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## AN EVALUATION OF THE READINESS OF COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE BRANDING IN SAMUT SONGKHRAM PROVINCE

WILAILUK MEEPRACHA<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the readiness of community enterprise branding. The sampling size was 415 participants, who were selected by a sample random sampling technique in Samut Songkhram province. The methodology used in the research was a questionnaire with a five-characteristics rating scale; confirmatory factor analysis was also used as a data analysing tool. The research results demonstrated five determinant factors: Context, Input, Process, Output and Outcome. Firstly, Context contained two indicators. Secondly, Input comprised five indicators. Thirdly, Process consisted of four indicators. Fourthly, Output contained two indicators. Finally, Outcome comprised two indicators. The overall evaluation of the project showed that the high aspect was the Context (= 4.54) followed by the Outcome (= 4.53) and the least aspect was input evaluation (= 4.33). Confirmatory factor analysis showed that the measurement model created by the researcher agreed with the empirical data by using goodness of fit measures of chi-square value was 85.353, p-value = 0.026, GFI = 0.988, AGFI = 0.979, RMSEA = 0.019, SRMR = 0.015, Construct Reliability: the value was 0.944 and the variance extracted: the value was 0.552.

**Keywords:** evaluation, community enterprise, readiness, branding

### INTRODUCTION

In 2001, the Thai government introduced the One Tambon One Product project with the intention that the project would encourage villagers to develop items for commercialisation by using local resources.

The economic crisis in 1997 manifested the weak basis of the Thai economy, which relied on foreign investment with managerial problems in many large enterprises. The country was seriously hit by the crisis and most affected people were those who were at grassroot level. However, this crisis was considered to have brought several changes to the Thai economy. After Thailand experienced the serious economic crisis, the government turned its attention to agricultural development. In 2001, the Thaksin government came up with many policies aiming to rehabilitate the rural economy. One policy that received nationwide attention was the “One Tambon One Product” (hereafter OTOP) project. This is the community business promotion project that aims to strengthen the grassroots economy by supporting cottage industries to add values to raw materials. The OTOP project was motivated by the “One Village One Product” movement, which was originally initiated in Oita prefecture, Japan. The Thai government has adopted and developed this scheme to stabilise the rural Thai economy. The OTOP project is designed to encourage rural people to identify their local resources and culture to add value and produce unique local specialties for marketing both domestically and internationally (Kusuma Panyee).

The literature review and survey in Samut Songkhram province found problems with OTOP problems in the areas of management, marketing, technology and network. The research focused on the issue of marketing. The product is not certified (Office of Research and Academic Services Uttaradit Province Uttaradit Rajabhat University, 2005) and sales channels is still limited (Bunch Gaysorn Wong Anuporn School, 2009). The important part is to make

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OTOP products fashionable; this requires the creation of branding because branding is the building of trust with employees, customers and stakeholders. In marketing terms, the definition of branding is the sum total of a company's value, including products, services, people, advertising, positioning and culture. Brands give potential clients a firm idea of what they are buying before they buy it, making the purchasing decision easier.

Researchers are interested in doing research into the evaluation readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province. The results of the research that can be developed into an innovative system to help in the decision making and planning, strategic development. The branding of the local community and the OTOP will influence the sustainable business model.

## METHODOLOGY

To conduct this study, the researcher followed the steps below:

1. Review literature related to documentation and theory.
2. Analyse and synthesise the information from the document to develop research framework and research tool.
3. Create questionnaire for data collection of this study according to the defined behaviours.
4. Verify the validity of the factors and indicators by content analysis after the indicators were summarised to confirm the indicators lists, returning to the three experts to verify the item objective congruence (IOC) with questionnaires. The results were calculated to show content validity.
5. Select the questions with the IOC value not less than 0.5 to create the questionnaire in the fieldwork.
6. Try out revised questionnaire with 30 people to test reliability of each question.
7. Analyse the reliability of the questionnaire through alpha coefficient value by Cronbach. The whole reliability of the questionnaire was higher than 0.70.
8. Collect data with the selected subjects. A sample of 415 data was collected through five branch scales. The empirical methods of confirmatory factor analysis were used in turn to extract the key factors driving all forms of readiness in branding.
9. Analyse the data.

## FINDINGS

1. The evaluation readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province. This is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The evaluation readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province.

Factor	$\bar{X}$	S.D	Level	No.
1. Context	4.54	.402	highest	1
2. Input	4.33	.353	high	5
3. Process	4.46	.420	high	4
4. Output	4.52	.417	highest	3
5. Outcome	4.53	.436	highest	2
Total	4.48	.167	high	

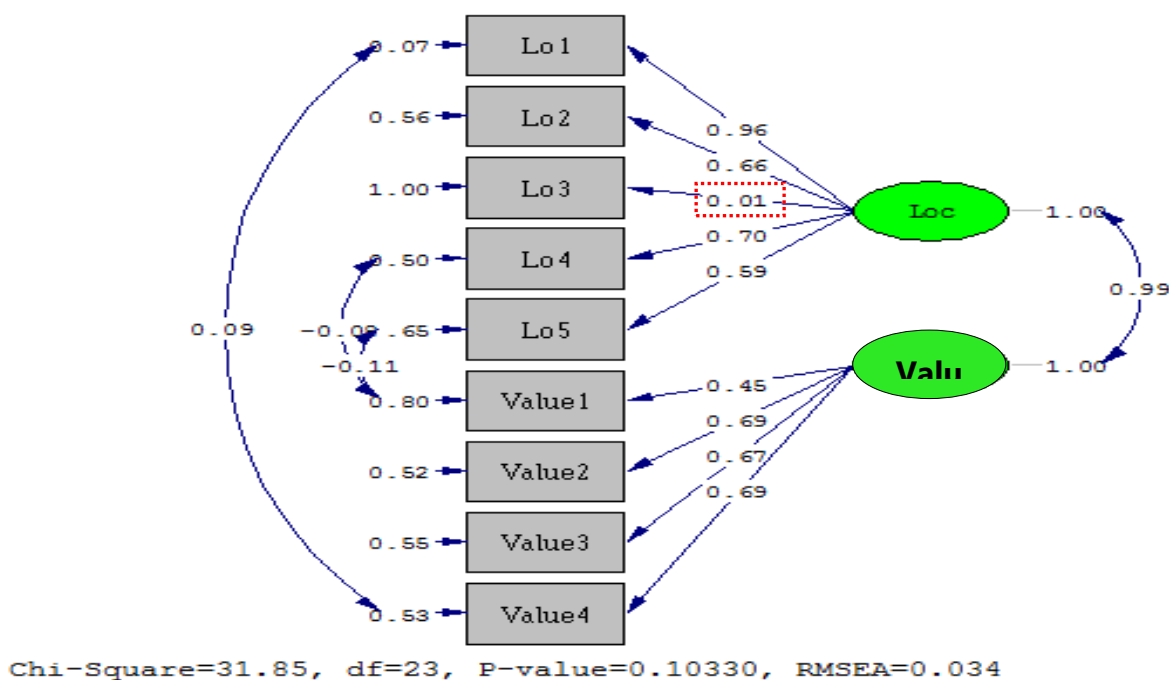
The evaluation readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province is shown. The overall evaluation of the project showed that the high aspect was the Context ( $\bar{X} = 4.54$ ), followed by the Outcome = 4.53) and the least aspect was input  $\bar{X}$  (evaluation =4.33).  $\bar{X}$  (

2. First Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis

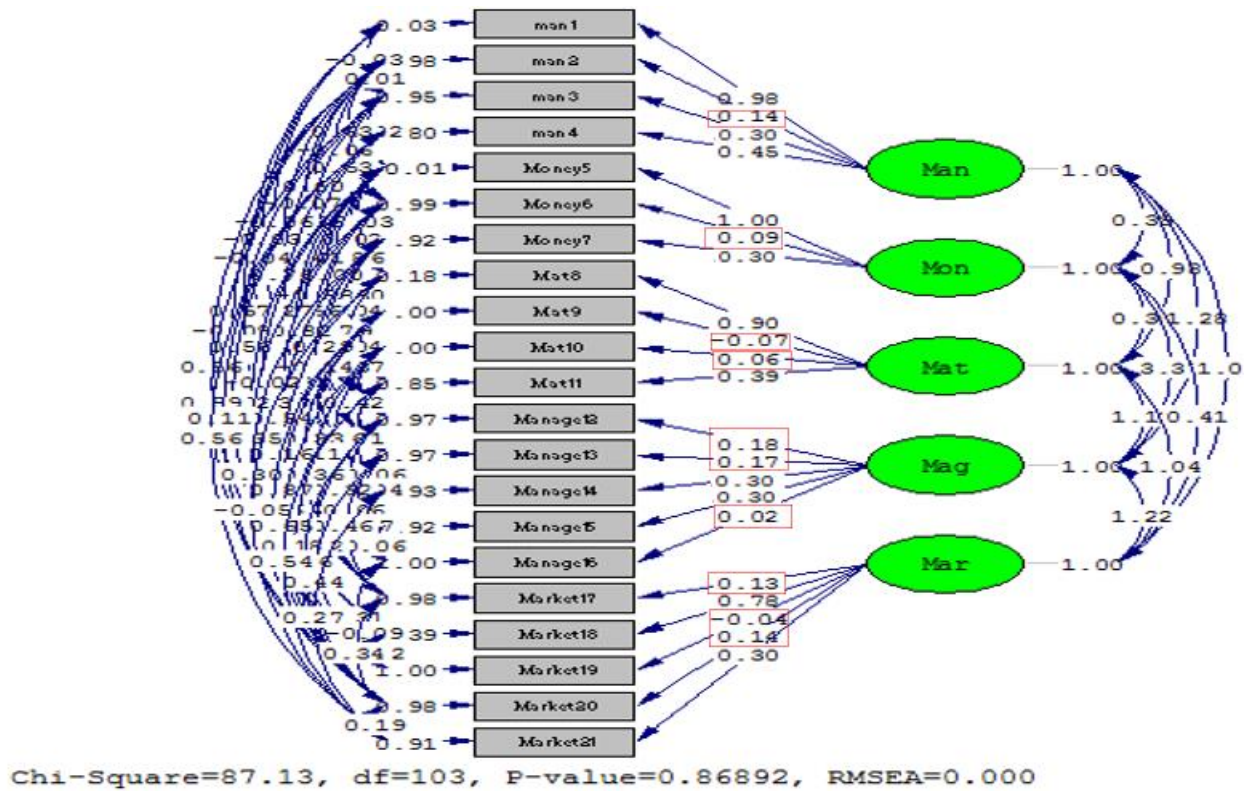
This was the index property test to identify whether it could be an actual representative of each factor or not. The researcher conducted a consistency test between the measurement model and empirical data by sampling the score derived from each factor.

- a. Factor of Context, the results shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Model of first order confirmatory factor analysis.

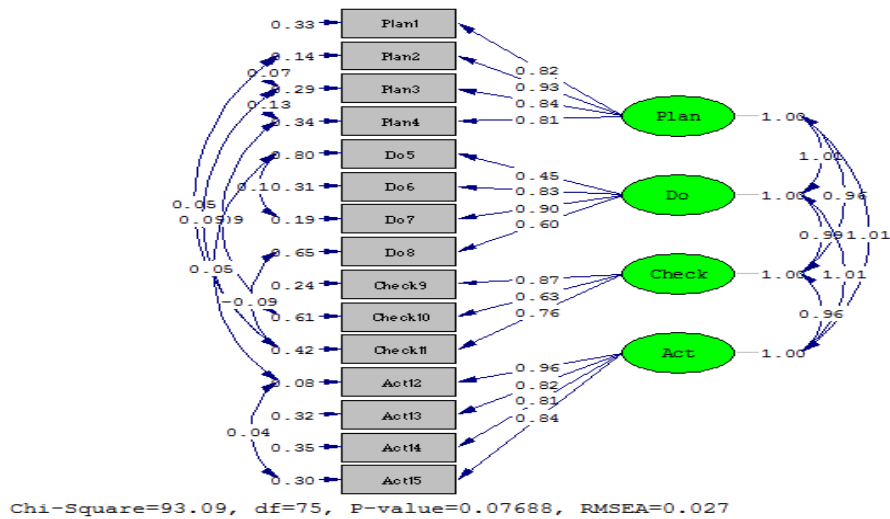


In terms of Factor of Context, there are two indicators of Location and Value. The result found that factor loading of Location, the indicator of “Located nearby the market assisting in production and sale” (Lo3) yielded a factor loading lower than the criteria, but other indicators yielded a factor loading higher than 0.30 and passed the criterion.



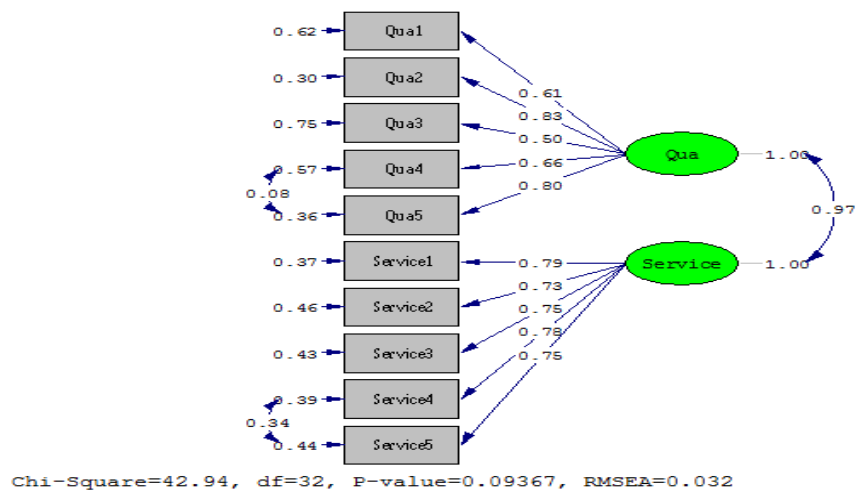
**Figure 2.** Model of first order confirmatory factor analysis. The evaluation readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province by the Input

In terms of Factor of Input, there are five indicators: Man, Money, Materials, Management and Marketing. The result found that factors and indicators yielding factor loading lower than criteria were: the factor of Man, the indicator of “Personnel has skill in performing assigned tasks” (Man2); the factor of Money, the indicator of “Peoples in community spent their personal budget in investment” (Money6); the factor of Materials, the indicators of “High-quality raw material selection process exists” (Mat9) and “Suitable maintenance, raw material and work equipment cleaning exists” (Mat10); the factor of Management, the indicators of “Suitable personnel and labour management exists” (Manage12); “Capital-based budget administration exists” (Manage13) and the indicator of “Marketing management is suitable to customer’s demands” (Manage16); the factor of Marketing, the indicator of “Demand of customers and markets was studied before product development” (Market17) and “Target groups were selected (Market19) and the production was conducted in demands of customers and markets basis” (Market20). The other factors and indicator yielded factor loading higher than 0.3 and passed the criteria.



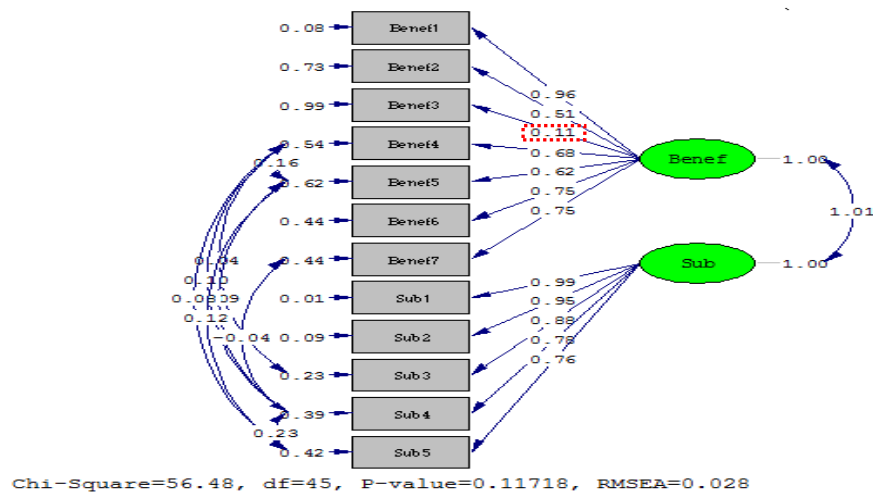
**Figure 3.** Model of the first order confirmatory factor analysis.

The evaluation readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province is presented by the Factor of Process. There are four indicators of Plan, Do, Check and Act. The result found that the factor loadings of all factors and indicators passed the criteria.



**Figure 4.** Model of first order confirmatory factor analysis.

The evaluation readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province is presented by Factor of Output. There are two indicators of Quality and Service. The result found that the factor loadings of all factors and indicators passed the criteria.



**Figure 5.** Model of first order confirmatory factor analysis.

The evaluation readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province by the Factor of Outcome is presented. There are two indicators of Benefit and Sustainability. The results showed that the factor and indicators which yielded the factor loading lower than the criteria were the factor of Benefit and the indicator of “Customers tell their friends to purchase products and services”. The other factors yielded factor loading higher than 0.30 and passed the criteria.

### 3. Second Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis

This analysis was conducted to test the properties of each factor to identify whether it could be the actual representative in terms of studying the latent variable or not. That variable was the readiness for community enterprise branding in Samut Songkhram province. The researcher conducted consistency test between the measurement model and empirical data by sampling the score derived from each factor. It was found that the structure of the readiness for community enterprise branding in Samut Songkhram province was consistent with empirical data, according to the criteria. It could be considered from the chi-square value of 85.353 ( $p$ -value = 0.026); the GFI value was 0.988; the AGFI value was 0.979; the RMSEA value was 0.019; and the SRMR value was 0.015. All factor loadings were positive and greater than 0.30 with a significance level of 0.01 for all variables. The overall measurement model of readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province yielded a construct reliability of 0.944; this meant that all observable variables were measuring the same latent variable. The variance extracted was 0.552, meaning that variance of observable variables was described by latent variable in the overall image of 55.2%. It was concluded that measurement model readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province was consistent with the empirical data.

## CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This research was able to develop a measurement model for the readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province which consisted of a total of five factors and 15 indicators. The factors were Context (two indicators), Input (five indicators), Process

(four indicators), Output (two indicators) and Outcome (two indicators). The overall results indicate the consistency with the theorems of: Stufflebeam (1971); Tyler (1950); Stake (1967); Kelly et al. (2003) and Garvin (1984); Grönroos (1984); and the indicator development concept of Chungsiripornpakorn (1999, p. 6–7), who stated that indicator development could be accomplished by using theoretical definitions. Development of indicators using empirical definitions was consistent with John Stone's concept (Boonjai Srisathitnaragoon 2000: 101–105); it is referenced by John Stone (1981, p. 18–23), who explained that index development requires knowledge and generality of index development method, variable selection method, factors used to define indicators, variable combination method and determination method of factor variable loading. Jetthana et al. (Jetthana Daeng-intawat and Sukum Moolmueang 2007, p. 27) have proposed a method for indicator development and determination which stated that indicator development requires necessary variable selection and there should be combination method/calculation method, determination of variable loading, creation or development concepts. Educational index consists of three methods: indicator development for usage, indicator development using theoretical provisions, and indicator development using empirical data. These research results were also consistent with the concept of assessment indicator determination of Suwimol Tirakanon (2000, p. 25), who deemed that the quality of assessment significantly depends on index development – the more index use, the greater the accuracy of assessment.

The evaluation readiness of community enterprises branding in Samut Songkhram province yielded high-level results. This was because the sample community was strong. That community develops products based on customer's demands, creates distinction and originality, features products, and its products have identity, in terms of the integration of existing wisdom and cumulative development using cutting-edge technologies and the products are finally able to be sold. The National Culture Commission (OTOP, 2006, p. 3) and Witthaya Mekhum (2012) stated that one of the main reasons that most of OTOP products have been certified by local government agency is because the local producers have been trained by the project to increase quality.

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