Participatory Communication in Community Enterprise Toward to Success of Coffee De Mong, Nan Province

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were to examine the factors of participatory communication in the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise in Nan Province and to study the factors of participatory communication in the community enterprise that affect the success of the De Mong Coffee brand. The research instrument used was a questionnaire to collect data from 80 members of the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise in Nan Province. Stepwise multiple regression analysis was employed. The research findings revealed that the factors of communication style, content, communication goals, and communication channels were at the highest level of agreement, while the audience was at a high level and the level of participation with the sender was moderate and low, respectively.

Meanwhile, it was found that recipient factors (β = 0.367) and communication goal factors (β = 0.245) influenced the success of the De Mong coffee brand, with a prediction coefficient of 23.4% (R^2 = .234). This reflected the ability of recipients to understand and apply the knowledge gained to maximize benefits, following clearly defined communication guidelines. This process contributes to the development of member potential and community operations, which can effectively lead to the success of the De Mong coffee brand.

Keywords: Participatory Communication; Community Enterprise; Coffee Brand

Introduction

Participatory communication is a key concept in driving the organization's mission, especially for community enterprises, which operate on an interdependent model. Furthermore, providing opportunities for community members to participate in all stages of operations, including sharing opinions, co-planning, and jointly deciding on the direction of community product and service development, helps highlight the strengths and create a unique identity for community products or services, enabling them to achieve market success. This aligns with the national strategy to enhance competitiveness and achieve sustainable stability, focusing on the entire agricultural sector throughout the process, in line with the national development plan's goal of "Thailand as a leading country in agricultural products and value-added processed agricultural products" (2023-2027) It also emphasizes the importance of farmer group formation to strengthen and increase income distribution opportunities for farmer groups, agricultural cooperatives, and community enterprises.

According to data from the Community Enterprise Promotion Division, Department of Agricultural Extension, Nan Province has over 1,290 community enterprises, with diverse offerings based on each community's strengths, such as weaving groups, silverwork groups, tourism groups, agricultural product processing groups, organic farming groups, and coffee cultivation groups. Coffee is a significant economic crop for the province. The unique aspect of Nan coffee is that it "creates forests," meaning coffee is grown interspersed among existing trees, resulting in Nan coffee beans having a unique aroma compared to beans exposed to direct sunlight or strong sun for an extended period (Barista Buddy, n.d) At the same time, coffee cultivation also helps restore forest areas and solve the problem of forest degradation caused by monoculture farming, as well as improve carbon sequestration efficiency in the area. A study on carbon sequestration in sample coffee-growing areas found that the Maneephruek area can sequester carbon equivalent to 14.90 tons/ha, demonstrating the effectiveness of promoting economic crops suitable for the area, which can help increase farmers' income while sustainably preserving the environment (Panumonwatee & Pampasit, 2023).

For the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise, Maneephruek is one of the famous coffee bean cultivation areas in Nan province. It started with the gathering of Hmong farmers living in Maneephruek village, Thung Chang district, Nan province. They adapted from single-crop farming to cultivating a high-value agricultural crop, "coffee," under the concept of forest conservation. Their production is characterized by a focus on natural methods, using biotechnical agricultural

processes to achieve GAP production standards. Additionally, the area is highly suitable for coffee cultivation because it is located on a mountain at an altitude of over 1,400 – 1,600 meters above sea level, with year–round humidity and volcanic soil rich in potassium (Department of Agricultural Extension News Center, 2021) and also connect the ethnic identity of the "Hmong tribe," which reflects stories, lifestyles, and culture thru the De Mung coffee brand products, making De Mung coffee products well–known among consumers and generating income for community enterprise members of 100,000 – 200,000 baht per year (Prachachat Business Online, 2019). They have also achieved success in coffee bean competitions, such as winning first place in the Thailand Specialty Coffee Awards 2021 and many other awards (Thailand Coffee Fest. 2021)

Based on the above, the researcher recognizes the importance of participatory communication in community enterprises and its impact on operational success. This study aims to reflect the effectiveness of communication and provide guidance for community enterprises, farmer groups, and interested organizations to use the results of this research as a basis for future internal communication efforts.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the factors of participatory communication within the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise in Nan Province.

2. To investigate the participatory communication factors that influence the success of the De Mong Coffee brand.

Literature Review

Concept of Participatory Communication

Participatory communication is a crucial communication process for community development because it allows members to access information exchange and freely express their opinions together, reflecting the needs of members in various aspects. This leads to the effective resolution of operational obstacles and fosters shared responsibility in planning community development pathways toward the set goals. Furthermore, participatory communication is a communication process with the primary goal of raising awareness of value and building confidence in the potential of members, as well as emphasizing and elevating shared responsibility in community development. This is achieved by balancing the communication process equally according to relevant factors (Kaewthep et al., 2000). In other words, communication thru the

community's main communicators, who possess communication skills, serve as credible role models, and are familiar to the recipients, who have the ability to interpret and understand the content, as well as having a positive attitude toward themselves and the communicators. This ensures accurate and effective information exchange and reduces the gap between communicators and recipients, increasing the level of participation among recipients. This is done by selecting communication formats that facilitate member participation, such as two-way communication, and by choosing communication channels that recipients are familiar with to provide access to information that aligns with community lifestyles and meets the recipients' current needs (Shaw, 2024).

Additionally, the democratic process in communication is central to participatory communication, which involves a diversity of participants in terms of respecting others' rights, listening to others' opinions, and supporting each other in various activities such as community consultations or meetings. This ensures a smooth exchange of ideas on topics of interest, allows members to express themselves confidently, and provides easy access to media, thereby enhancing their ability to reflect their needs and jointly build upon community development (Ut-Inkaew & Pothipairatana, 2023).

Based on the literature review above, participatory communication is therefore a communication process that focuses on raising self-awareness and building confidence by increasing opportunities for participation in the communication process based on relevant factors, in order to enhance responsibility and joint decision-making within the community. This is aimed at achieving development outcomes that concretely meet the set goals.

Concept of Success

The success of community enterprises lies in achieving operational goals under the leadership of the organization's leader, coupled with member participation in operations, as well as clear monitoring and evaluation of success. The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) concept by Kaplan and Norton (1996) is one tool for managing community enterprises toward success thru clear operational planning, building networks of members both inside and outside the community for knowledge exchange, and sustainable community development (Tupkrut et al., 2020). Additionally, it serves to evaluate the success of community enterprises, reflecting the effectiveness of the organization's operational processes and creating operational stability (Meesri, 2020) The four perspectives are as follows:

1. Financial Perspective is a success indicator that affects operations at various levels, comprising two key objectives: revenue growth and cost reduction. These metrics reflect operational efficiency across various levels of the organization.

2. Customer Perspective is about prioritizing and understanding customers, both in terms of good interpersonal service and in accepting feedback and taking enthusiastic action to make improvements. This is done to create satisfaction and meet expectations regarding service quality, based on the service quality success factors proposed by Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry (1990), which highlights the importance of meeting customer expectations to foster satisfaction and trust. (Thongkua & Promyoo, 2020)

3. Internal Business Process Perspective refers to the efficient planning and management of an organization with good cooperation among members in operations. Additionally, assigning roles and responsibilities to community members based on their expertise is a key success factor for community enterprises, ensuring smooth organizational management and developing the skills and knowledge of organizational members. (Chankamon et al., 2020)

4. Learning and Growth Perspective is the most important perspective because it focuses on the future of the organization and also contributes to operations meeting their objectives.

Therefore, the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) concept is a performance evaluation that can be applied to all types of businesses. The strength of this concept lies in utilizing internal group capabilities to evaluate performance in various areas. Each area must have a defined evaluation framework (Scorecard) consisting of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and emphasize the components of work, which include 1) Objectives, 2) Measurement, 3) Targets, and 4) Initiatives. (Boonyarasai & Jongsureyaphas, 2018).

Key Factors Derived from the Literature on Participatory Communication and Success

Based on a review of literature related to participatory communication and success factors, the factors used in this research can be summarized as follows:

1. Participatory Communication Factors

1.1) Sender refers to the role of the speaker in communication, characterized by leadership qualities, a positive attitude, and acceptance by members of the community enterprise. The sender possesses the knowledge and ability to access media for additional information, as well as good communication skills for effective message delivery.

1.2) Receiver means the role of the listener in communication, who has different knowledge or opinions from the sender. Therefore, the receiver should have relevant skills, expertise, and experience to facilitate interaction, exchange of ideas, or feedback in the communication process.

1.3) Message Content refers to the issues or topics of communication that meet the needs of enterprise members, aiming to foster understanding of these issues and encourage participation in communication to achieve the set communication goals.

1.4) Communication Channel refer to the means of conveying information to the recipient. Choosing good media must align with the lifestyle and familiarity of the community enterprise members to ensure clearer understanding from the communication.

1.5) Communication Format This refers to communication patterns with two-way communication, where information can flow in various directions depending on the status and issues involved. It is divided into horizontal communication and vertical communication, with a pseudo-participatory style. However, indirect communication participation occurs thru sending enterprise member representatives to participate in the communication process, and direct communication participation occurs when all members of the community enterprise participate in the communication process.

1.6) Level of Participation refers to the level of communication involvement, where personal factors such as age, education level, occupation, and income influence participation at all three levels: 1) audience/receiver/users 2) sender/producer and 3) planner and policymaker

1.7) The goal of communication means setting clear objectives for systematic communication planning that meets desired needs, and also aims for development at the individual, group, and community levels.

2. Success Factors

2.1) Financial Perspective refers to the success in increasing income that is stable and sufficient for the livelihoods of community enterprise members, as well as the financial management of the community enterprise.

2.2) Customer Perspective refers to success in retaining existing customers and acquiring new ones, resulting from prioritizing customers in terms of building credibility, trust, care, and meeting their needs.

2.3) Internal Process Perspective refers to the successful and efficient management of the enterprise, including the development of vision and organizational collaboration, as well as the

improvement of product quality standards for the sustainable development of the community enterprise as a whole.

2.4) Learning and Development Perspective refers to the success of the community enterprise in forming groups and building networks both within and outside the community to further the operations of the community enterprise.

Conceptual Framework

The researcher established the research framework by summarizing the key points from the literature review related to participatory communication factors and success factors. Additionally, demographic characteristics were included to study the fundamental components of community enterprises, with details as follows:

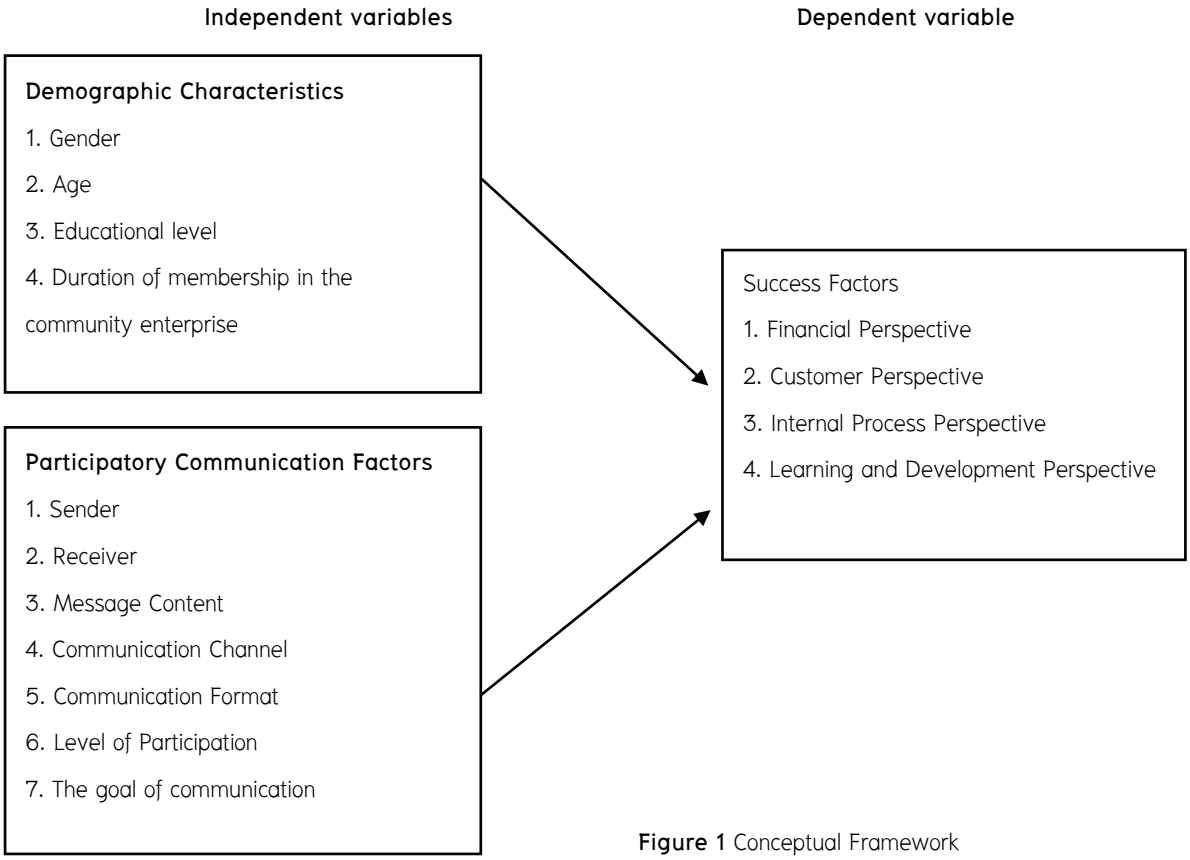


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research approach, with the methodology comprising the following components:

1. Population and Sample

The population in this study consisted of 100 members of the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise in Maneephruek Sub-district, Thung Chang District, Nan Province. The researcher determined the sample size using Krejcie and Morgan's ready-made table and calculation formulas, setting a confidence level of 95% and an acceptable margin of error of 5%, resulting in a sample size of 80 people. Therefore, purposive sampling was used for the 7 members of the community enterprise committee, and accidental sampling was used for the 73 members of the community enterprise.

2. Data Collection Instruments

The researcher used documentary research to study and gather information related to participatory communication factors and success factors, which were then used to develop research questions and design the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections as follows:

1) Section 1: Demographic Information (5 questions) Including gender, age, education level, position, and duration of community enterprise membership. The questions are multiple-choice.

2) Section 2: Communication components and communication behavior (5 questions) Covered sender, communication channel, communication frequency, participation frequency in the communication process, and receiver. The question format is multiple choice.

3) Section 3: Participatory communication component questionnaire (25 questions) This section includes questions on the sender, content, communication channels, receiver, communication style, level of participation, and communication goals. The questions are in a 5-point rating scale format, with the following scoring criteria: 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree.

4) Section 4: Success of the De Mong Coffee brand (12 questions) Including financial aspects, customer aspects, internal processes, and learning and development. The questions are in the form of a 5-point rating scale, with the following scoring criteria: 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree.

3. Instrument Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire was validated by three experts to determine the item-objective congruence index (IOC). The IOC values for all evaluation items were between 0.60 and 1.00, which is above the acceptable threshold of 0.50. Additionally, data was collected from a sample

of 30 individuals who were not part of the research sample to analyze the reliability coefficient using Cronbach's Alpha method. The reliability coefficient was found to be 0.926.

4. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher contacted the president of the community enterprise to explain the objectives and scope of the research. A field visit to the De Mung Coffee Community Enterprise in Nan Province was scheduled for data collection using questionnaires with 80 members of the De Mung Coffee Community Enterprise in Nan Province during October 2024, with a total data collection period of approximately 1 month.

5. Data Analysis

The researcher chose to use descriptive data analysis, employing basic statistics to analyze and present the data in the form of mean and standard deviation tables. This was done to describe the data collected from the sample group, including general information about the members of the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise in Nan Province, communication components and communication behaviors of the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise in Nan Province, participation in communication based on the components of participatory communication of the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise in Nan Province, and factors contributing to the success of the De Mong Coffee brand in Nan Province.

Additionally, inferential statistics were used to study sample data from statistical software for stepwise multiple regression analysis to examine the relationship between participatory communication factors and brand success factors for De Mong Coffee in Nan Province.

Human Research Ethics

This research was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang Bangkok: Project code EC-KMITL_67_112.

Research Results

1. General Information of the Members of the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise, Nan Province.

An analysis of demographic data from 80 respondents indicated the following:

The majority of members were male (56.3%), with the largest age group being 31 to 40 years (35%). Most respondents had attained a high school education (43.8%). In terms of roles within the enterprise, the vast majority were general members (91.3%), and 52.5% had been involved with the community enterprise for 1 to 3 years.

2 . Communication Components and Behavior in the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise.

The analysis of communication-related data revealed that the primary message sender was the community enterprise leader (40.8%). The most commonly used communication channel was meetings (42.9%). Regarding communication frequency, most members reported engaging in communication once per month (71.3%). The main message recipients were general members of the enterprise (96.3%). Furthermore, 67.5% of respondents stated that they actively participated in the communication process every time it occurred.

3. Participation in Communication Based on the Components of Participatory Communication.

The analysis of participation in communication, based on the seven components of participatory communication—namely, sender, message content, communication channels, receiver, communication format, level of participation, and communication objectives—revealed the following:

Table 1 Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Communication Participation Based on Participatory Communication Factor of the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise, Nan Province.

Participatory Communication Factor	$\overline{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation Level
1) Sender	2.48	.538	Low
2) Message Content	4.67	.493	Highest
3) Communication Channel	4.53	.302	Highest
4) Receiver	3.60	.661	High
5) Communication Format	4.69	.382	Highest
6) Level of Participation	2.64	.513	Moderate
7) Communication Objectives	4.64	.398	Highest

4. Success Factors of the De Mong Coffee Brand, Nan Province.

The analysis of the success factors of the De Mong Coffee brand in Nan Province covered four key dimensions: financial, customer, internal process, and learning and development. The findings are summarized as follows:

Table 2 Mean and Standard Deviation (S.D.) of Communication Participation Based on Success Factors of the De Mong Coffee Brand, Nan Province

Success Factor	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation Level
1) Financial Perspective	4.13	.694	High
2) Customer Perspective	3.67	.659	High
3) Internal Process Perspective	4.60	.463	Highest
4) Learning and Growth Perspective	4.32	.628	Highest

5. Multiple Regression Analysis

The researcher employed stepwise multiple regression analysis to examine the relationship between participatory communication factors and the success of the De Mong Coffee brand. The results are presented in the following:

Table 3 Multiple Correlation Coefficient (R) and Coefficient of Determination (R^2) of Factors Affecting the Success of the De Mong Coffee Brand, Nan Province

Model	R	R^2	Adj R^2	S.E.	F
1) Receiver	.421	.177	.166	.366	16.771
2) Receiver, Communication Objectives	.484	.234	.214	.355	11.782

Furthermore, the stepwise multiple regression analysis revealed the unstandardized coefficients (constant), standardized coefficients (β), and standard errors of prediction as shown in the following:

Table 4 Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis: Unstandardized Coefficients, Standardized Coefficients, and Standard Errors of Prediction

Model	B	S.E.	Beta (β)	t	Sig.
Constant	2.233	.484		4.617	.000
1) Receiver	.223	.062	.367	3.590	.001
2) Communication Objectives	.248	.103	.245	2.402	.019
R = .484, R Square = .234, Adjusted R Square = .214, F = 11.782					

From the table of results of the multiple regression coefficient Beta (β) analysis to prioritize the participatory communication factor variables that affect the success of the De Mong coffee brand in Nan Province, in descending order of importance, they are: Receiver (β = .367) and Communication Objectives (β = .245). Additionally, the results of the prediction coefficient (R^2 = .234) analysis, which is equivalent to 23.4%, can be summarized as follows: participatory

communication factors, namely Receiver and Communication Objectives, are significantly related to the success of the De Mong coffee brand in Nan Province at a statistical significance level of .05,

The regression equation for predicting brand success can be expressed as follows:

$\hat{Y}$ = 2.233 + 0.233(Receiver) + 0.248(Communication Objectives)

Discussions

In addressing Objective 1, which examined participatory communication factors within the De Mong Coffee Community Enterprise, the results indicate that among the seven components, communication format received the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 4.69, S.D. = .382). This finding highlights the regular opportunities for interaction among members and with leadership, emphasizing a participatory environment characterized by open dialogue, mutual consultation, and two-way information exchange. Such practices align with the principles of participatory and democratic communication, as emphasized by Servaes et al. (1996).

Furthermore, these findings resonate with the Strong Tambon Partnership Model, which underlines the importance of appropriate communication structures and media in enhancing community engagement and collective learning (Trakransart et al. 2024)

Other components that followed closely in importance were message content ($\bar{x}$ = 4.67), communication objectives ($\bar{x}$ = 4.64), and communication channels ($\bar{x}$ = 4.53). These results suggest that the enterprise-maintained message relevance, goal-oriented communication, and the use of accessible media platforms aligned with community lifestyles. This is in accordance with Khanthabua et al. (2024), who found that coffee farmers in Maneepruek Village accessed information primarily through meetings and direct communication with agricultural officers.

However, the factor that received the lowest level of agreement in the communication process was the sender ($\bar{x}$ = 2.48) and level of participation ($\bar{x}$ = 2.64). This reflects limitations in the communication process of community enterprises regarding leadership distribution, as the main senders are mostly community leaders or officials/employees of government or private agencies. This aligns with the study by Numthong (2015), which stated that the main senders in raising awareness of the basic rights of migrant child laborers in Samut Sakhon province are officials from relevant agencies. Meanwhile, most community members are receivers, with some members also playing the role of senders. To further enhance participatory communication capacity in the community, communication strategies such as meetings and training are chosen to reduce gaps and increase participation.

These findings are corroborated by Saisud (2017), whose study on public participation in agricultural development revealed similar trends—higher involvement in consultation and information-sharing, but limited empowerment in agenda-setting and decision-making.

Regarding Objective 2, which explored the participatory communication factors influencing the success of the De Mong Coffee brand, stepwise multiple regression analysis revealed that two factors—receiver (β = 0.367) and communication objectives (β = 0.245)—had a statistically significant impact on success (R^2 = 0.234). This emphasizes the importance of audience capacity, comprehension, and responsiveness in the communication process.

A clearly defined communication goal ensures strategic alignment and mutual understanding among stakeholders, contributing to long-term success. These findings align with Thummasaroch et al. (2024), who found that personnel with a positive attitude toward learning and effective message comprehension contributed significantly to organizational performance and flexibility.

Thus, receiver engagement and goal-oriented communication are critical to the operational efficiency and sustainability of community enterprises. These elements serve as enablers of strategic clarity, shared ownership, and knowledge flow—factors that contribute directly to success across the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) dimensions: financial, customer, internal processes, and learning and growth.

New Knowledge from Research

This study on participatory communication of community enterprises and its impact on the success of the De Mong Coffee brand in Nan Province has generated new knowledge regarding communication approaches within community enterprises that possess distinct ethnic identities. It was found that effective communication should emphasize the role of the receiver, particularly their ability to access, interpret, and apply information meaningfully. In parallel, the communication objectives, clearly defined by the community leaders or message senders, should provide direction while allowing members to freely express their opinions, leading to shared understanding and a unified course of action.

The study also identified communication limitations among certain members, particularly due to differences in education levels and age, which affected their confidence in expressing opinions. Although these members demonstrated a lower level of participation, they still adhered

to the community enterprise's agreements and received support from more experienced peers. This dynamic allowed the enterprise as a whole to continue progressing toward success.

Therefore, the research findings reflect the effectiveness of participatory communication in fostering unity among members, integrating shared ideas and cultural identity. The study provides a practical framework for developing internal communication processes in other community–based or ethnic enterprises seeking sustainable success.

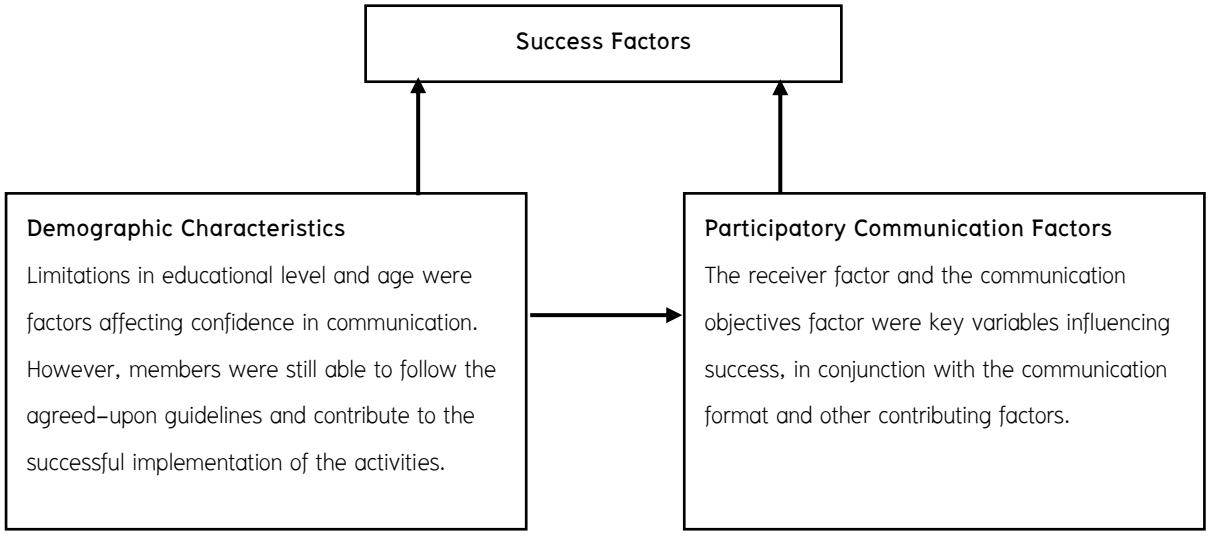


Figure 2 Knowledge from Research

Conclusion

The results of the research study on participatory communication in community enterprises and its impact on the success of the De Mong coffee brand in Nan province show that participatory communication in community enterprises plays a significant role in developing the potential of community members and the community's operational processes. This is achieved thru the support and cooperation of network organizations from both the public and private sectors, as well as networks of farmers themselves. The prominent elements of participatory communication include communication style, content, communication goals, and communication channels. However, the roles of the sender and the level of participation are still limited. Nevertheless, the results of the stepwise multiple regression analysis also found that the participatory communication elements of "receiver" and "communication goals" significantly impact brand success. This reflects the importance of setting clear goals and participatory listening in the internal communication process of the organization for future community operations. Therefore, promoting widespread

participatory communication and providing members with more opportunities for decision–making and free expression of opinions will help support the long–term success of community enterprises.

Suggestions

1. Recommendations for applying the research findings.

The research findings indicate that factors related to the audience and the goals of participatory communication are the most influential factors affecting the success of the De Mong coffee brand. Therefore, community enterprise leaders and relevant agencies should prioritize providing opportunities for the audience, which refers to community members, to participate in the community communication process. This includes allowing them to interact, ask questions, or express opinions to ensure continuous movement in the communication process. Clear communication planning and goals must be considered to create a positive communication atmosphere, stimulate members' interest and desire to participate, and reduce communication limitations arising from various conditions such as knowledge and language comprehension, so that members can receive accurate information, apply it, and take action according to the plan, leading to the continued success of the community.

2. Suggestions for future research.

This research reflects the effectiveness of participatory communication, which plays a significant role in the success and acceptance of community enterprises both within and outside the community. However, the success of the De Mung coffee brand or other community enterprises also involves factors beyond the scope of this research, such as marketing factors. Additionally, beside using questionnaires, qualitative research methods like interviews and observations can be employed to further clarify the study's findings.

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