

**SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS: THE FACTORS THAT
INFLUENCE THEIR SUCCESS**



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INFLUENCE THEIR SUCCESS**

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ABSTRACT

This thematic paper tried to find out the factors that influence the success of Thai social entrepreneurs by looking at the identified factors that have been concluded and summarized which consisted of 13 factors, and tested which factors can be applied and influenced the success of Thai social entrepreneurs by using a case study of a social enterprise in Thailand, Farmto Co.,Ltd.

FarmTo is an online market platform that was founded in 2015 with the aim to solve two key social issues, first it aims to act as a distribution channel for farmers to sell their organic farm products, and second is to help solving Thai farmers' debt problems.

The result from this paper shows that not all pre-identified factors are applicable to this social enterprises. There are only seven factors that influence the success of Thai social entrepreneurs;(i) Presence of demonstrated need and identifiable group of beneficiary (ii) Acceptance by the community and involvement of the beneficiaries (iii) Social capital (Structure capital, Relational capital, Cognitive capital) (vi) Sound financials and reliable source of funding (v) Dedication of the leadership team (vi) Organized structure with well-defined responsibilities (vii) Emphasis on learning and improvement

KEY WORDS: Social Entrepreneurs, Success Factors, Social Enterprise

33 pages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The objective of conducting a business today is not different from the old days where profit maximization or financial gain is the top priority. This traditional business concept is still rooted deep in the society where people seek for wealth creations. We also evidence the rapid change which in turn affects social and environment. As public concern about social and environmental increase, there is a need for corporations to take responsibility more proactively for sustainable pattern of development (Seelos & Mair, 2005). With such assumed responsibility, corporations, especially multinational corporations, are put in the position to adopt Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program to address the concerns (Zahra, Rawhouser, Bhawe, Neubaum, & Hayton, 2008), where some countries is a binding or an enforcement.

To tackle social and environmental issues, we create non-profit organization, charity, non-governmental organization (NGO) or a specific government department to oversee activities, set regulations, impose laws, and provide resources to help mitigate the afore mentioned problems. However, the sustainability of these organizations are questionable. They, the organizations, are the means to lessen the problem, but to solve the key issues businesses play a very important role.

During the talk given by Michael Porter in 2013 at TEDGlobal, he mentioned that the problems of NGOs or any charitable organizations is either it is unscalable or lack of resources. He, therefore, pointed out that the place to find resources is business because it creates wealth. Porter explained further that the profit in which the company make from selling goods or services allow whatever solution in which we have created to be infinitely scalable, the solution then become self-sustaining.

In Thailand, we are starting to observe the involvement of businesses in changing the society. Many businesses adopted social activity like CSR, however it is not enough to tackle the social and environmental issues we are currently facing. This is because CSR is still remained as an option to their businesses in which the initiative

for CSR based on the goal to increase shareholder values. Corporates and businesses have to put more focus on their stakeholders and environment rather than just making profit to increase shareholder value. Regardless of their effort, several issues are left unaddressed due to the focus of the companies that only address those issues relate to their activities (Zahra et al., 2008). Business person that focus on making the social and environmental impacts while perusing entrepreneurial goal is social entrepreneur.

The concept of social entrepreneur is still young, but have received a lot of interest from scholars around the world. The language of social entrepreneurship may be new, but the phenomenon is not (Dees, 1998). In this paper, we are going to examine how a social entrepreneur becomes successful by looking at factors contributing to the success of social entrepreneur in Thailand. The company uses in the case study is Farmto Co.,Ltd, or FarmTo. The company was founded by a graphic designer and his two friends while the last co-founder was invited to join them after they met in one of the competitions.

FarmTo is an online market platform that links farmers and consumers together for organics farm produce. The company aims to eliminate the middleman to provide end consumers with reasonable prices and product source knowledge and experience, while farmers get a chance to set their own selling price, at the same time creating their own brands and improve product quality in accordance to the end customers' demand. Through this business model, it aims to tackle the issue of Thai farmer's debt and create market channel for farmers, especially for organic farm products.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research focuses on underlying factors that make social entrepreneur become successful in Thailand. In this chapter, we are going to review the relevant concepts and theory which include the definition of social entrepreneur, definition of success, and factors to success of social entrepreneurs. This section also includes the definitions of some special terms uses in this research paper.

2.1 Definition of Entrepreneur & Social Entrepreneur

Since the term ‘Social Entrepreneur’ is the combination of the word ‘Social’ and ‘Entrepreneur’ it is good to start with the definition of ‘Entrepreneur’ before we define the term ‘Social Entrepreneur’

The word entrepreneur was originated from France around 17th-18th century according to Dees (1998). The entrepreneur means someone who undertakes a significant project or activity (Dees, 1998). While Martin and Osberg (2007) defined the word entrepreneur on Stanford Social Innovation Review in both positive and negative point of view as someone who is special, and has innate ability to capture the opportunity while combining the out-of-the-box thinking to create something new to the world. However, there is a need to wait until the impact of their action is evidence.

Adding on to that, Dees (1998) also raised the definition given by Peter Drucker that entrepreneur is someone who will exploit the opportunity from the changes but does not view entrepreneur to be an agent to cause the change.

Many articles distinct entrepreneur and social entrepreneur by the motivation due to the blurry distinction of the two terms, which we often perceived that entrepreneurs are motivated by money whilst social entrepreneurs are motivated by the social values created. Since there is a fine line to distinct between social entrepreneur and entrepreneur we take the argument of Martin and Osberg (2007) that the terms should not be differentiated

by merely the motivation; money and altruism. Instead, it should focus on the value proposition. However, what they have in common is the drive to accomplish the opportunity they identified.

Entrepreneurs' value proposition is to serve the market where customers can purchase and afford such products and services, in turn they receive profit from offering the products and services (services (Martin & Osberge, 20017).; in other word, Peter Drucker, mentioned that entrepreneur recognize the opportunity to create economic values.

On the other hand, the value proposition for social entrepreneur lies on the impact to social where it aims to create value that benefit the society at larger-scale or to a significant segment (Martin & Osberge, 20017) under which underprivileged and neglected can benefit from the social venture (Pervez, Maritz, & Waal, 2013). Dees (1998) stated that social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector by (1) Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value), (2) Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission, (3) Engaging in the process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning, (4) Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, (5) Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.

By prioritizing social benefits as most important value proposition, it does not mean the social entrepreneurs are only aim to create non-profit organization. Instead, the ventures that social entrepreneurs have created can be both not-for-profit or for-profits organization (organization (Dees, 1998). However, in this paper, we are going to focus solely on the social entrepreneur that ventures in the for-profit social enterprise.

2.2 Definition of Success to Social Entrepreneur

The definition of success of social entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs can be quite similar. However, looking into the definition of social entrepreneur we found that the value proposition is different for both. Therefore, the success definition of social entrepreneur can be derived from the definition of social entrepreneur itself.

Success of social venture can be determined by these three factors criteria
1) Ccreating social impact, 2) Eensuring implementation and survival, and 3) Hhaving

the capacity to grow, expand, and develop (Gumaste, 2010, 2010). For social entrepreneur to succeed, it has to create the organization that meet these success criteria.

1. Creating social impact in this context means the activities of business that create significant positive effect to the community and society where the impact in which it has created must address the social challenges (“What is Social Impact?,” n.d.) for a certain number of beneficiary.

2. Ensuring implementation and survival means that the enterprise must exist and sustain in order to serve its social missions. The existence must include all stages of social enterprise the establishment and the sustaining of the social enterprise.

3. Having the capacity to grow, expand, and develop is the ability to find mechanisms to grow, develop and improve which in turn helps the social enterprise scale up its social impacts.

2.3 Success Factors

Even though there have been an increase in the study in this field, there are very few studies that focus on factors that help social entrepreneurs to success in their social ventures. Therefore, we will look at what other scholars have identified.

Table 2.1 List of success factors

Article	Factors
Shair & Lerner (2006)	(a) The entrepreneur’s social network (b) Total dedication to the venture’s success (c) The capital base at the establishment stage (d) The acceptance of the venture idea in the public discourse (e) The composition of the venturing team, including the ratio of volunteers to salaried employees (f) Forming cooperation’s in the public and non-profit sectors in the long-term (g) The ability of the service to stand the market test (h) The entrepreneurs’ previous managerial experience.

Table 2.1 List of success factors (cont.)

Article	Factors
David F. T. Almeida (2010)	(a) Context (b) People (c) Innovation (d) Leadership (e) Ethics (f) Funding
Tonio Rost (2014)	(a) Content target (b) Full time employment (c) Venture experience
Gumaste (2010)	<p>Social Impact</p> (a) Presence of demonstrated need and identifiable group of beneficiary (b) Measured and defined impact (c) Large number of beneficiaries <p>Implementation/Survival</p> (a) Acceptance by the community and involvement of the beneficiaries (b) Social capital (structure capital, relational capital, cognitive capital) (c) Appropriate level of embeddedness (d) Sound financials and reliable source of funding (e) Dedication of the leadership team (f) Relevant work experience (g) Organized structure with well-defined responsibilities <p>Growth, Expansion, and Development</p> (a) Emphasis on learning and improvement (b) Long-term cooperation with other organizations (c) Drive to expand and grow

Even though there are several factors identified by several many scholars, we will take the factors compiled by from Gumaste (2010) due to its relatedness of the definition of success of social enterprise which in turn contribute by social entrepreneur. In the research, Gumaste (2010) compiled 13 factors from several researches. He studied to identify if these 13 factors truly relate to the success of the social ventures. This paper will refer these 13 success factors for the purpose of the study.

2.3.1 Social Impact

2.3.1.1 Presence of demonstrated need and identifiable group of beneficiary.

Unmet social needs can become opportunities for social entrepreneurs. However, despite some being visible and explicit, these opportunities are not selected by entrepreneurs. This is because not all opportunity identified is worth pursued (Seelos, Mair, Battilana, & Dacin, n.d.). For social venture to be success, a merely good idea may not work.

Beneficiary is the important factors that influence the firm's position as it is one of the components within the firm structure. The beneficiary can be suppliers, customers, employees, or the recipients depending on the venture in which the social entrepreneur has created. The beneficiary is the reason for the social venture's existence (Kennedy, 2016). Therefore, the identification of the needs of the specific beneficiary group in which the venture is targeting is needed for it to sustain the venture. In addition, this enables the venture to withstand the market test. If the identified opportunity has no real need from a group of beneficiary, there may not be market for social entrepreneur to serve.

2.3.1.2 Measured and defined impact

The impact is which social venture creates can come in various forms. The three general impacts according to Gumaste (2010) are the capacity building projects, which relates to the change in culture, package distribution initiatives is related to the health and economic impacts while movement building initiatives talk about the impact on political (2010).

2.3.1.3 Large number of beneficiaries

The reasonable number of beneficiaries that will justify the “medium” impact of a social venture is about 10,000 individuals, while any impact created to fewer than 10,000 individuals is considered “low”. For impacts create to more than 1,000,000 individuals is considered “high” (Alvord, Brown, & Letts, 2004). Therefore, to be consider as successful social entrepreneurs, they need to have to create an impact to certain number of beneficiary.

2.3.2 Implementation/Survival

2.3.2.1 Acceptance by the community and involvement of the beneficiaries.

The acceptance from society includes the acknowledgement and support of the project from the both community and beneficiary. The existence of the venture in a particular community is determined by this factor. This is because it allows the mobilization of the resources within the community. The involvement of the beneficiary will, according to Gumaste (2010), rebuilding the community through development of their families and societies.

2.3.2.2 Social capital (structure capital, relational capital, cognitive capital)

Social capital is a key to entrepreneurial success as it provides a mean to get an access to important resources like gaining access to investors (Cancialosi, 2014). Social capital is crucial for all types of businesses, including to social venture.

Social capital comes in three dimension according to Gumaste (2010) which are structure capital, relational capital and cognitive capital. For structure capital, it talks about the network ties an individual has to connect to people and resources, while relational capital refer to the quality of the network. It is intangible because it involve intangible factors like trust and feeling. Lastly, cognitive capital focus on the norms or common aspect in a cluster of network for example shared language or value (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998).

2.3.2.2 Appropriate level of embeddedness

The level in which an entrepreneur is seen as a member of the community or being included in it; the extent to which social entrepreneur implanted

or immersed into the community. This embeddedness allows the entrepreneur to exploit the social capital as well as mobilizing resources. Gumaste (2010) mentioned in his research that this factor determine the survival of any organization.

2.3.2.4 Sound financials and reliable source of funding

Sound financing is very crucial at the start-up period and for survival. This is because it determine the existence of the social venture to achieve the social mission it has set. Securing a sound financial support help social entrepreneur to establish the social enterprise at the start-up stage. Then it comes to sustaining the enterprise after the establishment. Greater social impact can be created after the venture has a stable income (Zastawny, 2014). Therefore, it is vital that that sound financial will help to explain the survival of the social enterprise. Reliable funding can ensure a smooth establishment because it allows entrepreneur to plan ahead, thus enable the company to follow its plan.

2.3.2.5 Dedication of the leadership team

The dedication of the leadership team in this context means the commitment of the leadership in term of time, money and the willingness to sacrifice (Gumaste, 2010).

2.3.2.6 Relevant work experience

Gumaste (2010) cited from a research by Sharir that the leaders experience relating to management or any that related to the venture is one of the contributing factors that lead to the success of social venture.

2.3.2.7 Organized structure with well-defined responsibilities

This is relating to the performance of the firm. The structure helps in determining work delegation, and ensure communication within the team and organization.

2.3.3 Growth, Expansion, and Development

2.3.3.1 Emphasis on learning and improvement

Learning culture encourage the venture to prepare and adopt to changes and future development. This applied to leaders as well as the staffs of the organization and related stakeholders.

2.3.3.2 Long-term cooperation with other organizations

The cooperation will provide greater support to the venture especially for future growth and expansion. To enable this to happen, social capital play vital role in establishing this kind of relationship. The cooperation with other organization also allow an organization to gain more new opportunities (Gumaste, 2010).

2.3.3.3 Drive to expand and grow

The expansion of impact of social venture is important in measuring success social entrepreneurs (Gumaste, 2010). This is because the larger the scale of the venture, the greater the venture mitigate the social problems it which it try to solve.

2.4 Definition of Organic

This paper looks at the definition of ‘organic’ that relate to farming and agriculture. Since there are different standards for organic farm produces in different country, it is more sensible to take the definition in the context in which the company is operated to ensure the consistency of the definition. The definition of ‘organic’ is taken from an independent organization based in Thailand that issues organic certificates to both domestic and international farmers, this organization is called Organic Agriculture Certification Thailand (ACT).

According to ACT, for farm products to have label as ‘organic’ they must possess these basic principles

1. Diversity of plants and animals must be observed in the area.
2. Farmer need to be self-reliant for organic matters as well as nutrient for their farming.
3. Optimized resources that found in the farm, this also include renewing resources to improve and sustain the environment.
4. Ecological system within the farm and the whole ecology are maintained.
5. Avoid activities that will generate pollution.
6. Human rights is the priority in the production process and management of organic farming.
7. The processing of organic produce should base on the natural method where the least amount of impact is created to the environment.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper will focus on the qualitative research as a mean to draw the findings. The aim of this research is to look for related factors that influence the success of social entrepreneurs in Thailand.

The organization selected for the interview is a recognized social enterprise based in Pathumthani Province, Thailand. The research choose to interview one of the co-founders of the company named To. Interview was used as a mean to collect data for this research. A secondary data is used as a complementary material to support the information of the interview.

The interview was done in two rounds. The first round of the interview was conducted through a phone call to understand the business and its concept. The second interview was conducted at a local ice-cream store for an hour for an in-depth understanding of the company. Semi-structured interviewed was used for both interviews.

3.1 Selected Social Entrepreneur

The social enterprise selected named FarmTo in this case study is based in Thailand, Pathumthani Province, Amphoe Nong Sua. One of the co-founders of the company had volunteered to provide the insightful information of the company, his name is To. When contacted for the interview, it was very intriguing to learn how they address one another in the company; the team addressed him as Farmer To. Therefore, he will be addressed as Farmer To throughout this research paper.

Unlike several entrepreneurs who quit their job to pursue their dreams, Farmer To still works for a company as a graphic designer. His strong passion for farming led him to his other two friends who wanted to tackle issues like finding distribution channel for organic farm produce, increase organic farm produce prices and tackle farmer's debt

problems. They formed a team and come up with a business model. They started small by using one of the co-founder's farmland to test their business idea.

To differentiate from others, they incorporate the idea of sharing and ownership into the farming. For the first time, end-consumer can purchase organic farm produce before they are being harvested, and get a chance to experience the real farming experience through purchasing products from FarmTo; end consumers can join farmers, whom they purchase products from, during cultivation period. This does not limit to only farm produce but FarmTo is offering product range from farm products to processing organic farm produce like cheese.

Farmer To mentioned that the social venture received awards from three competitions two of which named Banpu Champion for Change and National Innovation Agency (NIA). Through these competitions, the company received awards to fund for their social venture idea.

3.2 Interview Questions

Table 3.1 List of interview questions

Topic	Question
Business Idea	1. Tell me about your business idea?
Social Impacts (a) Presence of demonstrated need and identifiable group of beneficiary (b) Measured and defined impact (c) Large number of beneficiaries	1. Who are the key stakeholders? 2. How do you think this model benefit the key stakeholders? 3. How many people are working with the company? 4. How many has already benefited from the business? 5. Can you explain how they benefit from FarmTo?

Table 3.1 List of interview questions (cont.)

Topic	Question
<p>Implementation/Survival</p> <p>(a) Acceptance by the community and involvement of the beneficiaries</p> <p>(b) Social capital</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Structure capital 2) Relational capital 3) Cognitive capital <p>(c) Appropriate level of embeddedness</p> <p>(d) Sound financials and reliable source of funding</p> <p>(e) Dedication of the leadership team</p> <p>(f) Relevant work experience</p> <p>(g) Organized structure with well-defined responsibilities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What were your biggest challenges? How did you go about solving the problem? 2. Where did you receive the financial support? 3. What is your company current financial status? 4. How many people are in your team, and how do you work in your organization? 5. Do you think relationship matter in conducting/succeed in social venture? 6. In what way that social capital help you in growing this business? 7. What is your co-founders' past experience and your past experience that help in growing, developing this business? 8. How do you make decision?
<p>Growth, Expansion, and Development</p> <p>(a) Emphasis on learning and improvement</p> <p>(b) Long-term cooperation with other organizations</p> <p>(c) Drive to expand and grow</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What have you done to increase the capacity or trust or involvement? 2. Do your company have any related policy/ culture to cultivate learning, development and improvement? 3. Do you work with other organization? If yes, can you explain what the cooperation you have with the organization are? 4. What is your action or plan to grow this venture?

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The Company Background

FarmTo is an online market platform that was founded in 2015 with the aim to solve two key social issues, first act as a distributional for farmers to sell their organic farm products, and second is to help solving Thai farmers' debt problems.

The company is located in Pathumthani Province, Amphoe Nong Sua, Thailand. There are currently five members in the company; four co-founders and one part-time administrator.

The business was started by three friends who have strong passion for farming. Prior to setting up the company, the trio were already jumped into the agricultural field where one was doing the hydroponic farming. However, the usage of chemical to grow vegetables through hydroponic system quickly grew to become a big concern. He then terminated the project. Another co-founder whose family has an organic lemon farm also faced a problem; the family cannot find a market to sell the lemons. Therefore, they start anew with mission to find market channel or distribution channel for organic farm produce, and help tackle the issue of Thai farmer's debts.

To test the concept, in 2015, the team started farming on the available land owned by one of the co-founder in Pathumtani Province, Amphoe Nong Sua. However, they discovered that organic farming often give low yield compare to modern farming. The great deal of energy was put in to learn from farmers in the nearby area who do organic farming. They also joined Young Smart Farmer Thailand, an organization created by Ministry of Agricultural Extension in Thailand with the aim to be a learning hub for new Thai farmers. Joining the organization allowed Farmer To to quickly learn the tricks and tips of organic farming from other experience farmers in Young Smart Farmer Thailand, and with existing network, the trio successfully increase the farm yield. However, they need to find market to sell their products.

The previous problems they encountered were that the organics farm products were often devalued by customers and there was hardly any market for the products. Middleman often purchase the products from organic farmers at the market price instead of giving higher value for organic farm produce. On the other hand, organic farm owners want to sell it at a higher price because of the low yield and for it being organic.

The three also discovered along the way that farmers in Thailand have large debt, therefore they wanted to encourage them to do sustainability farming and alleviated problems to the farmers in Thailand.

Then, they started develop the business idea to solve the two problems. They started off by selling their products on Facebook. Firstly, sell to their friends and people they know. They then came up with the sharing concept for their business idea. To increase customer involvement and experience.

The business model in which the company adopted is very interesting. FarmTo offers farmers a marketplace where they can sell their products directly to end consumers who are very keen to purchase organic products. The additional option for farmer who sell with them is that they are able to set their own selling price.

The transaction is done before cultivation period begin. FarmTo allows end consumers to have a chance to choose which farmer they want to purchase from by browsing through their profiles and products on FarmTo's website. For FarmTo's case, customers will not receive the products right away, but to wait until the harvest period. While waiting, customer can join or visit the farming area to learn and experience the real farming activity.

For the farmer's side, out of all transaction made to FarmTo, 40% will be transferred to the farmer to purchase material for farming, another 20% will be deducted to FarmTo as a service charge, and the rest of the payment is paid to the farmer after they deliver products to customers. In this way, the farmer no longer need to go borrow or make loan to start farming. In addition, in any case that the farmer experienced natural disaster like flooding, the farmer will still receive 50% while another 50% will be transferred back to the customer's account. Another unique selling point of FarmTo is the name tag. For every order, the farmer will write the name of customers on the land area, or container of the products to show their ownership.

After came up with the solid business concept, they pitch their business concept in the competition. Farmer To mentioned in his interview that Banpu Champion for Change was the first competition that they participated. The competition awarded the team with 250,000 Thai Baht. This award provided the three with seed money to start the business. They used some of the money to experiment online advertising which they received a positive feedback.

During the competition, they also met an application developer, therefore invited this application developer to join the venture to help company create future mobile application. Finally, they become a team of four people. By 2018, they attended several competitions and won altogether about 1,300,000 Thai Baht. This money was used as a major source of project financing for FarmTo. In 2016, FarmTo Co.,Ltd was established as company.

The company estimated that they will complete the mobile application which will help them to scale and increase opportunity by mid-2018.

4.2 Success Factors

4.2.1 Social Impacts

4.2.1.1 Presence of demonstrated need and identifiable group of beneficiary

He described in detail during the interview that Thai farmers often have to take out loan to start farming as the season comes. However, they are clueless about the price in which they could sell, and the amount of yield is unpredictable as it depends on the uncontrollable factors. With high chemical cost for farming, loan cost, unstable demand and price, farmers are the risk taker because they have to deal with several uncertainties. In the end, they sell their farm produce with slim margin, thus unable to repay the debt and survive. The vicious cycle then begin; as the season comes, they borrow again and create more debt.

A study by Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI), a non-profit foundation that provide technical analytic for various public agencies, revealed that, in 2014, Thai farmers had an accumulated debt of 1.3222 Trillion Thai Baht as

displayed in the graph. Where 66% of Thai farmers were depend on loan. In addition, the poor farmers' debt is estimated to be about 142% of their income, while the well-to-do farmers hold about 63% debt of their total income.

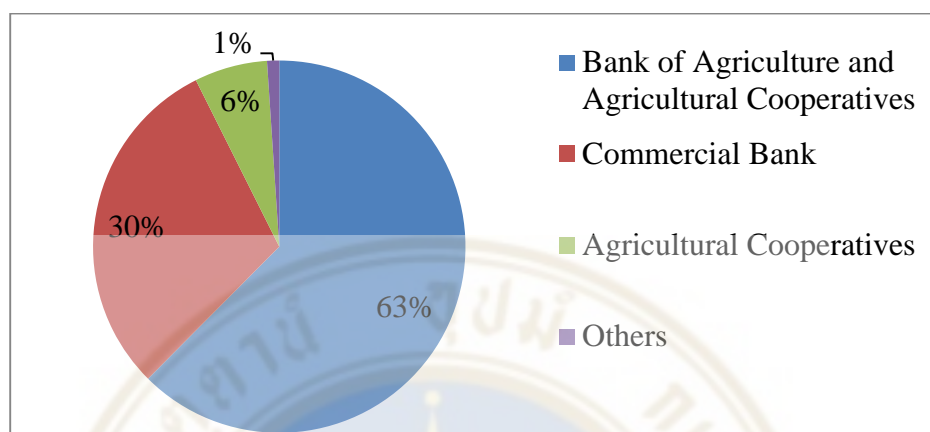


Figure 4.1 Thai farmer debts

Source: <https://tdri.or.th/2015/10/201>

Mekong Common's article provided an insight to the root cause of this vicious cycle by giving an example of the challenges that Thai farmers in Surin Province encountered. They found that they were confronting with health problem, low productivity due to 'modern farming' and accumulated debt. To support the above claims as to why farmers were facing with these issues, the Indochina Media Memorable foundation interviewed a farmer and it revealed that the modern farming was the root cause to the increasing debt.

"I cannot stop using chemicals, although I want to do it", said Boonsong, a worried farmer in the San Patong area of northern Thailand. They increase productivity and bring more income for us when crops prices are high. But they also create a disaster-debt. I have to keep spending more money on chemicals." (<http://immf-thailand.org/articles/thaifarmers.html>)

This information also supported by the interview in the case study. Farmer To openly discussed about the issue that Thai farmers were in debt because of the modern farming. It is true that in the early year the yield is high. However, as the soil become infertile and degraded, yield decreased and farmers need to rely more on fertilizer and chemical to increase yield.

There is a strong evidence of a clear beneficiary, farmers. This also meet the mission of the company; to alleviate the farmers' debt and to promote organic farming community. In addition, there is a need for the service as Thailand is an agricultural country.

Conclusion: This is a relevant factor that contribute to the success of FarmTo because there is a demand for such service from the identified beneficiary. The opportunity in which the company identified can solved farmer's problems by increase the profit margin through the reduction of the use of chemical by promoting organic farming. Since FarmTo was able to clearly identify the beneficiary, and that the problems in which it identified has a market, this obviously a factors that influence success of FarmTo.

4.2.1.2 Measured and defined impact

Farmer To gave us a successful case of how the business model has helped improve the quality and life of the farmers. He talked about how the company helped cheese maker named Khun Kai (In Thailand to address someone in a polite way we add 'Khun' in front of their names), to be able to sell Halloumi cheese that produces from organic milk again after she sold all the equipment's because there was no market to sell the cheese:

“When we met her, she already sold the cheese making tools. We asked if she could help us by continue making cheese and sell on FarmTo. She agreed. We also requested that in any cases that we could help her within two months, she needed to purchase back the tools and continue making the cheese. FarmTo succeed and Khun Kai is selling her cheese very well, she even hired more people because she needed more helping hand.”

A little about Khun Kai's background. She was a member of a Royal Project and she learned how to make cheese from there. She lived in the northern part of Thailand, Chiang Mai Province. The adjacent farmers who have organic dairy farm asked her to help purchase some milk from them at higher price. She agreed and used that milk to make cheese to help that organic dairy farm owner. However, she could not help long as there was no market for the cheese in Chiang Mai. She then forced to quit making cheese and find job. By the time that she met Farmer To, she had already sold all of her tools.

Conclusion: The measured and identified impact factor is classified into three forms. FarmTo offer the service that impact both culture and economic; capacity building initiative and package distribution initiatives. However, this factor only mention about the form of impact in which the social enterprise created through its service and product offer, but hardly has any connection to success. Therefore, it is irrelevant and should not be included into the list for factors that influence the success of social entrepreneurs

4.2.1.3 Large number of beneficiaries

Looking at the website of the company, there are only few products offer on the web. He gave the reason that the company is making the mobile application. There are 3,000 farmers who are currently interested in joining the company while more than 1,000 consumers sending in inquiries to the company. However, with small resources, the company cannot handle with the data input for 3,000 farmers. Therefore, the company need to wait until the mobile application ready to enable data input possible for 3,000 farmers.

The impact of which the company has created might not be as large as compare to other organizations, but there is an evidence of impact created by the venture. Since the application in which the company planned to implement has not been completed, Farmer To mentioned that only 500 farmers' life have been improved (through FarmTo's website).

Conclusion: The definition specified that the lowest number of individuals in which the company should create its impact on is fewer 10,000 individuals. According to the definition, the measurement in term of the of success rather than a factor that influence the success of social entrepreneurs. It also did not explain as a factor to success in both short-term and long-term. Therefore, this is rather irrelevant.

4.2.2 Implementation/ Survival

4.2.2.1 Acceptance by the community and involvement of the beneficiaries

When asked about the key stakeholders, the biggest concern of the company when initially started the business was the farmers. Even though, there has been an increase in young Thai farmers, however majority are still of older generation.

Therefore, they rejected the idea because they did not trust the company. The model itself is rather new, therefore they doubted the success of the business. The requirement in which the company ask may also invade privacy of some farmers as they were asked to welcome their customers and guests to their farms.

However, a good opportunity came as one farmer in the northern part of Thailand who has avocado plantation wanted to join FarmTo. The first lot of the produces were sold out at retail price. Farmer To claimed that the price of organic avocados that sold through FarmTo is 30% higher than the normal avocado available on the market. The success story of this farmer spread like wild fire within the village. Quickly, there were more than 10 families in the village that wanted to join FarmTo. As mentioned, number of farmers grew to more than 3,000 which currently outnumber the buyers. These long listed farmers will later be invited to join the mobile application which allows them to operate, share, and sell their products to end consumers. The application will be flexible and allow content to be created by farmers directly.

Conclusion: Failure to prove and communicate the possibility of idea can force FarmTo to fail at the start-up stage. As seen from the case, the unwillingness of farmers to work with FarmTo due to the lack of trust caused difficulty for FarmTo to deliver its ideas to other members in the community. Therefore, the acceptance from community is crucial for the establishment stage as well as the survival of the company. For the involvement of beneficiary, which in this case is a farmers, determine the success and failure of the company as well. Without them, FarmTo would not have products to offer to end consumers; FarmTo would not exist as an online market platform for organic farm produce. Therefore, this factor is important as a factor that influence success of social entrepreneurs.

4.2.2.2 Social capital

Social capital proved to be a very crucial for a small social enterprise like FarmTo. When asked Farmer To how he viewed the importance of such network, he agreed that it is very important.

At the initial trial stage, before these social entrepreneurs began their venture, they tested their business concept by making trial on Farmer To's farm, the productivity was low for organic farming due to the lack of knowledge and experience. Joining Young Smart Farmer Thailand allow them to gain knowledge quicker. The

mobile application that is development by the company is also the evidence of social capital gained through attending competition, which is another way to build network. Besides having another co-founder joined after the competition, the team also gained experts to advise and help them refine the business ideas. Farmer To mentioned that:

“Through competitions, we gain several connection with the top experts from Thailand to help us refine, guide and advice on our business as well as the business idea”

Conclusion: Social capital is place as a priority for FarmTo. According to the case, Farmer To sought helps through networks in which he gained from being a part of community, organization or competition. He did not stop building his network, but continue to grow it. Therefore, this prove to be vital and crucial factor for FarmTo. Thus is a relevant factor that influence success of social entrepreneurs in Thailand.

4.2.2.3 Appropriate level of embeddedness

High embeddedness is observed in this case. The level of “embeddedness” of the leadership team was both high and low throughout the different stages of development, depending on how one views the situation (Gumaste, 2010). One of the founder have organic farm. Prior to starting up the project, he had been acquire knowledge from farmers and by doing it himself. One of the co-founder’s parent also do organic lemon farming, therefore there is no doubt that there is a high embeddedness.

Currently, Farmer To is the farmer himself and has been selling his products on the website since the start. Therefore, he truly understand and have close relationship with farmers.

Conclusion: This factor can only be made possible with social capital. Therefore, it can be viewed as a related or similar factor to social capital because social capital also mentioned about the quality of the network a social entrepreneur has. Therefore, this factor should be drop from the list.

4.2.2.4 Sound financials and reliable source of funding

When asked about the financial situation of the company, it was surprising to learn that the company has done very well in managing the company finance. Farmer To mentioned that the company is profitable. He then mentioned that, the

associated cost relating to managing the company activities are salary for an administrator, and the cost of advertising for farmers. The seed funding came from the competitions.

As mentioned, the company received around 1,300,000 Thai Baht for seed funding the company. The co-founders also contribute some to the company. Asking why they still need to contribute, they explained that the investment is for the application which plan to launch in 2018. To complete the project, the company takes funds from competition, co-founders' investment, and profit from FarmTo.

Conclusion: It can be observed from the case that initial funding is crucial for social entrepreneurs to establish social venture. For FarmTo, it is hard to conclude that the company has a reliable source of funding because funding were obtain through competition. The lum-sum amount of funding that enabled this group of social entrepreneurs to kick-off their idea was from competition. The funding was, thus, an initial seed money for them, but unreliable as it is one-time source funding. The only reliable source of funding streamed from the company co-founders' contribution. Despite this, the company was able to survive due to the positive financial performance it has establish. Gumaste (2010) mentioned in his research that new venture could hardly secure reliable funding at the establishment stage. Therefore, this factor is essential, but only applicable for the survival of the organization

4.2.2.5 Dedication of the leadership team

All founders are dedicating to the company. Even though most of the co-founders still work for other company, they commit their time to develop the business together. One co-founder is appointed as a main dedicator because he has more time compare to others. For resources, they have contributed evenly.

Going for competition is not an easy task because preparation has to be made prior to each competition. For the past two years Farmer To had been responsible for participating in the competition. He also responsible for educating farmers and traveling to promote business in all region.

Conclusion: Social entrepreneurs themselves are the important factor. This especially applicable to FarmTo as there were only five members in the company, where four are the co-founder. Their dedication make the establishment possible despite tight working schedule from their daily work. Therefore, undoubtedly, this is a factor that influence the success of FarmTo.

4.2.2.6 Relevant work experience

There is no evidence which show that relevant work experience is applied in the business. However, working in the designing industry allows them to think out of the box.

Conclusion: Relevant experience may help reduce time spend on learning but not necessary a factor that influence success. As we can see from the case, the founders do not have any experience conducting businesses or were in the management field, but they were able to create the company and sustain it till today. Therefore, the past experience is irrelevant to the factors that influence the success of social entrepreneur.

4.2.2.7 Organized structure with well-defined responsibilities

They are four co-founders in the company. Each of them hold different responsibility. One of the co-founders who owns a restaurant is assigned as a strategic planner and public relation. Farmer To was assign to promote and attend competition. Another who owns a web designing company oversee the website development. The last person is the application developer, therefore oversee the mobile application development. Major issues were discussed amongst co-founders to make sure that they are all in the same direction.

Conclusion: It is difficult to gauge this factor from FarmTo's case as the company still consist of very few members. However, conflicts could occur because several co-founders were involved. Through well-defined responsibilities, all members are able to focus on doing their works, while organized structure facilitate the communication including who to report to who, and who is responsible for making decision of certain matter. Therefore, a relevant factor that influence the success.

4.2.3 Growth, Expansion, and Development

4.2.3.1 Emphasis on learning and improvement

For farmers who join the company, they do not only gain from selling products at retail price, getting advance payment and risk sharing but the farmers are educated to build their own brand, improve quality, and are advised to apply for quality assurance to further increase credibility, quality and reliability of the products to the required standards.

The company provide knowledge and encourage farmers to build their own brand. The company is willing to share information so that farmers can achieve the required standards for organic farming. Farmer To mentioned in the interview that, value added service and product are encourage, but there is a need to make sure that farmers are having a strong foundation; having their own funding and clear understanding of the standards to move to the next step. Farmer To also loves acquiring new knowledge. He would attend classes, talk to the expertise and look for answers himself. He then shared these knowledge to the farmers. To conclude, there is an evidence for the emphasis on learning and development.

Conclusion: In order for FarmTo to offer quality products to end-consumers, farmers are encouraged to improve their product quality up to the standards. FarmTo facilitate this through offering advice to farmers who want to learn. This includes branding of the products. This is important for FarmTo if it wants to sustainably grow as it is the factors to determine the number of farmers and products offering on FarmTo's website and mobile application. Therefore, this factor is essential for the sustainable growth for the company.

4.2.3.2 Long-term cooperation with other organizations

The company cooperated with university, social enterprise, and government departments to create, develop the company. The cooperation with university is for the development, test and research. The university also provides facility, resource, and advice to help FarmTo's farmers who are ready to build their brands to create packaging for their products.

For cooperation with other social enterprises, the company is looking to partner with those that support the work and concept of the company. For example an online market place for tourist, another famous social enterprise in Thailand, has invited the company to promote the farm stay activity on the website. With the help of this company, FarmTo's farmer can enjoy another source of income from tourism.

Organization like NIA (National Innovation Agency) and TCDC (Thailand Create & Design Center), both are Thai public organization, helped the company by giving advice and market opportunity. The continual cooperation allow FarmTo to stay up-to-date with the government policy, plan and trade promotion organized.

Conclusion: The long-term cooperation provides the opportunity for FarmTo to access in certain resources. However, it does not provide a solid prove that long-term cooperation is a factor that influence success. In addition, this can be viewed as a similar factor to social capital. Therefore, to avoid the duplication, it is should be exclude from the list.

4.2.3.3 Drive to expand and grow

The leaders have been working towards the goal they have set for their business plan. When asked Farmer To where they see themselves in the future, he wished that the company could transform the society's behavior. They are aiming to reach all the organic farmers in Thailand. They wish is that the company can gather these farmers into one place. The success will be to encourage farmers who is firm believer in moderm farming to change to organic farming. This is their dream as a social entrepreneurs.

To expand, they are focusing on giving the farmer authority to create their own content on the application that plan to be launched in 2018. They also look for investor who is willing to provide funding for them to promote and create value-added service between another social enterprises in ASEAN and nearby countries.

Conclusion: Even though Gumaste (2010) refer this to the application of the strategy to bring about the expansion and growth. However, this factor should be revised to 'having clear vision and mission' as it is factors that guide the company strategy. In addition, the drive for growth and expansion does not guarantee the success of the venture. Taking an example of FarmTo's case, the success is not evidence despite the drive for growth and expansion is presence. Therefore, this factor should not be included on the list.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

Success of social entrepreneurs are contributed by several factors. Even though, factors are divided according to the three criteria for success of social venture, but without a person who act upon it, the social venture might not be success.

To be successful social entrepreneur, one must succeed in leading the organization in which it has impact on social, able to create sustainability and scale through development and expansion. To achieve this success, we found that opportunity identified by social entrepreneur must be clear. In actual fact, this factor is quite similar to commercial entrepreneur but the distinction is that social entrepreneur include underprivileged and neglected to its social venture (Pervez et al., 2013). Like FarmTo, the goal is to help farmers to achieve financial stability, and provide distribution channel for their products.

For factors that influence the success of social entrepreneurs in Thailand, it can be concluded from the finding that that there are only seven factors from thirteen factors that are relevant to the success of social entrepreneurs as summarized in the table below.

Table 5.1 Factors that influence success of social entrepreneurs in Thailand

Factors that Influence Success of Social Entrepreneurs in Thailand		
Social Impacts	Implementation/ Survival	Growth, Expansion, and Development
(a) Presence of demonstrated need and identifiable group of beneficiary	(a) Acceptance by the community and involvement of the beneficiaries (b) Social capital (Structure capital, Relational capital, Cognitive capital) (d) Sound financials and reliable source of funding (e) Dedication of the leadership team (g) Organized structure with well-defined responsibilities	(a) Emphasis on learning and improvement

These factors are drawn from the case study of FarmTo. They are deemed as relevant factors that influence to the success of the company. However, there are several factors that the study did not take into account, for example, those proposed by Almeida (2010).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is not to pinpoint the exact factors but to study the successful case and derive, in general, the factors that influent the success of social entrepreneurs in Thailand. This is because one set of factors may work for FarmTo but may not for others.

5.2 Limitation in the Scope of the Study

The identified success factors is quite generic in term of application. In facts, there are still many other factors involve to the success of social entrepreneurs. The paper also does not cover different type of social entrepreneurs as only one social entrepreneur is interviewed in this case due to the time limitation of the study.

The company in the study is at its early stage. Even though there is an evidence showing that company help farmers to get out from the trap, but the plan in which the company has been working on has not yet been achieved.

5.3 Recommendation

This research is aimed to identify factors that contribute to the success of social entrepreneurs in Thailand. However, this is just only a first step in identifying the factors. For future research, I would recommend to base factors according to the stage of the social venture. Gumaste (2010) has done well in compiling the factors and group them according to the definition of social venture's success. However, there is a differential meaning to the success of social venture in each stage.

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Appendix A: Letter of Informed Consent

Letter of Informed Consent

Date... 17 / 03 / 2018

First name... ARTHIT Last name... JANNON THACAI Age... 38
 Current Address No. Road Sub-district
 District Province Postal code..... Tel. 099-124-1125
 E-mail address


I would like to state my informed consent to participate in the research project, entitled:

“... SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS : THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THEIR SUCCESS ...”

I acknowledge all information related to this research project including background, rationales, objectives, questionnaires, expected benefits and participative risks of this project, as well as the guidelines of prevention and expected participative compensation, if any. I have been clearly explained and answered for all issues and questions I have by the principal researcher of this project. I realize and aware of my rights and acquired all related information about the benefit and disadvantages of my research participation. I may withdraw from the project at any time with or without informing the researcher in advance, and without any further consequence of my withdrawal.

I agree that the researcher can use information from my interview to present to the public and/or to publish in scholarly journals and professional magazines.

With my understanding above, I therefore sign this letter of informed consent.

Signature ...  (Research participant)

(.....
)

Date... 17 / 03 / 18