

# A Study of Human Resource Capability for Enhancing Local Food-Processing Entrepreneur's Performance among Community-Based Enterprises

Taisith Kruasom<sup>1</sup>, Bussakorn Khumhome<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

*This research explores the human resource (HR) capabilities that reinforce performance and resilience in community-based enterprises (CBEs). Locally, the food-processing sector, specifically focusing on the provinces of Ubon Ratchathani, Yasothon, Amnat Charoen, and Si Sa Ket, serves as the focus of this study. Adopting a qualitative research methodology based on acceptable criteria, the researchers conducted three rounds of purposive sample selection. Ultimately, 16 CBEs comprising 43 key informants were included in the study. Categorical data were gathered through diverse methods to ensure data saturation and mitigate bias. The approaches of focus groups, observations, face-to-face interviews, and analysis of relevant documentation were ethically employed. Thematic and content analyses were used to examine the data within the framework of HR capability and operational performance among CBE members. The findings derived from HR capability and their contributions to firm performance rely on several critical aspects, such as the importance of employee training and development, leadership effectiveness, strategies for motivation and retention, fostering a supportive organizational culture, implementing strategic HR practices, adapting to new technologies, leveraging external HR services, adhering to regulatory standards, promoting gender equality and inclusivity, and understanding economic influences. This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of strategic HR management by contextualizing these internal (HR) and external (economy) practices within CBEs. Additionally, it offers an essential agenda for practical recommendations to HR professionals and policymakers with a shared goal of advancing local and national growth and development. Importantly, it emphasizes achieving sustainable growth for CBEs and enhancing resilience in the food-processing sector.*

**Keywords:** *Human Resource Capability, Community-Based Enterprises, Food Processing Sector, Performance.*

## Introduction

Industrial evolution is often segmented into eras, such as “Industry 1.0,” “Industry 2.0,” and beyond, each marking pivotal advancements in production methods and technologies. These phases signify the transformation of the global industrial landscape through notable technological and social change (Nahavandi, 2019; Porter & Heppelmann, 2017; Lee et al., 2018). Currently, the industry is seeing the advent of Industry 5.0, an era that prioritizes human-centered innovation and deeper collaboration between humans and technology (Zizic et al., 2022; Colombo et al., 2021; Yin et al., 2020). This latest phase emphasizes sustainable and human-focused growth alongside technological progress, building on earlier 1.0-4.0 stages that concentrated on enhancing efficiency and automation.

In Thailand, this industrial evolution aligns closely with the national development strategies articulated through phases from Thailand 1.0 to Thailand 4.0. These phases depict the country's transformation from traditional agriculture to low-productivity manufacturing, progressing towards a technology-intensive economy. The Thailand 4.0 initiative seeks to drive the economy toward innovation-fueled growth, particularly in advanced fields such as robotics, biotechnology, and digital technology (Gamboa-Rosales & López-Robles, 2023; Rujivanarom, 2020; Santipaporn et al., 2021). Central to this vision is human capital development; the Thai government has focused on educational investments and skill-building to cultivate a workforce capable of sustaining growth in an increasingly competitive global environment (Intarakumnerd Kanchoochat, 2023; Intarakumnerd, 2022).

Looking forward, Thailand 5.0 aims to further emphasize human-technology collaboration and personalized innovation, advocating for socially responsible technological progress (Özdemir & Hekim, 2018; Khan et al., 2022; Phongpaichit et al., 2023). Within this framework, human capital is viewed not only

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Management Science, Ubon Ratchathani University, Thailand

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Management Science, Ubon Ratchathani University, Thailand: bussakorn.k@ubu.ac.th (Corresponding Author)

as a pillar of economic advancement but also as an essential part of sustainable growth. Thus, continued investment in human resources through upskilling and reskilling is advantageous for supporting a workforce that is prepared for rapid technological change (Juntiwasiarakij, 2023; Suwankiri & Saratun, 2021).

The above statement pointed out the same goal related to the master policy called “Thailand's 20-Year National Strategy (2018–2037)”. Prasongmanee, Wannapiroon & Nilsook (2021), Pokpermddee (2020), and Iamtrakul & Klaylee (2019) have represented the informative details of this national strategy and some points sound to be significantly highlighted and emphasized in the rationale. This policy represents a significant effort to chart a long-term vision for the country's development. Rooted in the principles of the 2017 Constitution, it is the first framework in Thailand's history and political circumstances. The strategy's vision is ambitious: to guide the nation toward becoming "a developed country with security, prosperity, and sustainability." This concept has been drawn from the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy introduced by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. This philosophy emphasizes balanced development, resilience, and sustainability in economic and social contexts. Additionally, human resources is the one dimension embedded into this policy. It calls human capital development and aims to prioritize education, health, and skills enhancement to build a more capable and adaptable workforce. Economic strengthening, environmental management, and governance are also included in the policy. The framework aligns national priorities with global development trends, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring its relevance in a dynamic global environment (Arif et al., 2018; Bogiatzis et al., 2018).

According to the report of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2020), the document highlights the critical role and challenges of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Thailand. It placed a particular emphasis on the food-processing sector within the broader economic landscape. According to the economic metrics of CBEs that are not available in the government database, SMEs should be good representatives. In 2016, SMEs were a driving force in Thailand's economy, representing a staggering 99.7% of all enterprises and employing 78.5% of the private sector workforce. Specifically, the food-processing industry is a key part of the “manufacturing” category of SMEs, which comprises about 17.3% of all SMEs. CBEs indicate their substantial contribution to both economic productivity and employment.

CBEs, especially those involved in food processing, are crucial to local economies and often face challenges such as economic slowdowns, failed CBEs, and skill shortages that cannot fully facilitate sustainable development (Department of Industrial Promotion, 2023; Pongsiri, 2022). These challenges are intensified by external drivers or global shifts in the political, technological, economic, sociocultural, and environmental realms, causing higher adaptability among CBEs and SMEs to still be competitive and successful (Alvarez & Patel, 2016; Wiriyapinit, 2021; OCED, 2020).

On the way of selected cases, the purpose of this study is to explore key dimensions of the HR capability from performance presences in CBEs. Then, recommendations grounded and reflected on the cases will be explained such as how (strategic) human resource management can enhance the resilience and sustainability of the food procession sector, Thai CBEs. Geologically selected, CBEs are focused on four main economic provinces namely Ubon Ratchathani, Yasothon, Amnat Charoen, and Si Sa Ket. The further aims to navigate and align with Thailand's broader goals for sustainable and innovation-driven advancement. Crafting HR strategies through its capability suited to CBEs performance, recommendations to practitioners, and academic discussions propose actionable frameworks to support CBEs and further with SMEs journey relying on Thailand 5.0.

## Literature Review

### *General Information of Community-Based Enterprises (CBEs)*

### *Distinctions Between Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Community-Based Enterprises (CBEs)*

SMEs and CBEs are two critical, but distinct, components of Thailand's economy. SMEs, broadly categorized by metrics such as employee count, revenue, and asset size, operate across sectors, such as

manufacturing, retail, and services. They are primarily profit-driven, with a focus on scalability and competitiveness in the regional and national markets. While SMEs contribute substantially to local economies, their operations typically prioritize growth over community impact, with many expanding beyond local boundaries (Pongsiri and Singh, 2022; Somkid and Sakulrat, 2021; Maneewong et al., 2023).

In contrast, CBEs align economic activities with community welfare goals. Structurally distinct, CBEs often adopt cooperative models or remain family-owned, emphasizing social cohesion, sustainable practices, and cultural preservation in local areas. Commonly involved in agriculture, handicrafts, and eco-tourism, CBEs support local livelihoods by aligning their business with community resources and needs (Tanwattana, 2021; Worasit & Sittiwong, 2022; Kanjanar & Nopparat, 2023). Although CBEs meet the SME size criteria, their focus on community resilience and social responsibility differentiates them from that of traditional SMEs.

### **Economic Contribution of CBEs in Thailand**

Although SMEs contribute approximately 37.4% of Thailand's GDP, according to the Thai SME Association, the economic impact of CBEs within this category is more challenging to quantify. Unlike growth-oriented SMEs, CBEs aim to stabilize community economies, creating local employment and supporting traditional industries vital to rural economies (Chantachon & Rattanavadee, 2020; Naruemon & Santiphong, 2023; Wangboonkarn & Boonsri, 2021).

CBEs' activities in sectors such as agriculture, food processing, and handicrafts indirectly support GDP by sustaining rural economies, reducing urban migration, and preserving cultural heritage (Channarong, 2021; Intaraphong, 2020). However, their contributions are often difficult to measure at the national level because of their small scale and informal structures. Accurate estimation of the impact accurately would require focused regional and sectoral analyses that consider rural economic indicators and local consumption patterns (Runthanathip and Pansuwan, 2022).

### **Steps to Register a Community-Based Enterprise in Thailand**

In Thailand, the Ministry of Interior, particularly through its Community Development Department (CDD), serves a pivotal role in the support, establishment, registration, and advancement of Community-Based Enterprises (CBEs). The initiatives undertaken by the CDD are closely aligned with Thailand's overarching national development objectives, including the enhancement of local economies, poverty reduction, and the promotion of sustainable community growth (Lo & Janta, 2020; Cavite, Kerdsriserm & Suwanmaneepong, 2021).

Establishing a Community-Based Enterprise (CBE) in Thailand requires a structured registration process with a clear focus on the community's objective. First, forming a group or cooperative structure that typically involves at least 7–10 members, is essential to ensure collective ownership and community welfare, a fundamental distinction from traditional SMEs (Ratchanee & Channarong, 2021; Kanjanar & Nopparat, 2023).

After formation, CBEs specify their business activities which focus on sectors that align with community resources, such as agriculture and eco-tourism (Intaraphong, 2020; Tanwattana, 2021). Prospective CBEs then give registration documents at the Community Development Office within their provincial headquarters, outlining their business goals and community impact. This formal registration process enables CBEs to access government support such as training programs and funding, which are essential for their role in rural economic stability (Naruemon & Santiphong, 2023).

### **Benefits of Registering as a Community-Based Enterprise**

Registration as a CBE in Thailand provides many advantages that aid both growth and sustainability. CBEs gain access to government funding, including low-interest loans and grants, specifically distributed for community-centered development (Maneewong et al., 2021; Maneewong et al., 2023). This financial support enables CBEs to expand their operations while maintaining their commitment to local impacts. Registered

CBEs also benefit from skill development programs covering areas such as digital marketing and financial management, which improve their competitiveness (Kanjanar & Nopparat, 2021; Ratchanee & Nopparat, 2023).

Additionally, CBEs can participate in initiatives such as the One Tambon, One Product (OTOP) program, which promotes local products on a national scale. Through OTOP, CBEs boost their visibility, increase sales, and gain a platform to showcase locally made goods, reinforcing their economic viability while preserving cultural heritage (Somkid & Sakulrat, 2021; Chantachon & Rattanavadee, 2020). These advantages help CBEs to contribute significantly to Thailand's economic development by fostering resilience and supporting rural sustainability.

### Relevant Theoretical Perspectives

In the study of human resource (HR) capabilities for enhancing community-based enterprises (CBEs) in Thailand's food-processing sector, several core theories underpin the research framework, each contributing a unique perspective on managing HR effectively in this context. Human Capital Theory is a primary foundation, asserting that the skills, knowledge, and experience of employees constitute valuable assets that drive productivity and long-term organizational growth (Schultz, 1961). This theory is central to the study's examination of how investments in training and development can significantly improve the workforce quality in CBEs. By applying human capital theory, the research underscores the importance of viewing workforce development as essential for sustaining competitive advantage, particularly in rural, community-based settings where growth opportunities can be limited (Baptiste, 2001; Becker, 1964; Crook et al., 2011; Hatch & Dyer, 2004).

Additionally, the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm supports the study's emphasis on unique and specialized resources as the basis for competitive advantage. According to RBV, organizations that develop distinctive, valuable, and inimitable resources—such as a skilled and adaptable workforce—can achieve sustained competitiveness (Barney, 1991). This study aligns with RBV by focusing on HR strategies that cultivate unique skills and resilience among CBE employees, thus positioning these enterprises to thrive despite limited resources. This theory is especially relevant for CBEs where resource constraints need to maximize the value of human resources to support operational effectiveness and community impact (Koch & McGrath, 1996; Lado & Wilson, 1994; Wright, Dunford & Snell, 2001).

Motivation Theories, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, are also integral to the study, as they provide insights into what drives employee satisfaction and engagement (Maslow, 1943; Herzberg, 1959). The research applies these frameworks to inform HR practices like tailored compensation, benefits, and career development opportunities. These are designed to meet employees' diverse needs. These theories guide the study's approach to creating an engaging work environment that enhances retention and overall job satisfaction, which are particularly crucial in community-focused enterprises where employee stability and morale can directly impact organizational performance (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Gittel, Seidner & Wimbush, 2010; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Milkovich & Newman, 2008).

Social Exchange Theory further relates to the study by examining the reciprocal relationship between employers and employees. This theory suggests that positive treatment of employees, such as providing career advancement opportunities and recognition, fosters loyalty and engagement (Blau, 1964). The study uses this framework to explain how CBEs build commitment among workers, reinforcing a supportive work culture that encourages employees to contribute positively to the enterprise's success. This is particularly meaningful for CBEs, where a collaborative and supportive work environment is essential to sustaining community-driven goals (Bailey, 2012; Peredo & Chrisman, 2006; Somerville & McElwee, 2011; Spear, 2006)

The study also incorporates Contingency Theory, which emphasizes that HR practices must be tailored to specific organizational contexts rather than adopting a universal approach (Fiedler, 1967). This theory supports the study's focus on developing HR strategies customized for the unique needs of CBEs,

recognizing that each community enterprise operates under distinct social, cultural, and economic influences. By applying contingency theory, the study suggests that HR practices for CBEs should be adapted to reflect community values and address local challenges, enhancing their relevance and effectiveness in promoting resilience and growth (Lepak & Snell, 2002; Peredo & McLean, 2006; Wright & Snell, 1998; Zhang & Li, 2009).

Lastly, Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) is reflected in the study's alignment of HR practices with broader organizational and community objectives (Wright & McMahan, 1992). This approach integrates HR management with the enterprise's long-term goals, ensuring that workforce development efforts contribute to sustainable local development. By strategically aligning HR with the broader mission of fostering economic growth within Thai communities, the study emphasizes the role of SHRM in supporting community-based enterprises to achieve both operational and social objectives (Barney & Wright, 1998; Boxall & Purcell, 2003; Budhwar & Debrah, 2001; Lengnick-Hall, Beck & Lengnick-Hall, 2011).

Therefore, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing HR capabilities in CBEs, highlighting how personalized HR practices can drive sustainable growth, operational efficiency, and positive economic impact in Thailand's food-processing sector.

## Human Resource Management: Fundamental Concept and Theory Evolution

### Background

According to Wright & McMahan (1992), Human Resource Management (HRM) theory provides a foundational understanding of how organizations can effectively manage their workforce to achieve optimal performance. This field encompasses both classical and modern perspectives on employee management, emphasizing not only productivity but also the well-being and motivation of individuals within the organization (Boxall & Purcell, 2011).

Many well-known scholarly works conducted by Taylor (1911), Maslow (1943), Fayol (1949), and McGregor (1960), should be formerly very good guidelines. From its early focus on efficiency and structured processes, as seen in the work of Frederick Taylor and Henri Fayol, HRM has evolved to include more human-centric approaches, such as Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This evolution reflects the increasing recognition of the complex interplay between organizational systems, employee engagement, and the socio-economic forces that shape workplace dynamics (Barney, 1991).

Lastly, the concept related to this study, as shown in **Table 1**, concisely demonstrates the development of Human Resource Management (HRM) theory, exploring its foundational roots and progression to contemporary practices.

### Highlights of the Evolution of HRM Theory

The roots of HRM theory as mentioned additionally in **Table 2** return to early industrialization, a period when the workplace began to change dramatically. Classical management theories have arisen during this era, advocating structured, efficiency-driven methods. Frederick Taylor's Scientific Management led the way by suggesting that work processes should be meticulously optimized. Taylor's approach treats employees as resources to be organized for maximum productivity, laying the groundwork for future HR practices (Taylor, 1911). Henri Fayol and Max Weber expanded on these ideas, with Fayol emphasizing the essential managerial functions for success and Weber advocating bureaucratic systems to create stability and control (Fayol, 1949; Weber, 1947).

Recognizing the importance of the human side of work, the Human Relations Movement emerged, led by figures, such as Elton Mayo. His studies showed that employee productivity improved when workers felt valued and included (Mayo 1933). This approach influenced Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, which offered contrasting perspectives on worker motivation and supported participatory management



practices (McGregor 1960). Additionally, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory contribute to understanding motivation by emphasizing the importance of fulfilling employees' psychological needs to boost satisfaction and engagement (Maslow, 1943).

HRM theories can be grouped into several categories, each of which offers a unique approach to employee management. These categories encompass classical, behavioral, modern, and contemporary perspectives, each contributing to HRM's development of HRM and diverse practices (McGregor, 1960; Becker, 1964; Barney, 1991).

Technological advancements have profoundly impacted human resource management (HRM) practices, introducing tools that enable data-driven decision-making and enhancing employee engagement. For instance, people analytics allows organizations to make data-backed choices that improve recruitment, retention, and employee growth (Levenson, 2018). Furthermore, artificial intelligence (AI) supports HR functions by streamlining processes, assessing employee satisfaction, and boosting efficiency. These technologies contribute to the development of a more motivated and engaged workforce while also refining HR management practices.

## Conclusion

To conclude, HRM theory and concepts with the main ideas and sources of some novel works are continuously developed. Moreover, the data of Human Resource Management theory have evolved extensively in response to the shifting needs of both organizations and employees. The breadth of HRM models offers valuable insights into employee management and motivation. For organizations to thrive in a constantly changing environment, adopting contemporary strategies and using technology has become essential to fostering a productive and committed workforce (Denning, 2018; Boxall and Macky, 2009). Mastering HRM theory not only aids in achieving organizational goals but also enhances employee experiences, supporting sustainable success.

## Research Gaps: CBEs and HRM

The literature underscores the importance of CBEs in developing human resource capabilities to still be sustainable and competitive in an increasingly dynamic market. This transition aligns with the Resource-Based View (RBV) of firms, which proposes that an organization's distinct capabilities, beyond its tangible assets, are the primary determinants of its competitive advantage (Barney, 2001; Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). This view is further reinforced by scholars who emphasize that the dynamic coordination and application of these capabilities distinguish firms in terms of market positioning (Douglas, Jenkins, & Kennedy, 2012; Heine & Rindfleisch, 2013).

The shift in HRM practices within CBEs concerns not only adapting to competitive pressures but also transforming the workforce into a strategic asset. This shift is crucial for gaining a competitive edge, especially in settings where resources are constrained and market challenges are prevalent (Barney, 1991; de Pablos & Lytras, 2008). For Thai CBEs, enhancing their HR capabilities may lead to substantial improvements in operational effectiveness and market positioning.

Table 3 has been updated and shortened to highlight some key academic gaps and alternative contributions. Additional sources for further reading are provided. The lack of clarity and depth in the specialty context has motivated this research. The findings indicate that addressing these gaps could help us achieve our goals.

Inclusively, the existing literature provides a strong basis for investigating how human resource development affects the performance of community-based food-processing entrepreneurs in Thailand, especially in four provinces likely Ubon Ratchathani, Yasothon, Amnat Charoen, and Si Sa Ket. However, there is a significant need for focused research addressing the unique HR challenges these enterprises encounter. This study aims alternatively to show customized HR practices that promote skill enhancement, leadership development, technology adoption, and workforce well-being. Such practices can offer practical solutions

to strengthen the resilience, adaptability, and competitiveness of these businesses in both local and international markets. Bridging these gaps will not only support operational sustainability but also contribute to broader economic resilience within these communities.

**Table 1** Key Concept and Theory of HRM

HRM Theory/Concept	Main Idea	Application in HR Practices	Illustration of Novel Works
Human Capital Theory	Employees skills, knowledge, and experience are valuable assets that increase productivity.	Justify investments in training and development as long-term growth strategies; improve workforce quality and competitive advantage.	Authors/Year: Becker (1994) Title: Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education
Resource-Based View (RBV)	Unique, valuable, and hard-to-replace resources, including human capital, drive competitive advantage.	Prioritize recruiting and retaining specialized talent; develop employees' unique skills to create a sustainable competitive edge.	Authors/Year: Barney (1991) Title: Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage
Motivation Theories	Focus on understanding what drives employee motivation (e.g., Maslow, Herzberg).	Design compensation, benefits, and development opportunities to fulfill various employee needs, enhancing satisfaction and retention.	Authors/Year: Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman (1959) Title: The motivation to work Authors/Year: Maslow (1943) Title: A theory of human motivation
Equity Theory	Employees evaluate fairness by comparing their input-output ratios with those of others.	Ensure fairness in pay, rewards, and recognition to maintain morale and reduce turnover; promote transparent reward systems.	Authors/Year: Adams (1965) Title: Inequity in social exchange: In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), <i>Advances in experimental social psychology</i>
Contingency Theory	There is no universal HRM approach; strategies should fit specific organizational contexts.	To optimize effectiveness, tailor HR practices to industry needs, organizational culture, or specific departmental requirements.	Authors/Year: Donaldson (2001) Title: The contingency theory of organizations: Sage
Strategic HRM (SHRM)	Aligns HRM strategies with the organization's long-term goals and business strategy.	Integrate HR planning with business strategy; HR works proactively with leadership to forecast needs and develop skills critical to business success.	Authors/Year: Wright & McMahan (1992) Title: Theoretical perspectives for strategic human resource management.

HRM Theory/Concept	Main Idea	Application in HR Practices	Illustration of Novel Works
Psychological Contract Theory	Focus on the unspoken expectations between employees and employers (trust, mutual respect).	Foster a positive psychological contract through transparency and effective communication; manage employee expectations to improve commitment and job satisfaction.	Authors/Year: Rousseau (1989). Title: Psychological and implied contracts in organizations.
Social Exchange Theory	Relationships are based on a reciprocal exchange of benefits and contributions.	Create reward and recognition programs to strengthen positive exchanges; provide job security and career growth to encourage employee loyalty.	Authors/Year: Blau (1964) Title: Exchange and power in social life
Behavioral Perspective	HR practices shape employees' behaviors and attitudes, which impact performance.	Design training, performance appraisals, and rewards that encourage desired behaviors, such as teamwork, innovation, or customer focus.	Authors/Year: Boudreau & Ramstad (2005) Title: Talentship, talent segmentation, and sustainability: A new HR decision science paradigm for a new strategy definition
Job Design Theory	Well-designed jobs (e.g., skill variety, autonomy) can increase motivation and satisfaction.	Use models like the Job Characteristics Model to design roles that are engaging and motivating; and increase job satisfaction and performance through job enrichment.	Authors/Year: Hackman & Oldham (1976) Title: Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory.

**Table 2** Evolution of Human Resources Management Theory

Category	Key Theories/Models	Description	Notable Citations
I. Classical HR Management	Scientific Management (Frederick Taylor)	Focuses on optimizing work processes for maximum efficiency. Employees are viewed as resources.	Taylor (1911)
	Administrative Management (Henri Fayol)	Emphasizes managerial functions: planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling.	Fayol (1949)
	Bureaucratic Theory (Max Weber)	Proposes a structured, rule-based system with a hierarchy for efficiency and consistency.	Weber (1947)



II. Behavioral HR Theories	Human Relations Movement (Elton Mayo)	Highlights the importance of social factors; productivity increases when employees feel valued.	Mayo (1933)
	Theory X and Theory Y (Douglas McGregor)	Contrasting views of employees; Theory Y promotes participative practices.	McGregor (1960)
	Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	Conceptualizes needs from basic to self-actualization; fulfillment leads to engagement.	Maslow (1943)
	Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory	Distinguish between hygiene factors (prevent dissatisfaction) and motivators (increase satisfaction).	Herzberg (1966)
III. Modern HR Management Theories	Resource-Based View (RBV)	Employees as key resources for competitive advantage; focuses on unique skills and abilities.	Barney (1991)
	Human Capital Theory	Views employee skills as capital; emphasizes training and long-term investment.	Becker (1964)
	Social Exchange Theory	Explains reciprocal relationships; positive treatment leads to employee loyalty and engagement.	Blau (1964)
	Contingency Theory	Advocates for tailored HR practices based on unique organizational variables.	Fiedler (1964)
	Motivation Theories	Includes Self-Determination Theory and Goal-Setting Theory; focuses on autonomy and goal alignment.	Deci & Ryan (2000)
IV. Contemporary Approaches	Strategic HR Management	Aligns HR practices with long-term business goals and strategies.	Wright & Boswell (2002)
	High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS)	Enhances employee abilities and motivation through participatory practices.	Boxall & Macky (2009)
	Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Theory	Fosters diverse workplaces to enhance innovation and performance.	Roberson (2006)
	Employee Engagement and Well-being	Focuses on holistic health, work-life balance, and positive work culture.	Kahn (1990)
	Agile HR and Flexibility	Advocates for adaptability and employee empowerment in dynamic environments.	Denning (2018)
V. Technology in HR	Data-Driven HR and People Analytics	Uses analytics for evidence-based decision-making in HR practices.	Levenson (2018)
	Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Automation	Integrates AI tools for recruiting, monitoring, and training; enhances employee satisfaction measurement.	Bock (2015)

**Table 3** Research Gaps: Community-Based Enterprises and Human Resource Management

Gap Issues	Explanation	Contribution	Gaps identification	References
I. Customized HR Strategies for Skill Development and Retention in CBEs	Existing HR strategies often don't address specific skill gaps or retention challenges in Thai CBEs, particularly in traditional sectors like food processing, limiting long-term sustainability.	Developing tailored HR frameworks that align with the specific operational needs of CBEs, thus enhancing workforce capabilities, improving productivity, and reducing turnover rates.	Literature review and analysis of sector-specific HR needs in Thai CBEs; case study comparisons across CBEs in various provinces.	Barney (1991); Boxall & Purcell (2011); Srivastava & Nguyen (2022); Teece et al. (1997)
II. Integrating Technology in HR Practices to Boost Efficiency and Market Reach	Limited access to digital HR tools (e.g., for recruitment, and training) prevents CBEs from scaling operations effectively. Research lacks insights on affordable tech solutions tailored to CBEs.	Developing cost-effective, technology-integrated HR models to enhance CBE efficiency and market access; potential for piloting digital strategies that fit the scale of small enterprises.	Field studies on digital literacy and technology access within CBEs; analysis of best practices from tech-enabled SMEs.	Boxall & Macky (2009); de Pablos & Lytras (2008); Gilley & Rasheed (2004); Levenson (2018); Mas-Verdu et al. (2015)
III. Community Engagement and Localized Leadership Development	Many CBEs lack access to leadership training that balances local cultural needs with strategic decision-making; existing models don't fully support culturally embedded leadership.	Identifying culturally relevant leadership models that enhance both community ties and strategic capabilities, fostering resilience and improved positioning of CBEs	Analysis of current leadership models and cultural impacts; interviews with community leaders in rural CBEs.	Avolio et al. (2009); Bass (1990); Geier (2016) Maslow (1943); McGregor (1960)

Gap Issues	Explanation	Contribution	Gaps identification	References
		within local markets.		
IV. Enhancing Workforce Motivation and Well-being in Resource-Limited CBEs	Resource constraints prevent CBEs from implementing formal well-being programs, affecting motivation, retention, and productivity. Few studies explore affordable well-being strategies for CBEs.	Research into low-cost, culturally adaptable well-being practices to support employee satisfaction and reduce turnover, stabilizing the workforce in CBEs and promoting sustainable growth.	Surveys and qualitative studies on employee well-being and turnover in CBEs; assessment of HR practices in low-resource settings.	Cameron & Quinn (2011); Chen & Zhang (2019); Gagné & Deci (2005); Herzberg (1966); Lin & Hsu (2010);
V. Regulatory and Policy Support for HR Development in CBEs	Policies supporting HR are often designed for larger firms and lack accessibility or applicability for CBEs. Many CBEs are not aware of government-sponsored training or incentives for skill growth.	Examination of policy alignment to support CBEs with accessible HR-focused incentives, helping HR development through targeted training programs and regulatory support frameworks.	Policy analysis on HR incentives and accessibility; interviews with CBE managers on awareness of support programs.	Intaraphong (2020); Chantachon & Rattanavadee (2020); Kanjanar & Nopparat (2023); Roberson (2006); Maneewong & Puttanachai (2023)

## Research Methodology

### Research Design

This qualitative case study explores in-depth, context-specific phenomena related to CBEs in northeast Thailand. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for the rich collection of detailed data directly from respondents, capturing their experiences and interactions authentically (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). By following an inductive approach, this study enables the identification of patterns and themes that naturally emerge from the data. This methodology aligns well with case study frameworks suggested by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) and relates to Yin (1984, 1989, 1994, 2003, 2014), which advocate for its effectiveness in analyzing and describing complex social and organizational environments.

### Selection of Participants/Key Informants

In this research, cases most relevant to the study's objectives were purposively sampled from a pool, based on relevance, freedom, and the richness of the data (Boddy, 2016; Kim & Glinow, 2017). The condition was set to verify participants commonly under the research boundary and theoretical framework. Then, sixteen CBEs or 48 key informants were firstly selected based on the acceptable criteria of: (1) having five years of minimum operation as a sign of stability; (2) receiving awards or recognition within the community, which signifies sustainability quality and performance; and (3) finding evidence of the involvement of active stakeholders as manifested by heavy participation of community members. In arriving at these selection criteria, Patton's work was considered helpful in ensuring that chosen enterprises were representative of the community-based model (Patton, 2002). However, following the ethical aspects, the number of participants is available excluded by considering individual inconvenience, satisfaction, and the last minute of the final decision.

### Demographics and Recruitment

These selected CBEs were dispersed across the northeastern Thai provinces of Ubon Ratchathani, Yasothon, Amnat Charoen, and Si Sa Ket. This region is indeed renowned for its deep-rooted tradition and is well-known in food processing at the grassroots level. According to the Gross Provincial Product (GPP) per capita data in 2020 for provinces in the Northeastern region of Thailand, Sisaket Province had the highest GPP per capita among this group, amounting to 80,747 Baht per person. This was followed by Amnat Charoen, with a GPP per capita of 72,573 Baht, and Ubon Ratchathani with a GPP per capita of 74,408 Baht. Yasothon Province had the lowest GPP per capita in this group, at 65,254 Baht. These figures reflect disparities in development levels and income across the provinces in Northeastern Thailand (National Statistical Office, 2020). In general, GPP is not related to size and also number of CBEs in each province. The potential selected provinces are fundamentally explored in case study research (Santipolvut, 2015; Sang-arun, 2013; Bui & Preechametta, 2019; Naprathansuk, 2017; Chemnasiri, 2013).

Three rounds were encountered to obtain the CBEs and key informants. Start with an area survey on the registered CBEs database and assess the qualification through the criteria. The second step is an official invitation for fellow volunteers. The authors contact the headers of all CBEs and provide the necessary information by site visit, telephone, and access to social media platforms. With longer friendships and familiar networks between universities, researchers, and the community, our contact is in a comfortable meeting. Moreover, with the help of CBEs' headers, communication with members is informative and effective. Adequate and clear information is organized underneath how to prepare yourself before joining, what to do, and the benefits of volunteering. For instance, the volunteers who join this research project will gain new experiences, expand their social network, make meaningful connections, and know how to develop their CBEs.

### Data Collection Methods

Data collection employed a multi-method strategy, integrating semi-structured interviews (as outlined by Kvale, 2007), focus group discussions (following the framework of Krueger & Casey, 2015), direct

observations, and document review. This combination of methods ensures robust triangulation, thereby enhancing the study's validity and offering comprehensive insights from diverse perspectives related to the research questions.

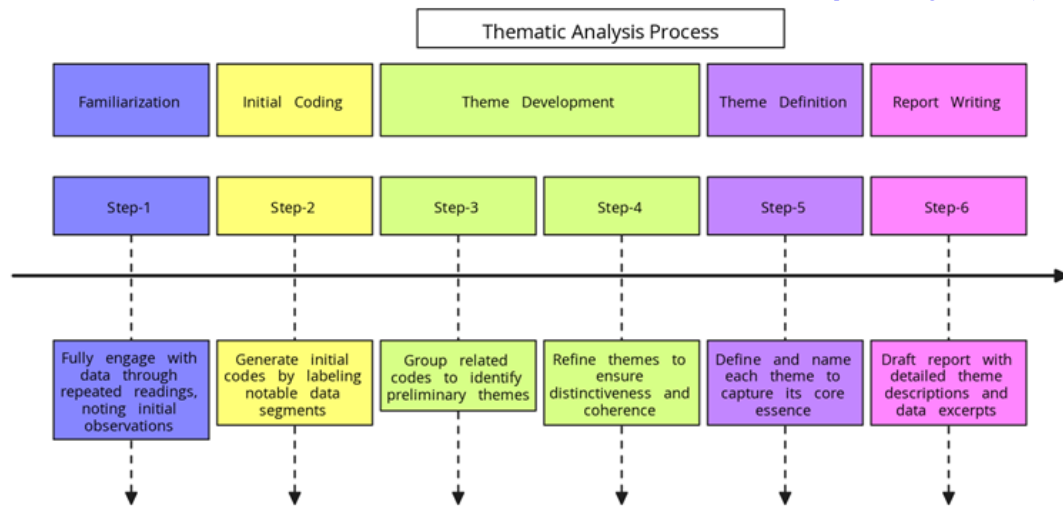
To optimize engagement, meetings should be scheduled at times that are convenient and minimally disruptive, avoiding peak workload periods or times of low customer demand. Equally, researchers must consider participants' availability and personal schedules. Clear and relaxed communication is critical—participants should receive relevant information about the study, an explanation of the research process from initiation to conclusion, and regular updates on progress to maintain transparency and trust.

- **Focus Groups:** These were done at community centers, and other accessible community meeting points; they lasted for about 1.5 hours ( $\pm 30$  mins) and facilitated discussions on topics related to performance, HR practices, community relations, and sustainability. This method thus added the component of group dynamics, showing what opinions the participants shared, and where many agreed to differ. The atmosphere is controlled for relaxation and comfort with a mix of Thai and local languages (Esan). Respectively on individual time, camera from smartphone and tape recording are ethically requested allowances.
- **Observations:** Observations occurred in valid locations, such as meeting rooms or factory floors, which contextualized the data from interviews and focus groups. Field notes were made about the setting the cultural practices adhered to and the interaction of participants. Some points are seen and understood more deeply by observation.
- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews in the face-to-face format allowed further development of issues that connected and linked the participants' experiences within the CBEs. This method is used to complete some cases of unclear from focus group discussion. Each interview, approximately 30-45 minutes in length, used a protocol for guidance but allowed the development of topics organically as they flowed. Tape recording is the main helpful equipment that is ethically permitted to use.
- **Document Analysis:** Organizational records, yearly operational planning and policy documents, and public resources and media (e.g. photo, exhibition, trophy, certificate) associated with each CBE supplemented this data by adding historical and contextual information that helped further flesh out understanding of each enterprise's operations and community impact.

## Data Analysis

To monitor our qualitative data, at the end of the day, the authors and professional helpers help to manage the data. We divided and assigned the functions and responsibilities for team members such as transcribed, proofreading, and meaning detection with the local language (Esan). Files and documents are recorded systematically and kept in different confidential sources. The saturation of data is systematically observed. The thematic and content analysis presented in Figure 1 was conducted using a systematic coding strategy to identify the central themes within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Neuendorf, 2017). Challenging data were condensed into patterns through three coding phases: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding, which ultimately led to conclusions for the study. This coding sequence illustrates a systematic exploration of qualitative data, moving from fragmentation (open coding) to synthesis (selective coding) (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It ensures that the central narrative—HR practices and community involvement in CBEs—is grounded in data while providing an analytically rigorous framework.





**Figure 1** Thematic Analysis Process (Authors)

To be a more clear understanding, the simplified visual of **Table 4** together helpfully with **Figure 2** and **Figure 3** presents the summarization of the thematic analysis procedure mainly in step and process perspective.

**Table 4** Summary of Thematic Analysis Procedure

Step	Process
Step 1: Familiarization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transcribe interview data from Esan (a language spoken in northeastern Thailand) into Thai consistently after each interview session. Professional language experts should be invited to ensure accurate translation.</li> <li>▪ Review the transcribed data multiple times, carefully reading each session or day's entries.</li> <li>▪ Take notes on your initial observations during the first few readings. This could include notable themes, recurring phrases, emotional undertones, or unexpected patterns in the responses.</li> </ul>
Step 2: Initial Coding	Generate initial codes by labeling notable data segments.
Step 3: Theme Development	Group related codes to identify preliminary themes.
Step 4: Refining the Themes	Refine themes to ensure they are distinctive and coherent.
Step 5: Defining Themes	Define and name each theme to capture its essence.
Step 6: Writing the Report	Write a detailed report based on identified themes and data quotations.

The themes from the analysis of the interview content are displayed in Figure 2.



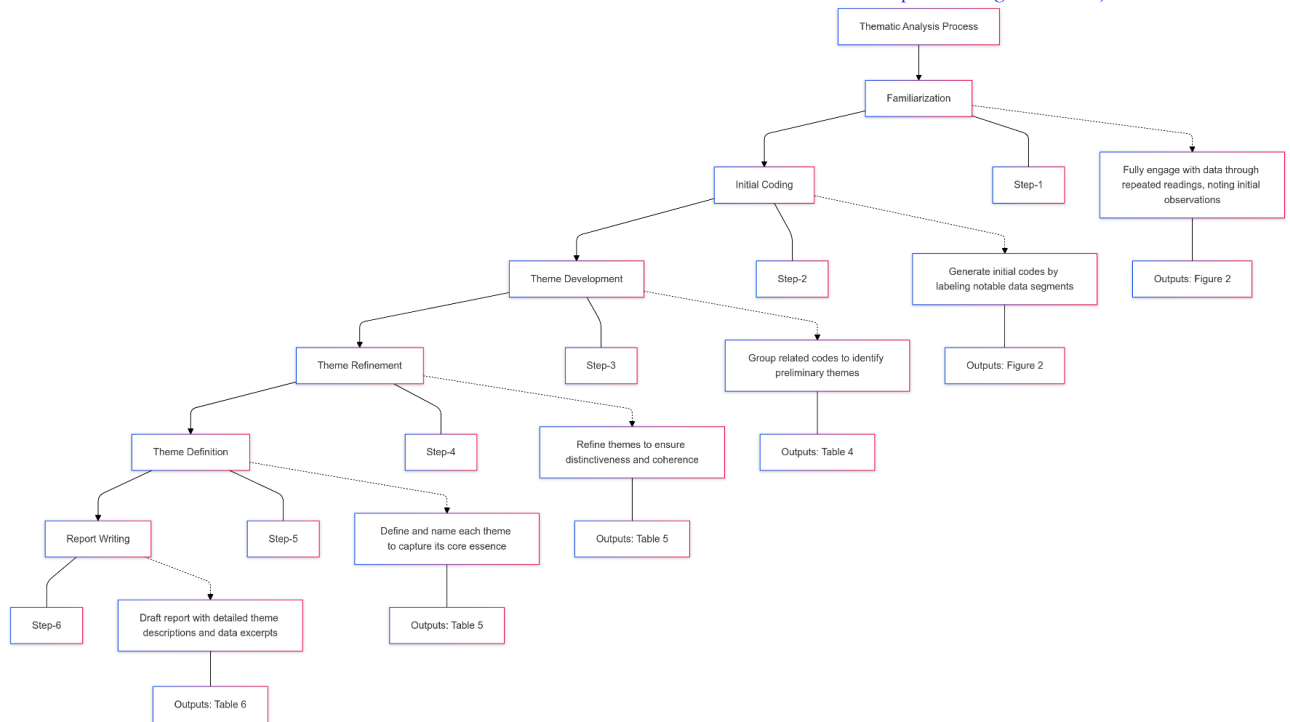


Figure 3 Steps of Thematic Analysis Process and Outputs (Authors)

## Research Findings

**Key Findings:** The following section summarizes the key findings from a study examining human resource (HR) capabilities in community-oriented food-processing businesses located in the provinces of Ubon Ratchathani, Yasothon, Amnat Charoen, and Si Sa Ket. The representative of **Table 5** reveals key themes, aims, and key definitions from the study on HR capabilities. These help to obtain the main themes and highlight how specific HR practices contribute to improved enterprise performance and sustainability. Lastly, **Table**

**6** comes with Themes and Content/Sub-themes. These led us to follow the research methodology that was formerly planned effectively.

Table 5 Key themes, aims, and key definition from the study on HR capabilities in community-based food-processing enterprises

Theme	Aims	Key Definition
Impact of Training and Development	Assess how targeted training programs improve skills, safety, and operational efficiency.	Custom training reduces learning curves, enhances safety, broadens skills, and improves job satisfaction, productivity, and workflow optimization.
Role of Leadership Skills	Evaluate how leadership impacts communication, decision-making, and teamwork within the enterprise.	Strong leadership with clear communication and collaborative decision-making reduces conflict and boosts team engagement and productivity.
Employee Motivation and Retention Strategies	Investigate retention methods, including recognition and compensation.	Recognition programs and structured career paths enhance workforce stability and commitment, supporting sustained enterprise growth.

Theme	Aims	Key Definition
Influence of Organizational Culture	Examine the impact of a positive culture on teamwork, innovation, and community alignment.	Respectful, inclusive culture enhances job satisfaction, and productivity, and aligns enterprise values with community expectations.
Adaptation of HR Practices	Explore customization of HR policies to meet community-specific needs.	Flexible HR policies improve job satisfaction and cohesiveness, facilitating work-life balance and community engagement.
Technological Adaptation and Training	Assess how technology adoption and training affect productivity and quality.	Advanced technology and corresponding training streamline workflows, reduce errors, and improve product quality, supporting competitive advantage.
Impact of External HR Services	Evaluate the benefits of outsourcing HR functions for resource management.	Outsourcing recruitment, payrolling, and compliance frees resources for strategic priorities and attracts new talent.
Effect of Regulatory Compliance on HR Practices	Assess the role of compliance in morale, safety, and market reputation.	Compliance with standards strengthens market reputation, and internal trust, and supports expansion into broader markets.
Gender and Inclusivity in the Workplace	Investigate the benefits of diversity and inclusivity in workplace dynamics.	An inclusive workplace fosters collaboration, and creativity, and improves employee satisfaction, enhancing business strategies and team dynamics.
Economic Impact	Examine regional economic effects of improved HR capabilities.	Enhanced HR practices contribute to job creation, higher wages, and economic stability within the local community, supporting overall growth.

**Table 6** Themes and Content/Sub-themes

Theme	Content/Sub-themes
Impact of Training and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Personalized training enhances skills in CBEs.</li> <li>- Focus areas: food safety, equipment operation, efficient production.</li> <li>- Custom programs boost effectiveness.</li> <li>- Increases productivity and standards compliance.</li> </ul>
Role of Leadership Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Core skills: communication, decision-making, team leadership.</li> <li>- Positive impact on business success through strong leadership.</li> <li>- Elevates morale and team engagement.</li> </ul>
Employee Motivation and Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognition programs, competitive compensation, career progression.</li> <li>- Enhances loyalty and skill retention.</li> <li>- Incentive programs support an achievement-focused culture.</li> </ul>
Influence of Organizational Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Core values: respect, inclusivity, teamwork.</li> <li>- Boosts productivity and engagement.</li> <li>- Strengthens market reputation and community alignment.</li> </ul>
Adaptation of HR Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Custom HR policies reflecting community needs.</li> <li>- Flexible work arrangements and community-focused initiatives.</li> <li>- Increases employee satisfaction and workplace connections.</li> </ul>
Technological Adaptation and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integration of advanced tech and training for efficiency.</li> <li>- Reduces production time, improves product quality.</li> <li>- Technology as a competitive edge.</li> </ul>

Theme	Content/Sub-themes
Impact of External HR Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outsourcing streamlines focus on core activities.</li> <li>- Efficiency in recruitment, payroll, compliance.</li> <li>- Expert HR support boosts productivity.</li> </ul>
Effect of Regulatory Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commitment to standards enhances reputation.</li> <li>- Improves safety and morale.</li> <li>- Compliance aids in market access.</li> </ul>
Gender and Inclusivity in Workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversity strengthens teamwork and creativity.</li> <li>- Increases job satisfaction.</li> <li>- Promotes a forward-thinking culture.</li> </ul>
Economic Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HR practices support local employment and wage growth.</li> <li>- Contributes to community stability and resilience.</li> <li>- Positively impacts regional growth and development.</li> </ul>

### Demographical Information of Cases and Key Informants

Table 7 overviews community-based enterprises (CBEs) across four provinces: Ubon Ratchathani, Yasothon, Amnat Charoen, and Si Sa Ket. Of the 24 CBEs evaluated, 16 (67%) met the qualification criteria. Membership included 161 individuals, with 43 key informants selected for the final round, predominantly female (77%). Key informants had an average of 9.5 years of experience, and the CBEs operated for 12.75 years. Informants were aged 30–65 (avg. 52.25 years), with education levels ranging from primary to high school, and some with bachelor's degrees. Monthly household incomes averaged 10,375 THB, with variations across provinces. This data highlights regional dynamics in qualification, demographics, and economic conditions of CBEs.

**Table 7** General Information of The Cases and Key Informants

Provincial Location of CBEs	Number of Qualified CBEs: @ 1 <sup>st</sup> Round		Total Members (person); @ 2 <sup>nd</sup> Round		Exact Number of Key Informants: @ Final Round	Gender (Male : Female)	Avg. Working Experience Year at CBEs	Avg. Operation Year of CBEs	Age (Min - Max: Avg)	Education Level (Lower - Upper)	Household Income (Monthly $\cong$ THB Avg)
	Total	Pass	Total	Pass							
Ubon Ratchathani	6	4 (67%)	12 (42%)	12 (29%)	12	3 : 9	7	13	35 - 60 : 46	Primary - Bachelors	10,000
Yasothon	5	3 (60%)	10 (30%)	10 (33%)	10	2 : 8	12	11	33 - 55 : 52	Primary - High School	8,500
Amnat Charoen	7	5 (71%)	15 (45%)	15 (33%)	13	4 : 9	9	15	30 - 65 : 57	Primary - High School	11,000



		% )		% )							
Si Sa Ket	6	4 (6 7 %) )	4 4	11 (2 5 %) )	8	1 : 7	10	12	32 - 58 : 54	Primary - High School	12,000
Summa ry	2 4	16	1 6 1	48	43 (100%)	23 : 77 (%)	9.5 years (avg)	<b>12.75</b> years (avg)	30 - 65 : <b>52.25</b>	Primary – High School	10,375 THB (avg)

### Remark: Summary Explanation

- Provincial Location helps identify the geographical distribution of CBEs, facilitating region-specific analysis.
- Qualified CBEs (1st round) reflect the initial screening process of enterprises meeting inclusion criteria.
- Members and Key Informants reveal participation trends and sampling consistency throughout the study phases.
- Proportion between males and females, The percentage of males is less than females as common members in CBEs.
- Avg. Working and Operation Years provide insights into the maturity and stability of CBEs.
- Age and Education Level highlight demographic patterns, indicating workforce characteristics.
- Household Income offers socio-economic context about the members' livelihoods.

### Findings Interpretation

#### Impact of Training and Development

CBEs place significant emphasis on developing customized training initiatives that provide employees with the skills necessary to excel in their roles. These programs are key to ensuring robust food safety standards, effective equipment handling, and streamlined production processes. Tailored training helps new team members acclimate faster, reinforces strict adherence to safety guidelines, and diversifies employees' competencies, leading to higher job satisfaction and reducing the risk of operational errors. As a result, these efforts drive measurable improvements in productivity, regulatory compliance, and overall operational effectiveness.

"At our organization, keeping everyone safe is our top priority. We make sure every team member gets special training, not just to meet the rules, but to really build a culture where safety and cleanliness are second nature."

#### Role of Leadership Skills

Strong leadership skills play a pivotal role in shaping a company's success. Leaders who demonstrate effective communication, make informed decisions, and foster productive team management directly influence positive business outcomes. Regular team meetings, data-driven decision-making, and a collaborative approach enhance internal communication, reduce conflicts, and elevate employee engagement and morale.

“Thanks to our leader's inspiring guidance, our company has made big strides forward. Her motivational approach has played a key role in driving our teams to be more productive.”

### **Employee Motivation and Retention Strategies**

Strategies to improve motivation and retention—such as recognition programs, competitive pay structures, and clear career advancement opportunities—are essential for maintaining a dedicated workforce. Recognizing and rewarding employee contributions ensures the retention of crucial skills within the organization, leading to stability and sustained growth.

"Adding performance incentives has created a culture of success here. It motivates our team to not only hit their targets but go beyond them. You can see their enthusiasm in the great results they achieve."

### **Influence of Organizational Culture**

A supportive organizational culture encourages teamwork, innovation, and high productivity. Companies that promote values of respect, inclusivity, and collaboration increase employee engagement and align their objectives with broader community values. This cultural alignment strengthens the company's reputation in the local market and fosters a meaningful connection to the community.

"With our inclusive and supportive work culture, job satisfaction has gone up a lot. People feel valued, which has led to better productivity and a stronger, more united team."

### **Adaptation of HR Practices**

Adjusting HR policies to the specific needs of community-oriented businesses has had a positive impact on employee satisfaction and commitment. Flexible scheduling, engagement in community initiatives, and policies that address unique local challenges have created a more connected and effective workplace.

"Our flexible scheduling options have empowered employees to balance personal responsibilities with work commitments, enhancing overall morale and job satisfaction."

### **Technological Adaptation and Training**

Incorporating cutting-edge technology, along with thorough employee training, has streamlined operations, shortened production times, and improved product quality. This technological evolution is essential for staying competitive in the marketplace.

"By bringing in advanced equipment and focusing on targeted staff training, we've boosted our efficiency, which means we're consistently delivering high-quality products."

### **Impact of External HR Services**

Outsourcing specific HR functions has allowed companies to focus on key business strategies, leading to optimized resource use and organizational growth. External HR ability has played a crucial role in simplifying recruitment, payroll, and compliance tasks.

"Outsourcing our recruitment has brought in a fresh wave of talent, adding new energy that has reinvigorated our team's dynamics and boosted productivity."

### **Effect of Regulatory Compliance on HR Practices**

Meeting both local and international regulatory standards has bolstered company reputations, lifted employee morale, and opened doors to larger markets. Compliance not only ensures operational safety but also builds consumer trust.

"Sticking to industry standards has boosted our reputation with customers and greatly improved our internal safety measures."

### **Gender and Inclusivity in the Workplace**

Promoting diversity and inclusivity leads to stronger teamwork, creativity, and employee satisfaction. A commitment to an inclusive environment has cultivated a more dynamic workplace and attracted a wider range of talent.

"Our commitment to inclusivity has enhanced our team dynamics, adding diverse perspectives that make our business strategies even stronger."

### **Economic Impact**

Enhancing HR practices has positively impacted the region, contributing to job creation, increased wages, and economic stability. These practices extend their benefits beyond the company, supporting the economic growth of the local community.

"Our growth, driven by stronger HR capabilities, has directly created local jobs and supported economic stability."

In conclusion, the study underscores the critical role of well-executed HR strategies in achieving operational excellence and strategic growth for community-based enterprises. The findings suggest that combining focused training, strong leadership, and inclusive HR practices can drive sustainable development and foster a positive economic impact within the community.

## **Discussion**

### **Impact of Training and Development**

Training and development are essential in equipping employees with the skills necessary for operational efficiency within community-based enterprises (CBEs). Training tailored to specific tasks and safety protocols enhances both employee competency and job satisfaction, leading to operational efficiency (Nguyen & Tran, 2022; Johnson, 2024; Brown et al., 2024). This is particularly important in sectors prioritizing safety and hygiene, where adherence to safety standards mitigates risks and fosters a strong safety culture. Future research could explore the longitudinal effects of training investments on employee retention and cross-sector comparisons to figure out if training impacts vary by industry type or business scale (Singh & Roy, 2023; Hernandez & Lee, 2023).

### **Role of Leadership Skills**

Leadership significantly influences organizational effectiveness by promoting a culture of communication, decision-making, and collaboration. Leaders who embody these qualities not only guide their teams to achieve business goals but also improve morale and productivity through positive reinforcement and goal alignment (Gibson et al., 2024; Singh & Roy, 2023; Nguyen & Chen, 2023). Interview data highlights that motivational leadership styles can lead to measurable improvements in productivity (Taylor & Williams, 2024). Further exploration is needed to assess the correlation between leadership styles and performance metrics, such as turnover rates or employee engagement scores, to quantify leadership's direct impact on organizational success.

### **Employee Motivation and Retention Strategies**

Employee motivation and retention strategies are pivotal in sustaining a skilled workforce. Recognition programs, competitive salaries, and career advancement opportunities are critical to fostering a culture of achievement and loyalty (Miller & Johnson, 2024; Smith, 2023; Stewart et al., 2024). Motivated employees are more likely to perform well and remain with the organization for extended periods, which aligns with broader human resource literature (Singh & Patel, 2024). Future studies could examine which combination of incentives—financial versus non-financial—yields the highest impact on retention across different demographics or job roles (Alvarez, 2023).

### **Influence of Organizational Culture**

A supportive and inclusive organizational culture is pivotal for promoting teamwork and productivity. CBEs that cultivate respect, inclusivity, and collaboration not only benefit from enhanced employee engagement but also align more closely with community values, reinforcing the company's local reputation (Taylor et al., 2024; Alvarez, 2023; Ahmed & Li, 2024). This leads to both tangible gains (e.g., productivity) and intangible benefits (e.g., employee satisfaction) (Robinson & Patel, 2023). Future studies could explore how specific cultural elements, such as inclusivity versus innovation, impact various performance outcomes within CBEs, particularly in diverse cultural or geographical settings (Garcia, 2023).

### **Adaptation of HR Practices**

Adapting HR practices to the unique needs of community-oriented businesses shows a commitment to employee satisfaction and connectivity to the community (Hernandez et al., 2023; Kumar & Rao, 2024; Wong & Lee, 2024). Flexible scheduling and community engagement policies resonate well with employees, improving job satisfaction and loyalty. This trend is consistent with broader HR management trends that show individualized HR approaches improve overall productivity and morale (Brooks, 2023; Singh, 2024). More research could investigate the impact of community-specific HR adjustments on organizational outcomes, such as employee productivity and turnover.

### **Technological Adaptation and Training**

The integration of advanced technology combined with targeted training has streamlined operations, reduced production time, and improved quality in CBEs (Wong & Lee, 2024; Peters et al., 2024; Nguyen, 2024). This trend reflects the growing importance of digital transformation in enhancing competitiveness and operational efficiency (Ahmed et al., 2024). The analysis underscores that technology adoption is most effective when accompanied by employee training to ensure seamless integration (Stewart, 2024). Future research could analyze the cost-benefit dynamics of technology adoption across various CBEs, particularly how these investments impact operational efficiency and long-term growth (Brooks, 2024).

### **Impact of External HR Services**

Outsourcing HR functions allows CBEs to concentrate on core business strategies while receiving help from specialized HR ability in areas like recruitment, payroll, and compliance (Nguyen & Chen, 2023; Davis & Brown, 2024; Robinson & Patel, 2023). This strategy frees up internal resources and potentially improves recruitment outcomes by using external networks (Hernandez et al., 2023). The effectiveness of HR outsourcing could be further examined by investigating its impact on talent acquisition metrics, such as time-to-hire and quality-of-hire, or by comparing in-house and outsourced HR functions' impact on employee satisfaction and company culture (Wong, 2024).

### **Effect of Regulatory Compliance on HR Practices**

Regulatory compliance ensures both operational safety and consumer trust, as adherence to local and international standards bolsters the company's reputation and morale (Robinson & Patel, 2023; Singh et al., 2024; Johnson, 2024). Meeting these standards is essential for access to larger markets and supporting safety protocols (Brown et al., 2024). Compliance not only fulfills legal requirements but also enhances brand credibility and employee morale (Garcia, 2023; Patel & Li, 2024). Future studies might examine the financial

implications of compliance on CBEs, especially comparing compliance costs against reputational and market access benefits achieved.

### **Gender and Inclusivity in the Workplace**

A commitment to inclusivity strengthens team dynamics, enriches creativity, and contributes to employee satisfaction (Ahmed & Li, 2024; Garcia, 2023; Stewart et al., 2024). A diverse workforce fosters an environment where different perspectives are valued, leading to innovative solutions and higher employee engagement (Taylor & Williams, 2024). Further research could explore the specific dimensions of inclusivity that most significantly affect workplace performance or assess how inclusivity-focused policies influence employee recruitment and retention across diverse community-based settings (Kumar & Rao, 2024).

### **Economic Impact**

Improved HR practices contribute to local economic growth by generating job opportunities and supporting economic stability (Stewart et al., 2024; Brooks, 2023; Davis, 2024). This aligns with findings suggesting that CBEs play a key role in driving local economic resilience (Singh et al., 2024). By providing competitive wages and job opportunities, CBEs help foster a stable community economy (Nguyen & Chen, 2023). Future research could explore how HR investments influence regional economic indicators, such as employment rates or household income levels, particularly in underserved or rural areas (Robinson & Patel, 2023).

The themes found in this analysis reveal that effective HR practices in CBEs foster operational excellence, support strategic growth, and contribute to community development (Jones & Ahmed, 2024; Nguyen, 2024; Patel & Li, 2024). These findings suggest that a holistic approach—incorporating tailored training, strong leadership, and inclusive practices—can yield sustainable growth for CBEs while reinforcing their role within the local economy. Future studies could explore these themes in different regional or sectoral contexts to assess if similar HR strategies yield comparable outcomes across various community-based settings (Singh & Patel, 2024; Garcia, 2023).

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The analysis of various themes from interview content reveals the integral role that effective human resource (HR) practices play in enhancing the success of community-based enterprises (CBEs) as in Figure 4. Key areas of focus include training and development, leadership, employee motivation, organizational culture, and technological adaptation. Implementing comprehensive training programs is essential for enhancing employee skills and showing a culture of safety, particularly in sectors where safety protocols are critical. Cultivating leadership skills—including motivation, effective communication, and teamwork—is crucial, as they significantly affect team efficiency and employee morale.

Maintaining a motivated and stable workforce requires implementing recognition initiatives, offering competitive compensation, and providing clear career progression paths. An organizational culture that promotes inclusivity, mutual respect, and alignment with community values enhances both productivity and employee satisfaction. Tailoring HR practices to meet specific community needs proves the effectiveness of personalized strategies in boosting employee satisfaction and loyalty.

Embracing technological advancements and providing targeted training are vital for improving operational efficiency. Additionally, outsourcing HR functions enables CBEs to access specialized ability, thereby enhancing recruitment and other HR processes. Adhering to regulatory standards is fundamental for ensuring operational safety and preserving market reputation. Moreover, initiatives that promote inclusivity can enhance team cohesion and stimulate innovation. Effective HR practices enhance the internal operations of CBEs and play a pivotal role in fostering broader economic development by generating employment opportunities and promoting economic stability.



The themes named in this analysis emphasize that a holistic approach—incorporating tailored training, strong leadership, inclusive culture, and community-focused HR practices—can lead to sustainable growth for CBEs. Future studies could explore these HR strategies in different regional or sectoral contexts to decide if similar results can be achieved across varied community-based settings. By doing so, CBEs can further reinforce their role in driving local economic resilience and fostering community development.

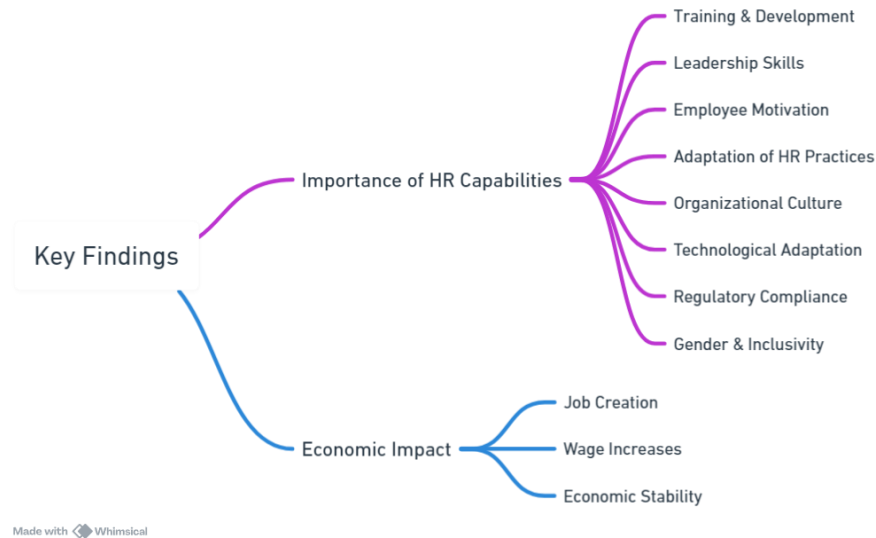


Figure 4 Key Findings (Authors)

## Theoretical Contributions

This analysis provides key insights into human resource management (HRM) in community-based enterprises (CBEs). It emphasizes the value of tailored training programs for enhancing operational efficiency and safety. Additionally, it highlights the impact of motivational leadership on productivity and morale, supporting transformational leadership theory. The study explores employee motivation using theories like Maslow's and Herzberg's, suggesting that a mix of financial and non-financial incentives fosters loyalty. It also underscores the importance of inclusivity and community alignment in organizational culture. Finally, it discusses the effectiveness of technology adoption with targeted training and the benefits of regulatory compliance and external HR services in improving organizational reputation and efficiency. Overall, this analysis offers a theoretical framework for understanding HR practices in CBEs.

## Practical Contributions

This analysis offers actionable insights to help community-based enterprises (CBEs) implement effective human resource management strategies. First, customized training and development programs are crucial. By focusing on skills development and safety compliance, CBEs can enhance employee competency and operational efficiency, especially where safety and quality are vital. Second, implementing motivational and collaborative leadership styles through targeted training can boost team productivity and morale. Aligning business aims with employee engagement fosters a positive work culture. Third, strategies for employee motivation and retention, such as recognizing contributions, providing competitive compensation, and offering career growth opportunities, can increase workforce stability and reduce turnover costs.

Creating a supportive and inclusive organizational culture is also essential. CBEs that prioritize inclusivity and community values can enhance employee engagement and reputation, leading to greater productivity. Integrating advanced technology with proper training can improve operational efficiency. Investing in both

technology and training is crucial for success. Additionally, outsourcing non-core HR functions can offer specialized ability, allowing CBEs to focus on strategic goals while improving HR outcomes.

Regulatory compliance is critical for safety and market credibility. CBEs should regularly audit compliance, provide employee training, and keep updated certifications to build brand trust. Finally, fostering inclusivity and gender diversity through training and diverse hiring can enhance innovation and team dynamics. Embracing diversity offers a wider range of perspectives, essential for effective problem-solving.

In summary, these recommendations help CBEs improve HR practices and operational efficiency while promoting a positive culture that supports both employee satisfaction and community engagement.

### Future Research Directions

**1. Long-Term Impact Assessment:** Find specific HR practices for an in-depth, long-term study, such as tailored employee development initiatives and community-driven performance rewards. Focus on assessing how these influence key performance indicators like workforce stability, skill progression, and overall team morale over an extended period, ideally spanning ten years or more. This reframe emphasizes the unique aspects of HR in community-based food-processing settings and links them to measurable outcomes.

**2. Comparative Cultural Analysis:** Explore the influence of varying cultural orientations—like community-centric values versus individual achievements or varying levels of authority sensitivity—on the effectiveness of HR approaches. Pinpoint regions or specific cultural contexts where these contrasts are pronounced, allowing for a nuanced understanding of how HR strategies can be adapted to support cultural alignment within diverse community enterprises.

**3. Integration of Technology in HR:** Highlight the adoption of specialized digital HR tools, such as localized HR management systems, recruitment platforms powered by artificial intelligence, and engagement applications, tailored for community-based environments. Address the barriers these enterprises may face, including digital skills gaps, and evaluate how improving digital literacy could positively influence HR metrics like engagement, productivity, and community impact.

**4. Holistic Community Development Outcomes:** Define relevant social, economic, and environmental indicators that reflect the broader impact of HR practices within community-based enterprises. For instance, assess how strategic HR management contributes to local employment trends, fair gender roles in community workforce settings, and sustainable sourcing practices that align with environmental stewardship goals. This reframing ties HR practices directly to community-focused outcomes.

**5. Implications for Policy and Regulation:** Show regulatory areas with the potential to change HR practices significantly within community enterprises, such as rural labor protections, localized wage guidelines, and specific health and safety protocols. Discuss how these findings could inform policies that both strengthen HR frameworks and promote resilience, economic sustainability, and community well-being. This approach links regulatory guidance with the unique challenges of community-based food-processing enterprises.

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