, training, or education. Various learning theories, including Behaviorism, Cognitivism, and Constructivism, highlight different aspects of the learning process. These include responses to stimuli, information processing, and the construction of knowledge through real-life experience. Each of these perspectives significantly contributes to the development of individual skills (Ormrod, 2016).

Skill Development is the process through which individuals improve their ability to perform tasks or activities effectively (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). Skills, including technical skills, social skills, and self-management skills, can be cultivated through training, experiential learning, and learning from others.

### **Government Policy**

Government Policy refers to the guidelines or action plans established by the government to solve societal problems or promote development. Government Policy plays a crucial role in determining the direction of national development, allocating resources, and fostering social equity. An effective Government Policy should be clear, rational, agree with actual problems, and capable of being implemented efficiently (Howlett et al., 2009).

Relevant theories, such as the Multiple Streams Framework of Kingdon (2003), suggest that the emergence of policy depends on the convergence of three streams: the “problem stream”, the “policy stream”, and the “politics stream”. When the timing of these three streams aligns, a “policy window” opens, creating an opportunity to advance policy initiatives.

### Relationships between Variables

Based on the aforementioned concepts and theories, the relationships between variables can be synthesized as follows. Educational institutions that play an active role in transferring knowledge, technology, and skills contribute to fostering business networks, developing the competencies of community enterprise members, and strengthening community enterprises to be resilient and sustainable (Busababodhin et al., 2023). Furthermore, government policies that facilitate the development of community enterprises act as supportive factors, enhancing the effectiveness of educational institutions' initiatives (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Phutiwanakul & Jongwutivet, 2023)

### Research Hypotheses

According to the concepts and theories synthesized from the literature review, the research hypotheses expected to occur within the context of community enterprise development in the Dusit district of Bangkok can be formulated as follows:

**H1.** *The government policy that promotes participation and collaboration directly influences the enhancement of educational institution engagement in the community enterprise development.*

**H2.** *The strong and dynamic business networking directly influences the enhancement of educational institution engagement in the community enterprise development.*

**H3.** *The community enterprise development to be resilient, capable, and competitive directly influences the enhancement of educational institution engagement.*

**H4.** *The promotion of learning and skill development aligned with the needs of community enterprises directly influences the enhancement of educational institution engagement.*

**H5.** *The government policy that creates a supportive environment indirectly influences the business networking and the community enterprise development.*

**H6.** *The strong and dynamic business networking indirectly influences the learning and skill development promotion.*

**H7.** *The strong and dynamic business networking indirectly influences the community enterprise development.*

**H8.** *The government policy facilitating the creation of a supportive environment indirectly influences the community enterprise development.*

### Research Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework in Figure 1 illustrates an integrated multi-stakeholder ecosystem for sustainable community enterprise development through five interconnected domains. The framework generates multi-level impacts: revenue generation, employment creation, income enhancement, community collaboration, participatory governance, skills enhancement, knowledge transfer, and entrepreneurship promotion. The bidirectional arrows indicate feedback loops where outcomes reinforce inputs, suggesting a self-sustaining development mechanism that leverages local wisdom and resources while integrating external knowledge and technological services.

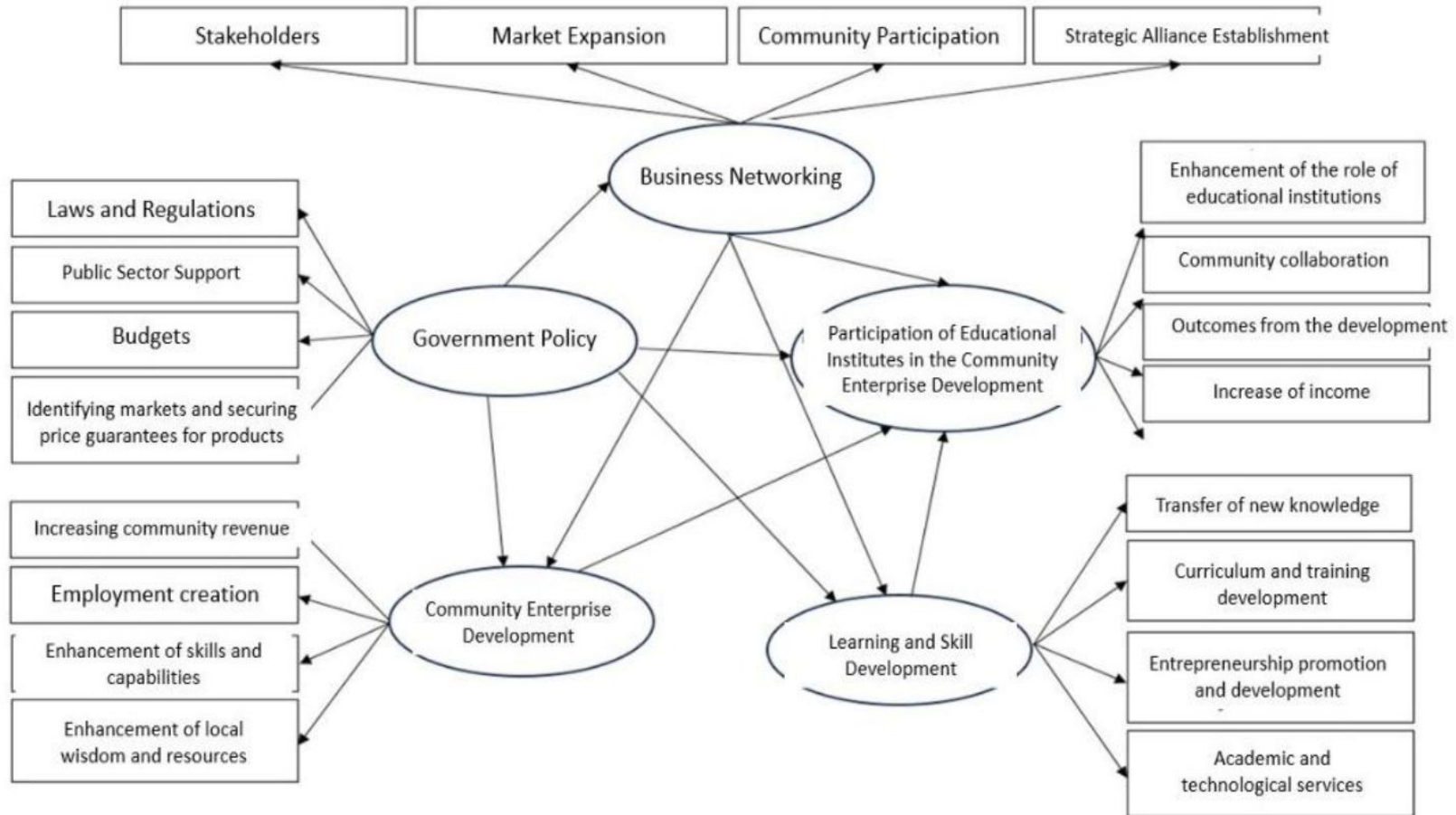


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework

## Research Methods

This is Mixed-Methods Research, having the objectives to examine the engagement model of educational institutions in the community enterprise development in Dusit District, Bangkok, to investigate the policy and administrative factors influencing such engagement, and to formulate policy recommendations to enhance this engagement. The research adopts an Explanatory Sequential Design, a two-phase methodological approach (Creswell, 2014). The approach begins with quantitative research followed by qualitative research to explain and elaborate on the quantitative findings.

### Population and Sample

The population for the quantitative research consists of members of community enterprise groups in Dusit District, Bangkok, as well as personnel from educational institutions involved in community enterprise development in the area. The sample size for the quantitative study was determined based on the principles of structural equation modeling. The parameter estimation was employed through the Maximum Likelihood method (Hair JR et al., 2010). A minimum sample size of 200 participants was recommended. Therefore, this study determined the sample size to be 400 participants, selected through stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation of each population subgroup. For the qualitative research, the sample consists of 10 participants, including leaders of community enterprise groups or relevant stakeholders. They were selected through Purposive Selection to obtain in-depth information on the key issues under investigation.

### Data Collection

The quantitative research employed a structured questionnaire developed based on relevant concepts, theories, and previous research. The questionnaire consisted of items related to personal information, policy and administrative factors, and the educational institution engagement. All items were measured using a 5-point rating scale. The questionnaires were distributed to the designated sample group for data collection.

For the qualitative research, a semi-structured in-depth interview guide was used as the data collection instrument. The interview questions covered topics related to the roles of educational institutions, networking, and policy recommendations. In-depth interviews were conducted with key informants, and the data were collected through audio recordings and detailed note-taking.

### Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe the characteristics of the sample. Correlation coefficients were analyzed to examine the relationships among variables. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the research hypotheses. Qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis to extract key themes from the data gained from the interview.

### Research Ethics

This research was conducted in accordance with ethical principles for research involving human participants and received approval from the Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University Ethics Committee (Committee 2) prior to data collection under Certificate of Exemption No. COE. 2-335/2025.

## Research Results

The data analysis in this research focuses on understanding the mechanisms and factors influencing the educational institution's engagement in the community enterprise development in Dusit District, Bangkok. The analysis is presented in two main parts: quantitative analysis, which examines data collected through questionnaires administered to members of community enterprises and personnel from educational institutions, and qualitative analysis, which examines data obtained from in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders.

### **Characteristics of the Sample: An Overview of the Development Context**

Understanding the characteristics of the sample is essential for interpreting the development context of community enterprises in Dusit District. An analysis of the demographic information reveals that in terms of gender distribution, the majority of the respondents were female, accounting for 59.30%. This reflects the significant role of women in community-level economic activities, particularly within small-scale and household-based enterprises. In terms of age distribution, the sample consisted of respondents from diverse age groups. The largest proportion fell within the early to mid-working age range (31–40 years), representing 28.70%. The next largest groups were those aged 21–30 years and 51–60 years, each accounting for 19.00%. Respondents aged 41–50 years comprised 15.00%. These findings suggest that the community enterprise development attracts both younger individuals who aspire to build new businesses and more experienced individuals seeking stability and long-term career sustainability.

In terms of highest educational attainment, most respondents held a bachelor's degree, representing 55.75%, followed by those with education above the bachelor's degree level, representing 19.25%, and those who completed upper secondary school/vocational certificate, accounting for 10.75%. This distribution indicates that community enterprises attract individuals with diverse educational backgrounds. Each brings different forms of knowledge and skills that contribute to community enterprise development. Regarding primary occupation, the respondents' occupations were diverse. The largest group consisted of full-time employees in government agencies or state enterprises, representing 35.00%, followed by community enterprise entrepreneurs, accounting for 28.20%. This highlights that community enterprises are not merely supplementary activities but initiatives capable of attracting participants from various sectors. For average monthly income, most respondents fell within the middle-income range (10,000–20,000 Baht), representing 44.00%. This was followed by those earning more than 30,000 Baht, accounting for 28.50% and those earning between 20,001–30,000 Baht, representing 14.25%. This distribution reflects that community enterprises serve as an important supplementary source of income and remain accessible to individuals across different income groups.

In terms of the length of participation in community enterprises, the sample showed varied experience levels. Most respondents had participated for not more than one year, representing 52.30%, followed by those with 3–5 years of experience, representing 26.30%, and those with 2–3 years of experience, accounting for 19.30%. This distribution indicates a dynamic membership structure, reflecting ongoing changes and a blend of both new and experienced participants.

### Descriptive Statistics of Variables: Foundational Context for In-Depth Analysis

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the context of community enterprise development, the researchers conducted an analysis of the basic descriptive statistics of the variables used in the study. The results include the mean, standard deviation, minimum value, maximum value, skewness, and kurtosis of each variable.

**Table 1:** Descriptive statistics of variables used in the analysis of factors influencing the community enterprise development in Dusit District

Variables	$\bar{X}$	SD	MIN	MAX	SK	KU
<b>Educational institute engagement in community enterprise development</b>						
Enhancement of the role of educational institutions (INS)	3.52	0.84	0.45	5.94	-0.03	0.33
Community collaboration (COM)	3.47	0.8	1.1	5.84	0.03	0.02
Outcomes from the development (DEV)	3.49	0.84	0.99	5.8	0.04	0.05
Increase of income (INC)	3.48	0.78	1.34	5.9	0.15	0.11
<b>Government policy</b>						
Laws and Regulations (LAW)	3.49	0.81	1.08	5.59	0.01	-0.05
Public Sector Support (SUP)	3.48	0.82	0.94	5.63	0.02	-0.06
Budgets (BUD)	3.49	0.83	0.57	5.63	-0.19	0.3
Identifying markets and securing price guarantees for products (PRC)	3.51	0.83	1.16	5.59	-0.22	-0.24
<b>Business Networking</b>						
Stakeholders (STK)	3.47	0.82	1.2	5.92	0.14	-0.13
Market expansion (MKT)	3.52	0.82	0.93	5.79	-0.16	0.08
Network competency/potential (CPT)	3.55	0.83	1.1	5.83	-0.06	-0.04
Strategic alliance establishment (ALI)	3.51	0.79	0.42	5.55	-0.14	0.02
<b>Community Enterprise Development</b>						
Increasing community revenue (REV)	3.51	0.79	0.83	5.74	0.05	0.06
Employment creation (EMP)	3.53	0.8	1.12	6.02	-0.15	0.1
Enhancement of skills and capabilities (SKL)	3.54	0.87	1.45	5.92	0.2	-0.07
Enhancement of local wisdom and resources (WIS)	3.49	0.81	1.44	5.81	0.07	-0.25
<b>Learning and Skill Development</b>						
Academic and technological services (TEC)	3.46	0.81	1.34	5.71	0.06	-0.18
Entrepreneurship promotion and development (ENT)	3.47	0.78	1.29	5.64	0.15	-0.22
Curriculum and training development (CUR)	3.44	0.81	1.04	6.02	0.07	-0.33
New knowledge transfer/training (TRN)	3.42	0.78	1.3	5.61	-0.03	-0.2

The data presented in Table 1 illustrates the levels and diversity of respondents' opinions and experiences regarding various issues related to community enterprise development. In terms of variable levels, the mean scores of most variables range between 3 and 4 (on a 5-point scale), indicating that the majority of respondents tend to moderately to strongly agree with the statements provided. Regarding differences among variables, certain variables exhibit higher mean scores than others, such as network competency/potential (mean = 3.55) and enhancement of skills and capabilities (mean = 3.54). This may suggest that respondents place particular

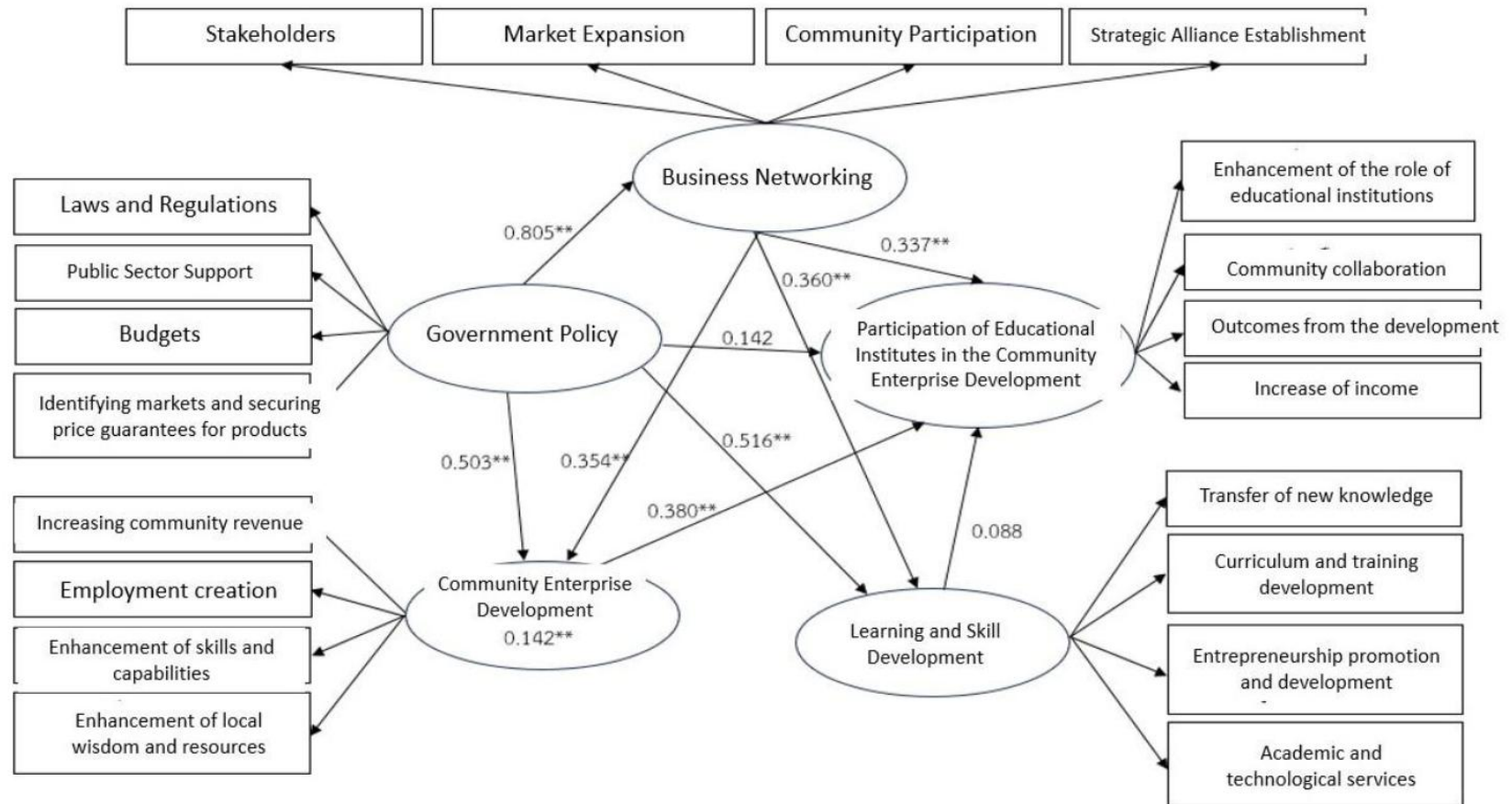
importance on these aspects or perceive them as areas in which community enterprises in the locality demonstrate notable strengths. On the other hand, some variables show relatively lower mean scores, such as new knowledge transfer/training (mean = 3.42), reflecting areas that may require further development or improvement. In terms of data distribution, the values display a distribution close to the normal curve (with most skewness and kurtosis values falling between -1 and +1), which is an appropriate characteristic for subsequent analysis using advanced statistical techniques.

### Factors Influencing the Educational Institution Engagement

According to the structural equation modeling analysis in Table 2, it was found that there are key factors influencing the educational institution's engagement in community enterprise development. These factors include; 1) regarding the role of community enterprise development itself, strong and competitive community enterprises with the ability to generate stable income are a major factor attracting educational institutions to participate in their development ( $\beta = 0.380$ ,  $p < .01$ ); and 2) regarding the business networks, strong business networks significantly contribute to attracting educational institutions to engage in development activities ( $\beta = 0.337$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Such networks facilitate the exchange of resources, knowledge, and opportunities, thereby increasing the attractiveness of educational institution engagement. In addition, the analysis revealed that government policy does not directly influence the educational institution engagement ( $\beta = 0.142$ ,  $p = .174$ ). However, it indirectly influences business network development and the strengthening of community enterprises as shown in Figure 2. Supportive government policies help create an enabling environment for establishing networks and promoting development, resulting in overall positive effects on community enterprises.

**Table 2:** Raw influence coefficients, standard errors, and standardized influence coefficients are illustrated below.

Influence Paths			b	SE	$\beta$	t	p
Government Policy	→	Educational Institution Engagement in Community Enterprise Development	0.140	0.103	0.142	1.360	.174
Business Networking	→	Educational Institution Engagement in Community Enterprise Development	0.359	0.103	0.337**	3.497	< .001
Learning and Skill Development	→	Educational Institution Engagement in Community Enterprise Development	0.090	0.124	0.088	0.726	.468
Community Enterprise Development	→	Educational Institution Engagement in Community Enterprise Development	0.411	0.128	0.380**	3.211	.001
Government Policy	→	Business Networking	0.745	0.065	0.805**	11.451	< .001
Government Policy	→	Learning and Skill Development	0.501	0.097	0.516**	5.141	< .001
Government Policy	→	Community Enterprise Development	0.459	0.095	0.503**	4.832	< .001
Business Networking	→	Learning and Skill Development	0.377	0.103	0.360**	3.667	< .001
Business Networking	→	Community Enterprise Development	0.348	0.100	0.354**	3.466	< .001



**Figure 2:** Causal relationship model of the educational institution's engagement in community enterprise development

### **Qualitative Findings: Context and Dynamics of Development**

From the analysis of in-depth interview data, several key themes emerged that reflect the context and dynamics of participation between educational institutions and community enterprises. For the role of Education as Enabler, educational institutions function as crucial facilitators that help communities' upgrade product standards and access broader markets. Through their knowledge, skills, and ability to connect communities with formal systems, educational institutions act as a "capacity accelerator," enhancing knowledge, skills, and institutional access. This enables communities to transform knowledge into tangible outputs. For the role of Multi-Actor Integration, the progress of community enterprises does not arise from the efforts of any single party. Instead, it requires strong, collaborative networks involving various stakeholders.

### **Conclusion and Discussion**

This research examined a critical issue related to the development of Thailand's grassroots economy, namely, the educational institution's engagement in the community enterprise development in Dusit District, Bangkok. The objectives were to understand the engagement model and the factors influencing such engagement. A mixed-methods research approach was adopted, combining quantitative analysis with in-depth qualitative interviews. This allowed for a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. The research findings can be summarized and discussed as follows:

#### **Model of Educational Institution Engagement: Integration into the Urban Context**

The analysis indicates that the educational institution's engagement in the community enterprise development in Dusit District follows an Integrated Model, combining multiple roles in a cohesive manner. This aligns with the Third Mission concept, which emphasizes the role of universities as social entrepreneurs aiming to create positive impacts on communities across various dimensions (Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020). These roles include:

- 1) **Knowledge and Technology Transfer:** Educational institutions serve as centers for transferring knowledge and appropriate technologies that fit the community context, such as production technologies, business management, digital marketing, and product development. Importantly, this transfer should not be limited to theoretical instruction but must involve the application of knowledge to produce tangible and practical outcomes.
- 2) **Collaboration Networking:** Educational institutions act as intermediaries in fostering collaboration among community enterprises, government agencies, the private sector, and other organizations. This facilitates resource exchange and new opportunities. These findings are consistent with the research of Caves and Oswald-Egg (2024), which emphasizes the importance of collaboration among universities, local administrative organizations, and communities.
- 3) **Policy Support:** Educational institutions support community enterprise operations by providing consultations, information, and coordination with relevant government agencies. This is consistent with the concept of Collaborative Governance proposed by Ansell and Gash (2008), which highlights the importance of Collaborative Governance on local development.

This integrated engagement model aligns well with the context of Dusit District, which is an urban area characterized by cultural, economic, and social diversity and home to several leading educational institutions. Integrating multiple roles is therefore essential to effectively address the complex needs of the community.

### **Factors Influencing Educational Institution Engagement: Internal and External Driving Forces**

The results of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis indicate that several key factors influencing the educational institution engagement in the community enterprise development are as follows:

- 1) **Community Enterprise Development:** Strong and well-established community enterprises with competitive potential and the ability to generate stable income are more likely to attract educational institution engagement. This finding is consistent with the Resource Dependence Theory, which posits that organizations seek access to essential resources required for their operations (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).
- 2) **Business Networking:** The presence of strong business networks plays an important role in attracting educational institutions to participate in development efforts. Such networks facilitate the exchange of resources, knowledge, and opportunities, thereby increasing the incentives for educational institutions to engage. This result is consistent with the study of Wang and Lu (2021), discovering that collaboration networks between universities and industries contribute to knowledge transfer and innovation.

The analysis further reveals that government policy does not directly influence the educational institution engagement. However, it indirectly affects business networking and community enterprise development. This supports the findings of Taylor (2020), which emphasized that government policy serves as a foundational enabling factor. Nevertheless, achieving genuine engagement from educational institutions requires additional mechanisms.

In addition, learning and skill development do not directly influence educational institution engagement. This is possibly because learning and skill development alone are insufficient. The acquired knowledge and skills must be effectively applied within the context of community enterprises to create a meaningful impact.

### **The Role of Educational Institutions as Enablers: Implementation of Knowledge to Practice**

The qualitative analysis indicates that educational institutions play a crucial role of “Education as Enabler” in multiple dimensions. These include: 1) knowledge and technology transfer, which enables communities to enhance product standards and access broader markets. This process requires not only the provision of knowledge but also ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure that knowledge transfer leads to sustainable outcomes. 2) Networking connects community enterprises with government agencies, the private sector, and other organizations. Establishing relationships with external institutions is essential for accessing diverse opportunities and support mechanisms. 3) Human resource development equips community enterprise members with the necessary skills and knowledge through training sessions,

seminars, and advisory support. 4) Inspiration building encourages younger generations to participate in community enterprise development. Fostering inspiration and local pride is vital for motivating youth to continue and expand community-based enterprises.

### **Policy Recommendations: Building an Ecosystem that Supports Sustainable Development**

According to the research findings, several key policy recommendations can be proposed. 1) In promoting the role of educational institutions as core mechanisms for community policy, the government should enhance and institutionalize the involvement of educational institutions in community development through systematic and continuous engagement by establishing performance indicators and allocating appropriate budgets. 2) In improving policy communication for better accessibility, the government should refine its policy communication to be clearer, easier to understand, and tailored to local contexts, using accessible and comprehensible language. 3) In establishing permanent local market platforms, the government should invest in creating user-friendly online market platforms with low service fees and integrated logistics support. 4) In advancing community standards and rights towards international levels, the government should support community enterprises in obtaining various certifications, such as FDA, GMP, HACCP, and Fair Trade, in order to enhance credibility and expand access to broader markets. 5) In developing a structured multi-stakeholder network, the government should promote collaborative efforts among government agencies, universities, the private sector, and civil society to foster sustainable and inclusive development.

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