



Managing People in Social Enterprises: A Narrative Research Study of Thailand

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to gain a comprehensive understanding of people management within social enterprises, particularly focusing on employee retention strategies and the development of employee attachment. The research addressed the significance of context in enriching the field's knowledge base. Conducted within the distinctive setting of Thailand, this study offers a unique perspective on social enterprises, which can significantly enhance the global discourse on social enterprise studies. By examining the nuances of the Thai context, this thesis aims to uncover insights that enhance the applicable understanding across various regions and contexts, thereby broadening the applicability and relevance of its findings in international settings.

This study employed narrative inquiry to examine the complex dynamics of people management and employee attachment in Thai social enterprises. Through in-depth interviews, the study collected rich stories and experiences from fifty participants, encompassing both founders and employees. The data were thoroughly analysed using thematic narrative analysis, enabling a detailed investigation of the narratives provided and uncovering significant insights into the sector's practices and challenges.

The results highlight that the central premise shaping people management in social enterprises fundamentally stems from the values advocated by the enterprise's leaders in the midst of their dual missions. Additionally, employee retention in social enterprises differs significantly from that in traditional for-profit organisations, focusing more on enhancing employee well-being and fostering the natural development of employee attachment. Employee attachment in this organisational setting is developed through the intertwining of positive relationships (social capital) and mature employee motivation (human capital). The findings underscore that significant elements in fostering the strengthening of employee attachment include social norms, individuals' virtues, and meaning-making processes, all of which are driven by meaningful interactions between individuals. This study develops a framework to explain how social enterprises leverage social and human capital to foster employee attachment organically. Additional findings reveal the unique employee attachment found in a social enterprise context where employee attachment persists even after employees leave the organisations.

This research makes significant contributions to the field of social enterprise studies, specifically in relation to people management and retention in social enterprises. By integrating Job Embeddedness, Social Capital, and Human Capital into the theoretical framework, this thesis significantly enriches the theoretical literature. Moreover, from a practical standpoint, the study offers valuable insights for social enterprises and leaders, including employees, stakeholders, and those who work for social enterprises. These insights could help them comprehend the strategies behind employee retention and the processes through which employee attachment develops within this distinct organisational setting.

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List of Abbreviations

AIESEC	Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques et Commerciales (in English: International Association of Students in Economics and Commercial Sciences)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CRS	Corporate Social Responsibility
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board (Thailand)
NIA	National Innovation Agency (Thailand)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSEP	Office of Social Enterprise Promotion (Thailand)
PDA	Population and Community Development Association (Thailand)
SE Thailand	Social Enterprise Thailand Association
SET	The Stock Exchange of Thailand
TSEO	Thai Social Enterprise Office
WISE	Work Integration Social Enterprise

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This thesis delves into the realm of people management within social enterprises in Thailand, focusing on the crucial aspects of employee retention, motivation, and attachment. This chapter introduces the thesis by providing an overview of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises in Thailand, emphasising the importance of the study, and highlighting literature gaps, research questions, objectives, and aims. It also outlines the research contributions and methodological orientation. The chapter concludes with a comprehensive outline of the thesis structure.

1.2 Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise

In the evolving landscape of business and socio-economic development, social entrepreneurship has emerged as a guiding principle, advocating for the integration of financial success and communal well-being. Social entrepreneurship seeks to balance financial goals with the broader aim of building a better society, positioning the community as a central stakeholder (Aliaga-Isla & Huybrechts, 2018). Despite the lack of standardised definitions or conceptual limitations (Doherty et al., 2014; Sasaki & Koizumi, 2016), social entrepreneurship is recognised as both an economic driver and a creator of social value (Praszkier & Nowak, 2012; Alegre et al., 2017), contributing to positive social change, reducing social inequality, mitigating poverty, and serving as a resource for socio-economic development and well-being (Shapovalov et al., 2019).

The ambiguity in defining social entrepreneurship facilitates the diversification of social enterprises, leading to an interchangeable use of the terms social entrepreneurship and social enterprise (Bielefeld, 2009; Sasaki & Koizumi, 2016). Bielefeld (2009, p.71) indicated that social enterprise is more discussed in the literature than social entrepreneurship because it is studied in a narrower concept and closely relates to the practitioners' sphere. Consequently, studying social enterprise in a practical context reveals that it encompasses a wide range of organisational forms, including nonprofit organisations, cooperatives, and for-profit organisations (Sasaki & Koizumi, 2016, p.1). Under this new subject stance, the social enterprise definition has been developed in different domains, and with the tremendous diversity and complexity of its nature, the concept has been adopted for use in many countries depending on the contexts (Maretich & Bolton, 2010; Doherty et al., 2014; Wu et al., 2020).

The contextual diversity of social enterprises is evident when examining various global examples. For instance, early social enterprises in Italy predominantly took the form of cooperatives, even before the term 'social enterprise' was formally coined (Savio & Righetti, 1993; Borzaga et al., 2017). In contrast, many social enterprises in developing countries are geared towards addressing challenges at the 'bottom of the pyramid' (BOP), working to rectify market imperfections and tackle deep-seated societal issues (Ahmed et al., 2020). On the other hand, South Korea's social enterprises emerged as solutions to unemployment challenges and as a support system for marginalised populations (Hwang et al., 2017). In the United States, the genesis of several social enterprises can be traced back to nonprofits that, faced with insufficient financial support, pivoted to income-generating activities to ensure their survival (Sasaki & Koizumi, 2016). An interesting dichotomy exists between the US and Europe; while American social enterprises tend to emphasise individualistic pursuits, innovation, and market-driven outcomes, their European counterparts are more rooted in collective efforts and community-based initiatives, all aimed at mitigating social issues (Ohana & Meyer, 2010, p. 442; Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

The field of social enterprise research is still in its developmental stages, marked by a notable gap in empirical studies that could elevate its robustness to the level observed in more established disciplines (Short et al., 2009; Zahra et al., 2009; Haugh, 2012; Zahra et al., 2014). There is an increasing demand within the academic community to expand the scope of research by exploring previously neglected domains, particularly non-Western or developing regions such as Africa, the Middle East, and East Asia (Doherty et al., 2014). In response to this growing demand, this study focuses on Thailand, located in Southeast Asia, which has received relatively limited attention in terms of social enterprise exploration. Shifting away from Western-centric paradigms, Southeast Asian perspectives have given rise to social entrepreneurship as a dynamic pathway for socio-economic progress within this region (Seyedali et al., 2019; Idris & Hati, 2013; Fricke, 2016). In this context, the way social enterprises operate fits well with the general ideas about their role, making them important for solving social problems and increasing community benefits.

In Southeast Asia, the ASEAN Social Enterprise Structuring Guide report highlights Thailand as a pioneering adopter of the social enterprise framework, a sentiment echoed by the British Council (2018). The domain of social entrepreneurship in Thailand has effectively mobilised diverse stakeholders. The Thai government has implemented various social entrepreneurial initiatives and incubator programmes. Simultaneously, there is a growing emphasis from both the public and private sectors, including educational institutions, on this emerging phenomenon (Therparat, 2018). This signifies an increased societal involvement and acknowledgement of the capacity of social enterprises to convert societal challenges into opportunities.

To offer a comprehensive overview, the next section provides a background on the evolution of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises in Thailand, highlighting potential growth trajectories and inherent challenges. The emphasis on this localised context recognises that social enterprises inherently possess unique geographical identities as they exhibit diverse entrepreneurial activities and implement varied

strategies adapted to their specific environments (Chell et al., 2010). Exploring the social enterprise landscape in Thailand can provide a fundamental understanding of the ecosystem and unveil the intricate nuances that shape the sector. This study places particular emphasis on employee motivations, interpersonal relationships, and employee attachment within Thai social enterprises, positioning these elements at the heart of the research focus. This approach provides an overview of the various potential social enterprises in Thailand, the propensity of social enterprise business industries, and their foundational principles. This contextual background can illuminate the motivations driving individuals to establish and engage with social enterprises. Additionally, it offers profound insights into the interpersonal dynamics within these organisations.

1.3 The Development of Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprises in Thailand

Research on social entrepreneurship has predominantly been centred in North America and Western Europe, creating a substantial knowledge gap about how entrepreneurship unfolds in less-studied regions (Doherty et al., 2014). Scholars such as Welter (2011) and Nicolopoulou and Samy (2018) have highlighted the potential of ‘contextualised entrepreneurship’ to deepen our understanding of entrepreneurship phenomena globally. Emphasising this notion, Karanda and Toledano (2012) argue that social entrepreneurship manifests differently across various cultural, economic, and social contexts, suggesting that a broader geographic lens could significantly enrich both academic and practical insights into the field. The influence of diverse contextual factors, such as local economic conditions and cultural elements, on entrepreneurial activities is significant and can vary dramatically between different environments. This variation underscores the urgent need for research in geographically diverse contexts to fully grasp social entrepreneurship’s complexity and multifaceted nature (Doherty et al., 2014; Zahra et al., 2014). De Bruin and Lewis (2015) further advocate for this expansive approach, asserting that studying social entrepreneurship across different settings not only addresses the inherent

complexity of the field but also aids in the development of flexible and practical strategies applicable worldwide. Moreover, Sengupta et al. (2018) highlight the particular importance of exploring social entrepreneurship in emerging economies. Here, the unique challenges and opportunities of such contexts can vastly alter entrepreneurial strategies and outcomes, offering rich insights that can drive the field forward. By extending research into these less-examined areas, we can uncover invaluable strategies that cater to the unique needs of diverse populations, thereby advancing our global understanding and impact of social entrepreneurship, including social enterprise.

Building on the existing research, which predominantly focuses on North America and Western Europe (Doherty et al., 2014), it becomes clear that understanding the contextual nuances of social entrepreneurship is critical, particularly in less-studied regions such as Southeast Asia. This section aims to explore Thailand's socio-economic development, providing a unique vantage point from which to examine the foundations and intricacies of the social entrepreneurship movement in Thai society and the potential development of social enterprises in the region. Keizer (2005) emphasises that the socio-economic framework is instrumental in exploring the interplay between allocation, distribution, culture, and preferences, effectively bridging economic theories and sociological perspectives to explain individual behaviour within society. This section provides insights into the trajectory of social entrepreneurship in Thailand by applying a socio-economic framework and examining historical data and literature. By comparing these insights with global data, we can uncover the origins and evolution of social entrepreneurial activities in Thai society, including the potential factors motivating individuals to engage in such endeavours. This approach lays a comprehensive groundwork for understanding the social and cultural dynamics that shape the social entrepreneurship landscape in Thailand. By delving into a detailed historical analysis, this section sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the social and cultural factors that foster the emergence and sustainability of social enterprises in Thailand in subsequent sections.

Thailand, known in Europe as ‘Siam’ before changing its name in 1939 (Thepboriruk, 2019), has a rich history that illustrates the country’s interactions with Western nations and the influx of Westernization, thereby reflecting the development of social entrepreneurship in Thailand. Exploring Thailand’s background from the Ayutthaya Kingdom period to the present is sufficient for this purpose. The Ayutthaya Kingdom period lasted from 1350 to 1767. During this time, Portugal was the first European nation to trade with Thailand, followed by the Netherlands (referred to here as Dutch), Spain, Britain, and France (Singhalampong, 2016). The evolution of international trade and political policies during this time had a significant impact on Thailand’s socio-economy. Subsequently, changes in sociological and economic frameworks influenced people’s societal behaviour. Elliott (1978) describes the socio-economic formation of Thailand, starting with the pre-Capitalism period, followed by the Against Colonialism period, and concluding with the Modern Thailand period. The Pre-Capitalism period, which includes the Ayutthaya Kingdom period, was characterised by a social structure comprising majority classes of peasant rice producers, a small ruling class such as the monarch, and local communities/states that mainly interacted with the capital through the exchange of levying and payment as rent tax. Social stratification was accepted due to the value and belief placed on the monarchy, with the king owning the land and everything on it. Society’s stratification took the form of a client-patron relationship, deeply influenced by Thai Buddhism. This patronage system involved non-kin individuals joining households for mutual benefit. In the community, each family possessed the land and economic activities (weaving, making clothes, fishing, etc.). Additionally, house building was a community-based activity that relied on community cooperation.

Against Colonialism refers to the period from the early 18th century until the mid-19th century, during which numerous envoys were sent from European countries to the Thai Kings. At that time, Indochina (an area mainly to the east of today’s Thailand, including Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia) was part of the French colonial empire, while Burma (present-day Myanmar) and the Malay Peninsula (today’s

Malaysia) were under British control. Thai Kings—King Rama III, King Rama IV, and King Rama V—signed treaties with Western colonial powers in a successful effort to maintain political independence. During this period, Westernisation had a transformative effect on Thailand's political and cultural structures. For instance, the Slave Liberation Act was prepared and implemented without bloodshed by King Rama V. Similarly, the country's administration was reformed by establishing ministries and provincial administrations and by creating a modern army and land ownership system. This era marked the beginning of the modernisation process, which continued until the end of World War II.

Significant political and economic changes occurred in Thailand after the mid-19th century (Elliott, 1978). These changes were spearheaded by the reforms initiated by King Rama V, aligning the country's systems with the economic integration principles of the capitalist economy. With many ruling class members receiving their education in Europe, the upper strata expanded, and the middle class grew. The king decided to abolish the practice of claiming rent from land within the Kingdom, leading to a decrease in the tangible aspects of patronage in the economy's social relations, and the agricultural sector emerged as a crucial area for economic development. Silcock (1967) highlighted Thailand's unique development pattern, noting that its agricultural taxation and trade patterns differed from those of other developing countries. For example, Thailand imposed a heavy premium and export duty on rice to keep domestic rice prices low, ensuring affordability for the local population. This policy prioritised the needs of the domestic market over supporting exports. Furthermore, the methods of industrialisation and the banking system were varied. For instance, the early efforts focused on substituting a modern, Western-oriented economy controlled by the Thai administrative class for the trade economy dominated by the Chinese and Europeans. After WWII, industrialisation involved multiple approaches, including state-run enterprises, private sector involvement, and the creation of industrial estates. A mix of nationalism, modernisation, and adaptation of foreign techniques also characterised the banking system. Having survived colonisation, Thailand's complexity in social and economic structures was

significantly shaped by its own revolution (Silcock, 1967). Table 1.1 presents the periods of Pre-Capitalism, Against Colonialism, Transformation, and Modern Thailand, comparing Thai historical events with related global historical events and their impact on Thailand's socio-economy.

Table 1.1 Historical Events Related to Thailand's Socio-Economy Transformations.

	Thai historical periods	Historical events in relation to socio-economic transformations and the global contexts
Pre-Capitalism Period	From Ayutthaya to the Early Rattanakosin Era (up to the Reign of King Rama II)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paternalism and monarchy as foundational societal structures - Engaged with international trade with Persian, French, Dutch, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Malay Peninsula merchants.
Pre-Capitalism Period	The period of King Rama III (reigned from 1824 CE until 1851 CE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - signed the Burney Treaty (with Britain) in 1826 CE. - signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce (with the US) in 1833 CE.
Pre-Capitalism Period	The period of King Rama IV (reigned from 1851 CE until 1868 CE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - signed the Bowring Treaty (with Britain) in 1855 CE.
Against Colonialism Period (Transformation Period—Developing to modernising country)	The period of King Rama V (reigned from 1868 CE until 1910 CE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thai aristocrats and royal families were westernised by education. - Trade and political agreements formulate the transformation process to Modern Thailand. - The Malay States and Penang were cessions to Britain from 1800 CE to 1909 CE according to the Anglo-Siamese Treaty. - According to the France-Siamese Treaty, from 1867 CE to 1907 CE, parts of the east and west banks of the Mekong River (present-day Laos), along with some western provinces of Cambodia, were ceded to France. The agreement between Thailand and Western countries promoted a shift towards a more open economy, impacting the country's political and social structures and economic practices.

	Thai historical periods	Historical events in relation to socio-economic transformations and the global contexts
	The period of King Rama VI (reigned from 1910 CE until 1925 CE)	- Thailand successfully maintained independence from European colonial powers during World War I (1914 CE to 1918 CE), and the king continued building a modern nation according to the national plan.
	The period of King Rama VII (reigned from 1925 CE until 1935 CE)	- Thailand transitioned to its first constitutional monarchy, marking the foundation for a new era of governance in Thailand, aligning with the global trend towards democratisation.
End of the Colonisation period in the mid-19th century	The period of King Rama VIII (reigned from 1935 CE until 1946 CE)	- Following King Rama VII's abdication, King Rama VIII ascended to the throne as a child, during which time he was still pursuing his studies in Switzerland. - End of World War II. (World War II: 1939 CE to 1945 CE)
Modern Thailand	The period of King Rama IX (reigned from 1946 CE until 2016 CE and present)	- Under a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy, the economy is opened up to foreign investment, facilitating greater economic integration with the global market - Many programmes have been implemented under Royal Development Projects to improve the well-being of the Thai people. For instance, these include the rain project to bring drought relief to farmers, the water reservoirs and agricultural land project to promote individual household reservoirs and prevent soil erosion, and the renewable energy project.

After World War II, Thailand suffered from a muddled economy for several years before recovering and advanced social and economic development. King Rama IX acceded to the throne in 1946 after King Rama XIII's death and returned to complete his studies in Switzerland. His declaration at the coronation ceremony concerned the aim of improving the well-being of the Thai people. After finishing his studies, he started visiting rural areas in Thailand. He initiated the first Royal Development Project in 1951, and later, more than thousands of projects were developed and implemented throughout his 65 years of reign.

After the Asian economic crisis hit Thailand in 1997, His late Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (King Rama IX) reiterated the practice of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. The concept concerns the sustainable development approach to promote the value of moderation, prudence, and reasonableness as a guideline for people to reach a state of self-sufficiency and live in harmony with nature. It became an alternative development strategy applied at community and national levels to help nations confront globalisation forces (Ketprapakorn & Kantabutra, 2019). His Majesty mentioned that the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy would help people become aware of the danger of too much dependence on foreign investments. Subsequently, projects aligned with this philosophy gained international acceptance. (Wechsler, 2014; Hays, 2008).

Thailand moved from the low-productive agricultural to the higher-productivity manufacturing sector from 1980 to 2015 (Oshima, 1986; Nikomborirak, 2017) and stepped from a low-income to an upper-income country in 2011 (Jitsuchon, 2012). Thailand's economy reached an average growth of 7.5% in the peak period before the twentieth century. After the Asian financial crisis, it reached 5% and was 4% in 2018 (The World Bank, 2019). Thailand's economic development is in a good position compared to the average growth rate of emerging markets and developing countries. (International Monetary Fund, 2019). However, although the report on poverty discloses that poverty in Thailand declined significantly from 67% to 7.8% over the last thirty years (The ASEAN Post Team, 2019), the Global Wealth Report (2018) revealed that Thailand was in the top five worlds ranking wealth inequality in 2018 (90.2 Gini Index). Moreover, Thailand was in the first rank as a country with wealth inequality in ASEAN (The ASEAN Post Team, 2019). This significant social inequality problem urged the Thai government to take urgent action, and social entrepreneurship is one of the solutions the government addressed in the national plan (NESDB, 2017).

In summary, social entrepreneurship in Thailand arose throughout the Modern period (the end of World War II). The Royal Development Project, initiated by His late Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej (King Rama IX) and grounded in the concept of ‘Sufficiency Economy Philosophy,’ has significantly impacted Thailand’s social and economic perspectives. With the aim to alleviate rural issues, enhance individuals’ well-being, and foster community development, the project’s programmes resonate with the principles of social entrepreneurship. Consequently, Thailand has rapidly embraced social entrepreneurship, positioning itself as one of ASEAN’s early adopters of this innovative approach (British Council, 2018).

1.4 Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise: Challenges and Opportunities in Thailand

The development of social entrepreneurship and the rise of the social enterprise concept in Thailand are influenced by many factors, contributing to a vibrant and dynamic shift in societal awareness and action. This momentum towards embracing social enterprises stems from various aspects, including cultural and historical backgrounds and the impact of global economic trends. In the previous section, it was noted how the rapid and seamless emergence of social entrepreneurship in Thailand is deeply influenced by its cultural and historical contexts and the significant role of global economic factors. This section further explores various factors contributing to the development and current state of the social enterprise concept in Thailand, including its challenges and opportunities. Through this examination, the dynamics shaping Thailand’s engagement with social enterprises become clearer, highlighting the potential for significant societal movements within the social enterprise sector in Thailand.

Early social entrepreneurial ventures in Thailand can be traced back to the 1970s, spurred by the ‘Sufficiency Economic Philosophy’ advocated by the late King Rama IX and the late Mother of King Rama IX (Nuchpam & Punyakumpol, 2019). This

philosophy inspired the establishment of community ventures in the Northern region, aimed at creating employment opportunities for ethnic minorities in remote mountainous areas with limited access to public services. These royal initiatives were undertaken under the auspices of the Mae Fah Luang Foundation, established in 1972. Notably, projects like Doi Tung and Doi Kham, affiliated with the foundation, developed more commercial business models to ensure financial sustainability (Sumano & Sompol, 2021). By adopting the social enterprise model successfully, they demonstrated its viability and effectiveness.

Furthermore, establishing traditional civil society and the third sector has deep roots in Thai society. This longstanding tradition has paved the way for heightened awareness of social issues and a philanthropic orientation geared towards supporting and assisting others within the community. A prime example is the Pho Teck Tung Foundation, an early voluntary association driven by a philanthropic mission established by overseas Chinese and Thai-Chinese in Thailand. This organisation is dedicated to performing public charity work, including managing unclaimed corpses and providing them with proper burials. It also plays a significant role in helping and supporting people by managing and rescuing victims, responding to health and medical emergencies during urgent incidents, and serving as first responders in most accidents. Beyond these services, the foundation engages in public welfare activities, offering assistance and relief in disasters, including famine and poverty, further showcasing the ingrained philanthropic spirit within Thai society (Nuchpam & Punyakumpol, 2019; Formoso, 1996; Poh-Teck-Tung, n.d.). The existence of the Pho Teck Tung Foundation dates back to 1906, and it was successfully registered as a legal foundation in 1937 (Poh-Teck-Tung, n.d.).

In Thailand, the visibility and formal recognition of voluntary associations and philanthropic organisations were significantly visible once a legal framework was established. This development began with the introduction of the Civil and Commercial Code in 1925, which allowed non-profit organisations to be officially

recognised as foundations and associations (Nuchpam & Punyakumpol, 2019). While ‘associations’ are registered under the same civil and commercial laws as ‘foundations’, they cover the same content related to public benefits but delineate clear distinctions regarding their management structures. This legal foundation has been instrumental in shaping the operational landscape for these organisations, providing a structured approach to their contribution to public welfare.

A well-known association dedicated to promoting social welfare and public services is the Population and Community Development Association (PDA), established with the goal of contributing to social development and improving the quality of life for people (Sumano & Sompol, 2021; Viravaidya, n.d.). Founded in 1974 by Mechai Viravaidya, recognised as the godfather of Thai social business (Chandran, 2019), the organisation launched initiatives like the Cabbages and Condoms restaurant. Established in 1975, this venture was designed as a business for social progress, generating income to fund AIDS projects, sexual health education programmes, and education for disadvantaged youth (Doherty & Kittipanya-Ngam, 2021). Several social projects and social enterprises, including Bamboo School, are managed and operated within PDA (PDA, n.d.).

Another prominent institution committed to advancing social welfare and public health services is the Abhaibhubejhr Hospital Foundation. This foundation is linked with the Chao Phraya Abhaibhubejhr Hospital and was created to preserve and enhance the knowledge of Thai herbal medicine. Its mission is to elevate individuals’ quality of life and health through a focus on Thai herbal treatments. The foundation has launched a social venture, Abhaibhubejhr, which markets Thai herbal products and disseminates local health wisdom. These efforts are not only aimed at improving the health of the Thai population but are also conducted with a deep respect for social and environmental well-being. Abhaibhubejhr was officially recognised as a social enterprise in 2018, underscoring its commitment to societal health and sustainable practices (Sumano & Sompol, 2021; Borncome, 2019).

Implementing legislation targeting social concerns and promoting community advancement has established a solid basis for Thailand's subsequent expansion of social enterprises. The Cooperative Act of 1999, along with its revision in 2010, had a crucial role in enabling the formation of cooperative organisations. These laws were created to assist entities that function as non-profit and non-governmental organisations, with a specific emphasis on conducting business for social purposes. This legislative framework facilitated the establishment of social enterprises in the cooperative form in Thailand. Notable examples of cooperative social enterprises that contribute to social welfare through their distinct missions and operations are Green Net, Fisher Folk, Wanita, and Lemon Farm (Kulratkittiwong & Panyorin, 2021; Nuchpiam & Punyakumpol, 2019; PuaPongsakorn, 2019; Doherty & Kittipanya-Ngam, 2021).

Besides, the Community Enterprise Promotion Act, enacted in 2005, was designed to foster the development of community enterprises in Thailand, though these enterprises predate the Act. Community enterprises share many traits with social enterprises, aiming to deliver social benefits, generate profits or surpluses from commercial activities, and achieve financial self-sustainability (Community Enterprise Promotion Division, n.d.). Nuchpiam and Punyakumpol (2019, p.143) noted that many Thai community enterprises operate on a micro-scale and lack the entrepreneurial vigour and potential of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), partly due to their reliance on state funding and their short-lived operational periods. The unstable policy environment and inconsistent governmental strategies in Thailand might have contributed to these issues (Valeepitakdej & Wongsurawat, 2015). However, despite such challenges, there has been a significant trend where numerous community enterprises have successfully scaled up to become SMEs and registered as social enterprises. Examples like Dairy Home, Akha Ama, LocalAlike, and Once Again Hostel illustrate this successful transition from community-based initiatives to recognised social enterprises, showcasing the sector's potential for growth and sustainability. Although there is no empirical evidence directly linking the Community Enterprise Promotion Act to the emergence of social enterprises in

Thailand, and many successful community-based social enterprises did not start their ventures in response to the Act, it has nonetheless raised awareness among Thai people about this kind of enterprise.

The business models and social objectives of the referenced organisations strongly resonate with the social enterprise concept, highlighting the rapid evolution of social entrepreneurship in Thailand and the nation's eagerness to embrace such models. However, this progression is not merely a product of local initiatives; it is also significantly shaped by global trends and the international political climate (Doherty & Kittipanya-Ngam, 2021; Nuchpam & Punyakumpol, 2019). Previous discussions have touched on Thailand's socio-economic framework. Nevertheless, there remains a vast area for examining how external factors, such as the increasing demand for social responsibility, the commitment to sustainable development goals, and the global third sector movement, contribute to a deeper understanding of Thailand's social entrepreneurship and enterprise dynamics. These elements underscore the international influences on Thailand's socio-economic landscape, and delving into these aspects is crucial to comprehensively grasp the intricate and varied evolution of social enterprise and social entrepreneurship within the Thai context.

Globally, social issues are a pervasive reality, their nature and severity varying widely across different countries due to unique socioeconomic conditions. In response to these challenges, the Thai government has strategically embraced the 'Sufficiency Economy Philosophy' alongside the emerging concept of social entrepreneurship, weaving these principles into national policy frameworks (Siriwan, 2018; British Council, 2020). Thailand's constitution also enshrines this strategic alignment, signifying the nation's commitment to sustainable development and mirroring the objectives outlined in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Central to Thailand's strategy is the National Economic and Social Development Plan, which aims to mitigate income disparity and improve the quality of public services, with a keen focus on uplifting disadvantaged groups and rural

communities (NESDB, 2017). A significant barrier to achieving these objectives has been identified as access to justice, prompting a comprehensive plan to address this issue, among others. Within this broader framework, promoting social entrepreneurship has been pinpointed as a critical initiative, reflecting a recognition of its potential to foster economic inclusivity and social well-being (NESDB, 2017). In alignment with this strategic direction, the Thai government took decisive legislative action, circulating the draft Social Enterprise Promotion Bill in 2015 (Nuchpam & Punyakumpol, 2019). The Cabinet approved a new draft of the bill in July 2018, specifically designed to bolster social enterprise (Doherty & Kittipanya-Ngam, 2021). This legislative effort culminated in the passage of the Social Enterprise Act in 2019, marking a significant milestone in Thailand's journey towards integrating social entrepreneurship into the fabric of its national development strategy (Chandran, 2019; British Council, 2020). This Act legitimises social enterprises and sets the stage for a supportive ecosystem that encourages their growth, thereby contributing to the country's broader social and economic objectives.

The international third-sector movement has also significantly influenced the development of social entrepreneurship in Thailand. A notable early influence was the Ashoka Foundation, which established its presence in Thailand in 1989 and became officially registered in 2004. Known as a pioneer in social activism within the country, Ashoka introduced and promoted the concept of social entrepreneurship in Thailand (Watanabe & Yahata, 2016). Additionally, AIESEC Thailand, registered as a non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation since 1966, has been instrumental in fostering youth leadership, addressing educational challenges, and implementing social projects aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2019; AIESEC Thailand, n.d.).

The influence of global trends and the international political climate on Thailand's social entrepreneurship scene is also evident. Doherty and Kittipanya-Ngam (2021) highlighted the significant contribution of the UK government and the British

Council in supporting the growth of social entrepreneurship and enterprises in Thailand. Moreover, local networks comprising entities from the public, private, and third sectors have been pivotal in nurturing the social entrepreneurship and enterprise ecosystem in Thailand. For instance, collaborative efforts by organisations like the Thai Health Promotion Foundation, ChangeFusion, PDA, and the British Council Thailand have been crucial in engaging the government and garnering support for social enterprise development (Nuchpiam & Punyakumpol, 2019). These network groups have played a vital role in shaping Thailand's social entrepreneurship landscape. In addition to the aforementioned organisations, the network includes The National Innovation Agency (NIA), the School of ChangeMakers, the Social Enterprise Thailand Association (SE Thailand), Nise Corporation, and government bodies like the Thai Social Enterprise Office (TSEO) and the Office of Social Enterprise Promotion (OSEP) (Watanabe & Yahata, 2016; Jitsuchon, 2012; Rujopakarn, n.d.). These collaborations and partnerships demonstrate a vibrant and comprehensive approach to nurturing social entrepreneurship in Thailand, underscoring the country's strategic and collaborative efforts to integrate local initiatives and global influences within its social enterprise framework.

Moreover, the interest and cooperation in social entrepreneurship in Thailand have garnered attention from both the governmental and corporate sectors. The Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) has championed sustainable investment, emphasising the integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) factors into corporate and investment practices. To support this, the SET Social Impact framework was developed to guide listed companies towards sustainable and socially responsible business practices. This included launching incentives for companies to shift their CSR approach towards social enterprises, with investments that bolster social enterprises in Thailand (Segal, 2020; SET Social Impact, n.d.). Furthermore, the SET has facilitated the promotion of social enterprises through various events, seminars, and discussions, aiming to enlighten business leaders and CSR professionals about the significant role social enterprises play in societal transformation (Doherty & Kittipanya-Ngam, 2021).

In parallel, the public sector has seen the evolution of social enterprise initiatives as part of a national strategic plan (NESDB, 2017). A notable effort is the Public-Private Collaboration Project, which fosters cooperation among public entities, the private sector, and civil society, forming social enterprises that operate as limited companies. These enterprises are uniquely co-owned by five sectors: the government, private entities, academic institutions, civil society organisations, and community members, thus embodying a comprehensive collaborative model (Nuchpiam & Punyakumpol, 2019). This model has spurred the creation of Pracharat Social Enterprises, which is mainly active in Thailand's provinces and promotes a public-private partnership model. According to Doherty and Kittipanya-Ngam (2021), these corporate social enterprises are eligible for promotional privileges and income tax exemptions. Private entities investing in these registered social enterprises can deduct such investments or donations from their corporate tax. However, the amount allocated for this must not exceed 2% of their annual net income. While this initiative is designed to extend the private sector's engagement beyond conventional CSR activities, it has faced scrutiny regarding its potential to skew the social enterprise landscape in favour of private interests. Critically, the real-world application and effectiveness of Pracharat social enterprises have encountered obstacles like funding limitations and the necessity for enhanced public and investor understanding of the social enterprise sector in Thailand (Joffre, 2021). Nevertheless, the emergence of Pracharat social enterprises has added a nuanced dynamic to the landscape of social enterprises in Thailand's context.

In summary, the evolution of social enterprises in Thailand has created a unique dynamic, illustrating the deep-rooted history and socio-economic intricacies of social entrepreneurship in the region. This distinct narrative, enriched by proactive third-sector engagement and cross-sectoral collaboration, has cultivated various social enterprise models, offering fertile ground for academic study and practical innovation. The synergy between local networking, socio-economic insight, and the international political environment has accelerated social entrepreneurship adoption and innovative implementation in Thailand. Moreover, the country's royal initiatives

and cultural heritage have seamlessly woven social values and missions into the fabric of Thai society, presenting a model where traditional values and modern entrepreneurial practices coexist and thrive. This unique blend not only enriches the local landscape but also provides valuable insights into the global discourse on social entrepreneurship, suggesting that Thailand's approach could offer scalable lessons and strategies for other regions, including the theoretical perspectives highlighted. Therefore, studying social entrepreneurship in Thailand is crucial not only for understanding its domestic evolution but also for extracting potentially transformative insights for global social enterprise practices. This makes Thailand an intriguing and significant case study for exploring how social enterprises can drive sustainable development, social innovation, and economic growth in a culturally nuanced context. Therefore, the exploration of Thai social enterprises is not just a local or regional interest but a valuable contribution to the global narrative on social entrepreneurship and its capacity for societal change.

1.5 Literature Gaps, Research Questions, Objectives and Aims.

1.5.1 Gaps and Problem Overview

Research on social enterprises, though critical, remains in its nascent stages compared to other established fields. This observation is supported by empirical evidence suggesting a substantial lack of rigorous studies necessary for its development and maturity (Zahra et al., 2009; Doherty et al., 2014). The literature reveals that social enterprises vary significantly in types and geographical contexts. Exploring social enterprises across different settings, especially in developing or non-Western areas like Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, can provide valuable comparative data, contributing to broader research and fostering the field's development (Haugh, 2012; Doherty et al., 2014; Chandra & Kerlin, 2021).

A notable gap within this emerging body of knowledge is the area of people management in social enterprises (Haugh, 2005; Doherty et al., 2009; Short et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2015, 2018; Belte, 2022). It is understood that social enterprises operate differently from traditional organisations (Borzaga & Defourny, 2004; Lyon & Ramsden, 2006). Consequently, conventional management practices are not directly applicable to them, and they need to develop their own principles for managing employees (Borzaga & Solari, 2004; Royce, 2007; Winkler & Portocarrero, 2018). While effective people management is crucial, playing a pivotal role in building organisational capacity and ensuring the sustainability of social enterprises (Okorley & Nkrumah, 2012; Satar, 2018), the diversity of social enterprises poses challenges to the development of people management practices within this context.

We acknowledge that people management within social enterprises varies due to their complex organisational operations and differing geographical contexts. However, to extend the literature on people management in social enterprises, it is necessary to understand how these practices have developed and how social enterprises manage their employees. Exploring the origins and reasons behind these practices potentially offers a framework for developing effective people management in this sector. Additionally, studying people management in social enterprises in less examined areas, such as Thailand, could provide deeper insights and enrich the existing literature. Therefore, this study explores people management within social enterprises in Thailand, focusing on how they manage their employees while upholding their dual missions.

Research in the field of people management within social enterprises consistently highlights significant challenges related to human resource shortages, recruitment difficulties, and retention (Royce, 2007; Truong & Barraket, 2018; Li, 2018; Satar & John, 2016; Black, 2021). These challenges are not unique to any geographical area and are prevalent in Thai social enterprises as well (Napathorn, 2018b). Specifically,

retention emerges as a critical issue impacting the success and sustainability of social enterprises (Haugh, 2005; Moses & Sharma, 2020). The difficulty in attracting and retaining qualified personnel in environments that often cannot offer competitive salaries or substantial benefits intensifies this issue (Alvord et al., 2004; Austin et al., 2006). Given the operational constraints of social enterprises, which limit their ability to provide attractive financial incentives, employee retention becomes a pivotal strategic concern. Furthermore, the workforce within social enterprises is typically diverse, encompassing individuals with varied needs and interests (Roumpi et al., 2020).

Dorado et al. (2022) explained that the complexity of balancing social and financial missions, the ethical implications of conventional retention strategies, and the unique characteristics of the social enterprise workforce contribute to the scarcity of research on employee retention in social enterprises. For instance, using performance-based compensation to incentivise productivity led to unethical lending practices in microfinance social enterprises. When loan officers prioritised increasing their loan portfolio, borrowers were pressured into taking loans they could not repay, ultimately conflicting with the social mission of alleviating poverty. Despite the recognised importance of retention, studies on this aspect within social enterprises are surprisingly scarce, although an emerging trend indicates a growing interest in this area (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Cerdin et al., 2018; Moses & Sharma, 2020; Dorado et al., 2022). While social enterprises are diverse depending on their context, studying retention in social enterprises in less-examined areas like Thailand could add valuable insights to the mainstream literature on social enterprise management.

The existing literature reveals that direct studies on retention in social enterprises are scarce. Many studies focus on related areas such as employee motivation, employee relations, and commitment (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Brolis & Angel, 2015; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Black, 2021; Seet et al., 2021), often applying traditional HR theories and practices. Consequently, these studies typically identify practices

that support retention or enhance employee commitment and motivation but do not directly investigate how social enterprises retain their people. Since social enterprises vary significantly in both types and geographical contexts (Haugh, 2005; Doherty et al., 2014; Chandra & Kerlin, 2021), it is beneficial to learn from various cases regarding how they retain their employees. This approach may provide more context-specific insights into retention within social enterprises, offering perspectives beyond the general practices that enhance retention. Therefore, this study also aims to fill the gap by investigating how they retain their employees.

Drawing on the literature on retention, it is evident that employee motivation, beyond mere compensation and rewards, plays a crucial role in developing effective retention strategies. Motivation fundamentally influences job satisfaction and commitment, which are key drivers in an employee's decision to stay with an organisation (Ramlall, 2004; Saks, 2006; Zin et al., 2012; Rubenstein et al., 2018). In the context of social enterprises, understanding employee motivation becomes even more critical for retention. Research indicates that employees in social enterprises are motivated not only by financial compensation but also by the emotional and social impacts of their work (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Brolis & Angel, 2015). This unique motivational framework leads many social enterprise employees to accept lower compensation in favour of their fulfilment from contributing to societal goals, and such motivations significantly influence their decisions to stay or leave the organisation (Amin, 2009; Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Satar, 2018; Newman et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2020; Tortia et al., 2022). Therefore, studying and addressing these motivational factors is essential as it provides a better understanding of retention in social enterprises and potentially addresses a better understanding of how and why employees choose to stay with social enterprises.

Although numerous studies have examined employee motivation in social enterprises, the complexity of this topic—stemming from the diverse workforce and the intrinsic link between motivation and individual values—indicates that further

research is needed in this area (Brolis & Angel, 2015; Brolis, 2018; Seet et al., 2021; Parker, 2024). Furthermore, employee motivation is not static; it evolves with life experiences, social and cultural influences, and organisational environments (Latham & Pinder, 2005; Boswell et al., 2008). Thus, studying motivation solely within the context of organisational work may not provide a comprehensive view, especially in social enterprises where social values drive employees. This study addresses this gap by investigating how and why employees are attracted to social values, join social enterprises, and decide to stay or leave. Therefore, one of the primary objectives of this study is to understand the motivations of individuals working in social enterprises, specifically regarding their decisions to join, stay, or leave.

The literature review for this research has been thorough, encompassing various aspects of retention, people management practices, and employee motivation in social enterprises. It has highlighted significant gaps and complexities within these areas, particularly the dynamic nature of employee motivation and the unique challenges social enterprises face in retaining employees. While traditional retention studies typically focus on organisational strategies to encourage employees to stay, they may not fully integrate the employee perspective, such as motivation and commitment regarding purpose and meaning, organisational culture, or interpersonal relationships, which can significantly impact the work environment and retention (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Chan, 2010; Soltis et al., 2013; Black, 2021; Lamane-Harim et al., 2023). This can lead to an incomplete understanding of the factors driving retention, particularly in unique contexts like social enterprises. On the other hand, studies on employee motivation, although they consider the employee's viewpoint (Amin, 2009; Brolis & Angel, 2015; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Farny et al., 2019; Seet et al., 2021), primarily explore what drives employee motivation and commitment in their work. These studies, while insightful, may overlook how these motivational drivers (e.g., passion for work, personal values, a sense of purpose, personal satisfaction) interact with broader systemic factors (e.g., life experience, social and cultural influences, organisational environment) that contribute to long-

term commitment or the evolving nature of motivation (Latham & Pinder, 2005; Boswell et al., 2008).

A broader approach that integrates both perspectives and examines the deeper aspects of long-term employee commitment to social enterprises can provide a more comprehensive understanding of retention in this unique context. This approach leads to the concept of employee attachment, which goes beyond surface-level motivation and management practices. It delves into the emotional and psychological bonds employees form with their organisation (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003; Hassan, 2012; Ohana et al., 2013), making it particularly suitable for studying social enterprises where employees are often driven by a sense of purpose and connection to social values. Therefore, this study explores how employee attachment develops in the context of social enterprises rather than solely focusing on retention management or employee motivation. This shift in focus is driven not only by the literature on retention in social enterprises but also by an incorporated consideration of the theories used in this study, which will be explained in detail in the following section.

1.5.2 Theoretical Orientation and Justification

Based on the extensive literature review regarding employee retention, particularly by considering the context of social enterprises, this study has shifted its focus to employee attachment rather than solely concentrating on retention management or employee motivation. Before delving into the detailed study framework, research aims, objectives, and questions, this section will articulate the connection of the theories used in this study: Job Embeddedness, Social Capital, and Human Capital.

With the specific focus of this research on people management within social enterprises, particularly in relation to employee retention, this study has revisited the literature on employee retention with insights gained from reviewing the literature on people management in non-Western contexts and within social enterprises. The

literature on people management in non-Western contexts indicates that traditional people management theories, including retention frameworks, may not be applicable in the Asian context due to cultural, value, and belief differences. Scholars have advocated moving away from merely applying Western management theories without adapting or tailoring the frameworks to fit the Asian context (Meyer, 2007; Fang, 2010; Sanders et al., 2017; Cooke et al., 2020). Similarly, the literature on social enterprises suggests that people management in these organisations significantly diverges from traditional organisations (Borzaga & Defourny, 2004; Lyon & Ramsden, 2006). Traditional retention theories may not be suitable for studying retention in social enterprises due to the context-specific factors that influence retention, such as socio-cultural differences and sector-specific industries (Moses & Sharma, 2020; Black, 2021; Dorado et al., 2022). Additionally, retention factors in social enterprises are complex and closely tied to the social values upheld by their employees, which vary based on cultural perceptions of motivation, beliefs, and values, including what is recognised as rewards (Doherty et al., 2009; Thomas & Peterson, 2016). This literature review highlights the necessity of a contextualised approach to retention frameworks used in this study, emphasising the importance of tailoring the frameworks to the specific socio-cultural and organisational contexts of social enterprises.

Reviewing the literature on retention theories led to the discovery of the Job Embeddedness Theory for this study. The Job Embeddedness Theory (Mitchell et al., 2001) emerged as particularly relevant to employee retention and is well-suited for the study in the social enterprise context, where employees often remain committed to their roles not just for financial reasons but due to a strong alignment with their personal values, purpose, and community connections. The elements under the Job Embeddedness Theory, specifically ‘Links’ and ‘Fit,’ are flexible enough to explain the myriad factors influencing an individual’s decision to stay or leave an organisation. They extend beyond mere personal motivation to include a spectrum of individual values and interpersonal relationships. In this research, Job Embeddedness is employed as a lens to delve into the multifaceted reasons people choose to remain

or depart, offering a comprehensive view that includes both work-related and non-work-related aspects of individuals' lives. This approach allows for a broader exploration of the underlying motivations and reasons affecting employees' decisions to work, stay, or leave, moving beyond simple classifications like intrinsic/extrinsic motivations or push and pull factors.

However, a further review of Job Embeddedness Theory indicated that its constructs lack the nuance needed to understand how employees develop an attachment to an organisation. For instance, while the 'Links' construct refers to the relationships that can drive employees to stay, the theory does not explain how these social ties evolve into employee attachment. Similarly, the 'Fit' construct, which refers to how well employees align their values, goals, and skills with organisational values, preferences, and environments, emphasises that strong alignment fosters motivation to stay, but it does not explain how this alignment transforms into attachment. The theory falls short in explaining the intricate mechanisms of employee attachment development.

A deep study of Job Embeddedness Theory reveals that the significant elements leading to the development of employee attachment are individuals' relationships and motivations. In this regard, the study incorporates social capital and human capital theories, recognising that relationships and motivation play a crucial role in the development of employee attachment. Social capital is employed to explore the development of relationships into employee attachment, while human capital is employed to examine the development of motivation into employee attachment.

Research in social enterprise literature indicates that social capital and human capital are key drivers of success and sustainability across various entrepreneurial activities (Kolstad & Wiig, 2013), social enterprises (Ko & Liu, 2015; Lang & Fink, 2019; Pansuwong et al., 2023), and businesses within the sharing economy (Zhang et al.,

2022). The studies showed that social capital supports organisational sustainability in many ways. It enhances network capabilities that are crucial for accessing resources, exchanging knowledge, and identifying opportunities (Anderson & Jack, 2002; Evans & Syrett, 2007; Hidalgo et al., 2024), decreases transaction costs and facilitate the process of navigating through bureaucratic systems (Boudreaux & Nikolaev, 2019), facilitate innovation (Weerakoon et al., 2020), and enhances social impact of enterprises (Mohiuddin et al., 2023). Similarly, human capital is also recognised as essential for promoting successful entrepreneurial activities (Audretsch & Keilbach, 2004; Schwarz et al., 2023), contributing to social enterprises' success (Satar & John, 2016; Modesti et al., 2020), sustaining employee motivation and improves skill development (Black, 2021), and enhances the organisational social impacts (Sarti & Torre, 2015; Bontis et al., 2018; Woo & Jung, 2023).

However, despite extensive research on social capital's effects on organisational achievement and sustainability, the specific links between social capital and people management, particularly in relation to employee attachment within social enterprises, remain underexplored. This gap presents significant research potential. Likewise, although various aspects of human capital have been studied, including the education, skills, and professional experiences of individuals (Audretsch & Keilbach, 2004; Modesti et al., 2020; Schwarz et al., 2023; Woo & Jung, 2023; Bontis et al., 2018), as well as leadership and HR practices (Sarti & Torre, 2015; Suriyankietkaew et al., 2022; Black, 2021), there is a notable lack of research on how human capital in relation to employee motivation and its transformation into employee attachment, which is crucial for enhancing the sustainability of social enterprises.

The gaps identified above suggest that it is worthwhile to study social capital and human capital as forms of social enterprise capital that can develop into employee attachment. This notion was enhanced by the discovery of the connection between Job Embeddedness and both social capital and human capital. It is clear that relationships and networks, whether between individuals or within groups, facilitate

the development of employee attachment. This is exemplified through the ‘Links’¹ element of Job Embeddedness and the ‘bonding’ aspect of social capital. However, using Job Embeddedness to explore the development of relationships into employee attachment may be limited by the theoretical framework’s ability to fully comprehend the origins of positive relationships that enhance employee attachment (Soltis et al., 2013; Jo & Ellingson, 2019). Consequently, social capital has become a primary theoretical perspective for examining the formation of relationships that develop into employee attachment. This investigation has led to the introduction of a new concept within the study framework, termed “**organisational relationship tie**,” which encompasses all aspects of positive relationships that contribute to employee attachment, including the emotional and psychological bonds that develop willingly between employees and their workplace.

Further investigation into the literature on human capital revealed that it is intricately connected to the ‘Fit’² element of Job Embeddedness. Traditionally, human capital theory focuses on factors such as education, experience, training, and skills that enhance an individual’s productivity and economic value to organisations. Research on human capital has typically aimed to quantify investments to achieve favourable organisational outcomes (Kearns, 2006; Nahapiet, 2011; Rodrigues et al., 2020). However, contemporary studies increasingly adopt a more contextual approach, incorporating a social perspective. Human capital now encompasses a broader range of skills, experiences, and knowledge, including employee competence, attitude, commitment, and personal characteristics (Ulrich, 1998; Han et al., 2008; Lepak et al., 2011). Scholars recognise human capital as an intangible asset, including genetic

¹ “Links” refers to the network of formal and informal connections within an organisation that can deepen an employee’s attachment and influence their decision to stay. For example, strong relationships with colleagues or familiarity with organisational processes may deter an employee from leaving. “Links” also extend to external bonds, such as relationships with non-work friends, a spouse’s employment, or community involvement, further increasing the employee’s reluctance to leave their current environment.

² “Fit” refers to an employee’s perceived compatibility with an organisation, encompassing personal goals, values, and career plans. The closer these align with the organisational culture and career realities, the stronger the attachment. “Fit” also encompasses the employee’s preferences for their surrounding environment or community, even though it is not directly related to the organisation itself. It could stem from the culture, art, and climate of the residence location. For example, employees who are content with where they live or enjoy their community will hesitate to leave the current organisation if doing so would distance them from this Fit.

inheritance, education, experience, attitudes towards life and business, as well as complementary skills and tacit knowledge, all of which contribute to the overall outcomes of organisations (Hudson, 1993; Storey, 1995; Han et al., 2008).

Interestingly, employee motivation is identified in the literature as a potential form of human capital that enhances organisational success by directly influencing employee performance (Lepak et al., 2011; Jeki & Sulastri, 2019; Harini et al., 2020). Scholars argue that motivated employees are often more productive, creative, and committed to their roles, thereby boosting overall organisational performance. Motivation can transition into a deeper commitment, making employees more likely to stay with an organisation when they feel motivated and connected to its goals and values, thus contributing positive outcomes toward organisations (Gardner et al., 2011; Kianto et al., 2017; Humeera et al., 2023). Although there were studies recognise employee motivation as a form of human capital contributing to organisational success (Lepak et al., 2011; Njoroge & Yazdanifard, 2014; Kianto et al., 2017), few have explored the linkage between employee motivation as a form of human capital and the potential development of commitment to stay and contribute to the organisations (Gardner et al., 2011; Humeera et al., 2023). This study also addresses this gap by acknowledging that employee motivation, as a form of human capital, can develop into employee attachment. Organisations, including social enterprises, can invest in this process, as numerous studies indicate positive outcomes for organisational performance and success resulting from motivated employees (Al-Tit, 2020; Kianto et al., 2017; Gardner et al., 2011; Satar, 2018; Black, 2021).

From this perspective, a new conceptual lens emerges, viewing human capital as a driver of employee motivation that can evolve into employee attachment, thereby becoming a vital resource for the growth and sustainability of social enterprises. Consequently, this insight leads to the introduction of another new term, “**motivation tie**,” into the study’s framework. “Motivation tie” refers to all aspects of motivation

that contribute to employee attachment, encouraging employees to stay willingly and enhancing organisational productivity.

Drawing on the theoretical concepts and identified gaps in the literature, this study applies Job Embeddedness as a framework to delve into the multifaceted reasons people choose to remain or depart, offering a comprehensive view that includes both work-related and non-work-related aspects of individuals' lives. Recognising Job Embeddedness's limitations in explaining the development of employee attachment, this study integrates social capital and human capital theories to explore how employee attachment develops within social enterprises.

1.5.3 Research Questions, Objectives, and Aims

This thesis primarily aims to explore how social enterprises manage their employees, starting with understanding the motivations driving individuals to work in these organisations and how employee attachment develops within this context. Additionally, it explores management practices to provide insights into how social and human capital can be leveraged to retain social enterprise employees while upholding their dual missions of social impact and commercial success.

Given the identified gaps in the literature, this study aims to achieve the following **research objectives**:

1. To explore how social enterprises manage their employees while upholding both social and commercial missions, using the case of Thailand.
2. To understand the motivations of individuals working in social enterprises, specifically regarding their decisions to join, stay, or leave.
3. To understand the development of employee attachment within the dynamic environment of social enterprises.

The **research questions** are articulated as follows:

1. How do social enterprises manage and retain their employees?
2. How does employee attachment develop within social enterprises?
3. How do social enterprises develop social and human capital to retain their employees while upholding both social and commercial missions?

1.6 Research Contributions

This study significantly contributes to the field of social enterprise, especially in terms of people management. It broadens the understanding of how social enterprises manage their employees, with a specific focus on the development of employee attachment. This research diligently delves into areas of literature that remain largely untouched, bridging a vital gap by illuminating aspects that have received limited attention in past studies. Situated within the Thai context, this research augments the empirical body of knowledge, providing detailed perspectives on the management approaches of social enterprises across varied environments. Through a thorough examination of these domains, this research aims to broaden the scope of current discourse, thereby fostering a more robust and comprehensive understanding of the entrepreneurial nuances and management dynamics inherent to social enterprises.

For the theoretical contribution, this research delves into a contextual analysis of social capital formation, focusing on the evolution of “organisational relationship ties.” It adds incremental knowledge to the existing theory by elucidating the processes of social capital cultivation, especially in the context of employee attachment within social enterprises. This deepened understanding highlights the role

of social capital in enhancing employee attachment. Furthermore, by integrating the concept of human capital to define the “motivation tie,” this study offers a perspective on employee motivation as a valuable capital for social enterprises.

From a practical standpoint, the insights garnered from this study can guide not only the social enterprises’ leaders but also board members, stakeholders, and policymakers in enhancing their people management practices. This not only ensures improved support for their employees but also aids in harnessing social and human capital. Such practices are essential in sustaining organisations that are committed to balancing both social and commercial missions. Furthermore, individuals whom social enterprises employ can utilise these findings to enhance their comprehension of their motivations pertaining to value-driven work and engage in introspective evaluation of the dynamic nature of their own motivation.

In summary, Table 1.2 presents a comprehensive overview of the gaps identified in the literature and theoretical frameworks. It categorises each field of literature and elaborates on the specific contributions of the research to these areas.

Table 1.2 Overview of The Gaps Identified and Research Contributions.

Literature and theory gaps	Literature field/ Theory	Contributions
- Research on people management in social enterprises is growing but still insufficient (Doherty et al., 2014; Belte, 2022).	Entrepreneurship/ Social Enterprise study	- Insights for people management and employee retention in the context of social enterprise.
- Scholars point out that social enterprises operate differently from conventional organisations because management practices are not directly applicable to them; thus, there is a call for more study and the development of their own strategies for managing their people (Royce, 2007; Borzaga & Solari, 2004).	Social Enterprise study	

Literature and theory gaps	Literature field/ Theory	Contributions
- Research on employee retention in the context of social enterprises is limited (Moses & Sharma, 2020; Dorado et al., 2022; Godfroid et al., 2022).		
Further research is needed on people management in social enterprises (Doherty et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2015, 2018; Belte, 2022).	People management in social enterprise	
<p>- There is a lack of knowledge regarding the antecedents and processes that lead to the development of social capital (Gedajlovic et al., 2013).</p> <p>- Studies on social capital formation are limited (Ellinger et al., 2011; Pastoriza et al., 2008). Theoretical and empirical research addressing the causes of social capital is scarce (Glaeser, 2001, p.2). Additionally, there is a call for studying social capital with a contextual approach (Bull et al., 2019).</p>	Social Capital Theory	<p>- Insights of how employee attachment develops within the context of social enterprise.</p> <p>- The insights from this study add to the literature on social capital formation.</p>
- Limited research has explored human capital from a social perspective, particularly regarding employee motivation, especially in the aspect of employee attachment (Gardner et al., 2011; Lepak et al., 2011; Humeera et al., 2023).	Human Capital Theory	- The insights from this study add to the human capital literature by highlighting that employee motivation is a form of capital worth investing in.
- Insufficient knowledge exists regarding employee motivation in the context of social enterprise (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Dupret et al., 2022).	Employee motivation in the social enterprise context	- The insights from this study add to the literature on employee motivation within social enterprises.

1.7 Methodological Orientation

The complexity of human motivations, relationships, and the subtle dynamics of individual interactions in social enterprises necessitates a qualitative approach for a comprehensive understanding. This method enables a deep dive into individuals' personal stories, experiences, and emotions that develop connections with their organisations.

Narrative inquiry is specifically selected for its ability to unearth the deeper layers of participants' experiences and insights. Caine et al. (2013, p. 576) assert that narrative inquiry is instrumental in exploring participants' lived experiences, allowing for a deeper understanding of their personal interpretations and reflective thinking. Kim (2016, p. 128) further supports this view, highlighting that narrative inquiry not only traces individual growth but also delves into the complex dynamics of human experiences, capturing their intricacies and contradictions that foster personal development.

At the heart of narrative inquiry lies the process of storytelling, where participants engage their cognitive faculties, judgments, and experiences, essential for narrative reasoning. This cognitive engagement enables the transformation of personal experiences into narratives that can be shared, providing the researcher with a rich understanding of the diverse range of human interactions. This insight is especially pertinent in exploring the complex layers of employee engagement and employee attachment within social enterprises. For a detailed explanation of the methodological foundation supporting this approach, please refer to Chapter 3 of this thesis.

1.8 Structure of The Thesis

The thesis is organised into six distinct chapters:

Chapter One: This initial chapter offers an overview of the study. It presents the background and context of the study, summarises research gaps, underscores the significance of the research, and delineates the research aims, research objectives, and contributions.

Chapter Two: This chapter presents a comprehensive literature review. It commences with an examination of social entrepreneurship and social enterprises, progressing to address various typologies of social enterprises, highlighting those prevalent in Thailand. The narrative then shifts to focus on people management in Asia and the context of social enterprise. Subsequent sections dissect topics such as employee retention and motivation. The Job Embeddedness theory is outlined, leading to discussions surrounding the social and human capital theories. Within this chapter, the theoretical framework is elaborated upon. The term “organisational relationship tie” is introduced to describe how interpersonal relationships can influence employee attachment, seen as an aspect of social capital. Similarly, “motivation tie” is defined as capturing the essence of what drives individuals in social enterprises, interpreting it as a facet of human capital that bolsters motivation and fosters employee attachment.

Chapter Three: This chapter provides an overview of the philosophical underpinnings that serve as the foundation for the research, as well as a comprehensive exposition of the research approach, design, and methodology utilised. The chapter provides a more detailed explanation of the systematic procedure for gathering data, including a clear description of the criteria used to select participants and an expanded discussion on the sample size. The pilot study and detailed methodologies regarding data analysis are thoroughly and comprehensively presented. Towards the end, the chapter presents an overview of the participants’ backgrounds, encompassing concise summaries of their life narratives

and offering a comprehensive account of participant characteristics and demographic details. This part serves to enrich the contextual depth and significance of the participant's contributions to the study.

Chapter Four: This chapter unveils the findings and themes derived from the research data, organised into four thematic groups. The first thematic group highlights themes pertaining to people management within social enterprises. The second thematic group delves into the nuances of motivation among those who have been associated with social enterprises, either as employees or founders. It explores the evolution and maturation of such motivations, providing insights into the nature of motivation in its mature form. The third thematic group focuses on themes associated with the cultivation of ties, viewed as manifestations of social and human capital, that evolve into employee attachment. The progression of these ties is elucidated, and critical elements that bolster and sustain the durability and potency of these ties are pinpointed. The fourth thematic group highlights themes regarding social capital formation within social enterprises. The unique employee attachment and the elements under the formation process of quality social capital are identified under this thematic group. This chapter reveals that all the developed themes significantly contribute to the research outcomes.

Chapter Five: This chapter reveals that all the developed themes significantly contribute to the research outcomes. It offers a comprehensive discussion that illuminates the interrelationships among the identified themes, delving deep into the insights gleaned from the findings. The discourse is reflective, providing valuable insights that align with and enhance the understanding of the associated research literature and theoretical concepts. In this regard, this chapter develops and presents the study's emergent framework.

Chapter Six: This chapter delves into the research contributions, the thesis’s key conclusion, and the potential avenues for future research while also addressing the study’s limitations.

Figure 1.1 below illustrates the interconnections and influences between the chapters in this thesis.

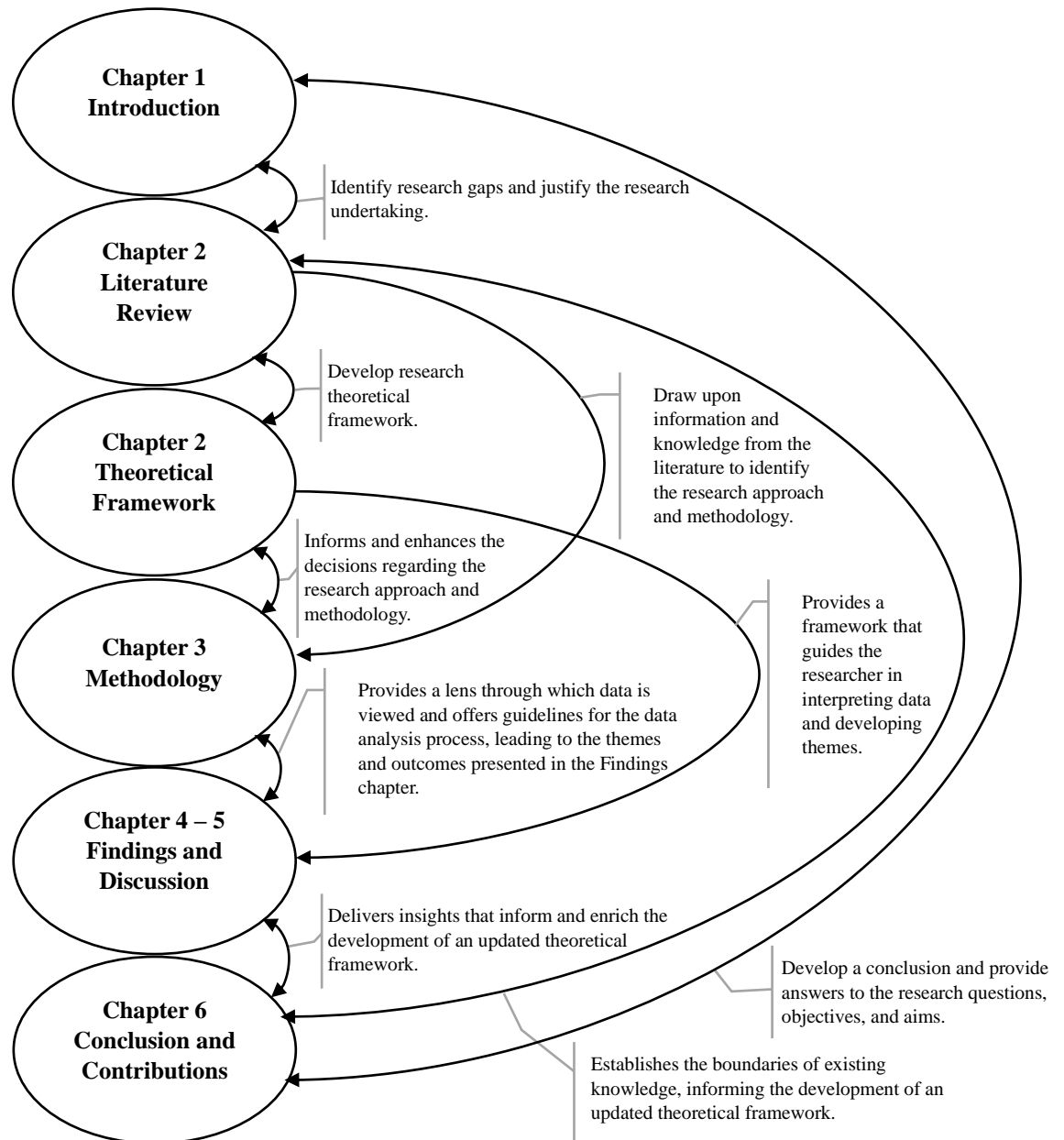


Figure 1.1 Structure of The Thesis

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is organised into five distinct sections. The first section reviews the literature on social entrepreneurship and social enterprises, setting the stage for understanding the specific context of this study. The second section examines the existing research on people management within Asia, particularly within the realm of social enterprises. The third section focuses on employee retention, discussing key literature that is vital for framing this study's context. The fourth section details the theoretical foundations that guide and lend academic rigour to the research. Finally, the fifth section introduces the theoretical framework developed for this study, which serves as the cornerstone for the subsequent investigation.

2.2 Section 1: Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise Literature

This section explores the existing literature related to social entrepreneurship and social enterprises. The review highlights that studying social enterprises and social entrepreneurship in various contexts enriches the field by identifying unique advantages. It points out significant gaps in research, particularly regarding the study of social enterprises in Asia and the specific area of people management within these organisations. Additionally, the literature underscores the complexity of social enterprise operations, illustrated by the diverse typologies of social enterprises, which can profoundly impact how these entities manage their employees. This complexity provides a fundamental basis for understanding the context of social enterprise studies.

2.2.1 Social Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise in Different Contexts

Social entrepreneurship was initially accepted as a study of an entrepreneurial phenomenon which strengthens the balance of economic and social purposes (Mair & Marti, 2006; Santos, 2012; Zahra et al., 2009). Accordingly, this concept aims to improve the balance between economic and social purposes in society by gathering resources and identifying opportunities to mitigate social issues or create additional social value. Such efforts are primarily motivated by social goals rather than by profit alone, as noted by Aliaga-Isla & Huybrechts (2018). Definitions of social entrepreneurship suggest its integration into the broader field of entrepreneurship, which is concerned with establishing new ventures, discovering opportunities, and innovatively utilising resources, as highlighted by Moore (1986) and Schumpeter (1934). This flexibility in defining entrepreneurship enables a reassessment of social entrepreneurship. El Ebrashi (2013, p.198) points out that social entrepreneurship can lead to distinctive outcomes, encompassing both tangible and intangible results. The concrete outcomes are related to the durability of social benefits, while intangible outcomes involve the ability to generate social change and impact. Thus, in the field, conceptualising entrepreneurship with an emphasis on these social outcomes helps broaden the scope of social entrepreneurship, encompassing various types of entrepreneurial ventures and underscores the importance of innovative approaches in addressing societal challenges.

Social entrepreneurship primarily focuses on amassing resources and exploring opportunities to alleviate social problems or generate social value, emphasising social purposes over profit. However, the definition of social entrepreneurship is still developing, with limited consensus on the definitions of both entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship (Satar & John, 2016; Bacq & Janssen, 2011). The divergence in definitions relates to the unique structures and concepts of social entrepreneurship, which vary from addressing the failure of the welfare state (Thompson et al., 2000) to tackling market failures concerning vulnerable and impoverished groups, including ecological preservation (Sasaki & Koizumi, 2016). Additionally, interpretations vary by region (Bacq & Janssen, 2011) and situation (Welter, 2011;

Nicolopoulou & Samy, 2018). Research into the definition of social entrepreneurship has evolved to include both practitioner and scholarly perspectives. Practitioners often focus on organisational categorisation (e.g., social enterprise typology), while scholars are interested in exploring various dimensions of social entrepreneurship (Conway Dato-on & Kalakay, 2016).

Like social entrepreneurship, the definition of social enterprise does not yet have a unified scope (Ridley-Duff & Bull, 2011, 2019). However, from an extensive view, “social enterprise refers to the use of commercial activity for a social purpose,” and its form is spread through different traditional, historical, and geographical contexts (Sasaki & Koizumi, 2016, p.1). From the literature, it can be seen that while the “US social enterprise remains a broader concept and emphasises the individual (social entrepreneurs), innovative strategy, and market outcome and impact”, in Europe, it emphasises organisation, collective dynamics and community, and the social problem alleviation (Ohana & Meyer, 2010, p. 442; Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

Research in the social entrepreneurship field is still nascent, and there is a vast room left for researchers to investigate social entrepreneurship in other areas. Doherty (2018, p.111) stated that “its dynamic in Eastern Asia is different from the typical one in the US because of the difference of driving forces such as the state influences, public policy, and civil society”. In fact, aside from Europe and the US, Doherty et al. (2014) addressed areas such as Asia and Africa that need to be investigated as they are different in sociocultural and economic contexts. In this regard, Haugh (2012) indicated that conducting the study in different contexts in different countries is a valuable contribution to knowledge in the field.

Regarding social entrepreneurship in different contexts, Sengupta and Sahay (2017) shed some light on social entrepreneurship literature to support the idea that most research originated in Europe and North America. The phenomenon of social

entrepreneurship in other areas, such as the Asia-Pacific, is still less investigated. They drew on the different main themes of social entrepreneurship research in the Asia-Pacific with a geographical lens. They explained the perspectives according to areas such as East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Oceania.

In East Asia, social entrepreneurship research was conducted in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Japan. The works related to China showed two primary contextual conditions, which are the Chinese rural enterprise and the change agent phenomenon of the leaders in rural communities. Both are related to the rural entrepreneurial firm, which acts as a social enterprise. In this regard, China's economic transformation and the reformation of the communist system probably be the factor that creates a unique context of social enterprise in China (Poon et al., 2009; Sengupta & Sahay, 2017, p.22). Social enterprises in other areas, such as Taiwan and Hong Kong, were created to emphasise solving unemployment and poverty problems (Chan et al., 2011, p.33). In Japan, social entrepreneurship research reveals that there are many forms and types of social enterprise, and choosing the social enterprise form depends on the financial operation of the ventures and the legal status (Laratta et al., 2011). In South Korea, research indicates that social entrepreneurship is primarily initiated by citizens' movements, with the government playing a crucial role in promoting it as a critical agenda item. Initially, the primary focus was on addressing the issue of unemployment, as highlighted by Bidet & Eum (2011) and Defourny & Kim (2011). For the social enterprise type in South Korea, there are both social enterprises that depend their operation on grants and donations and ones that are more congruent with business under commercial law. However, both relied on the trade with public and private sectors (Bertotti et al., 2014, p.49).

In South Asia, the social enterprise models pioneered by Yunus have significantly transformed the quality of life in Bangladesh, with the Grameen Bank standing out as a prime example of successful rule and support for micro-entrepreneurs. Research in Bangladesh has mainly focused on micro-finance and women's entrepreneurship, as

well as the broader ecosystem supporting social enterprises, including venture capital and incubation services. In Sri Lanka, the emphasis has been on agro-economic social enterprises, which have shown potential for social transformation and offer a model that could be replicated across all districts, highlighting their potential for widespread impact (Sengupta & Sahay, 2017; Palmas & Lindberg, 2013, p.131). Meanwhile, in India, studies have concentrated on identifying success factors, resource allocation strategies, and ecosystem factors that influence the sustainability of social enterprises (Satar & John, 2016).

In Southeast Asia, research has identified distinct focal points in the domain of social entrepreneurship. In Malaysia, studies have concentrated on aspects such as social entrepreneurship education, the personality traits of social entrepreneurs, and the role of women in social entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, in Cambodia, social entrepreneurship is emerging as a viable solution for addressing socio-economic challenges, according to Sengupta and Sahay (2017). In Thailand, the emphasis has been on assessing social impact and developing community-based social enterprises, with a strong belief in their potential to enhance quality of life and reduce poverty. Contrastingly, in the broader Australasian region, including Australia and New Zealand, the literature on social entrepreneurship primarily revolves around identifying critical success factors for social enterprises, innovative practices in the field, community development, well-being and educational aspects related to social entrepreneurship, and strategies for scaling up social enterprises (Sengupta & Sahay, 2017). From the works that relate to social entrepreneurship in the Asia-Pacific region, it appears that social enterprise and social entrepreneurship emerge in each area differently depending on historical background, level of economic development, social infrastructure, and the social problems which each area may give priority to solving them differently.

The literature suggests that social entrepreneurship and the study of social enterprises are both nascent and in the early stages of development. While there have been studies on social entrepreneurship and social enterprise in diverse contexts, the breadth and depth of research in these regions remain insufficient. The distinct socio-economic environments and cultural subtleties in these regions provide a diverse and unexplored source of knowledge that could enhance our understanding of the intricacies and possibilities of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise. Haugh (2012) has observed that robust evidence regarding the value and contribution of social enterprises is still lacking, and theories related to their creation, management, and performance are in the process of being developed. Consequently, this opens up numerous opportunities for further exploration in this field. Investigating social enterprises or social entrepreneurship in various contexts can significantly enhance our understanding and contribute valuable insights to this emerging field.

2.2.2 Social Enterprise Typology and Social Enterprise Types in Thailand

Although the boundary of social entrepreneurship definition is indecisive, many scholars have generated general agreement that the constructs of social entrepreneurship are different from commercial entrepreneurship and government agencies (Austin et al., 2006; Santos, 2012). It may overlap with some angles of the nonprofit organisation (Lasprogata & Cotton, 2003) and philanthropy (Ostrander, 2007), but the main distinction is on the social value creation (Lumpkin et al., 2013; Conway Dato-on & Kalakay, 2016; Satar & John, 2016).

The ambiguity of the definition of social entrepreneurship also allows for the diversification of social enterprises, as there is no sharp boundary for identification. The literature on social enterprise and social entrepreneurship showed that the ambiguity of the definitions results in the interchange of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise (Sasaki & Koizumi, 2016). However, using them as synonymous terms is not proper (El Ebrashi, 2013). The term social enterprise is more discussed in literature than social entrepreneurship (Bielefeld, 2009, p.71). It is a narrower

concept (Bielefeld, 2009, p.72) and relatively close to the practitioners' sphere, which is "related to a wide range of organisational forms which nonprofit organisation, cooperative, and for-profit organisation are included" (Sasaki & Koizumi, 2016, p.1). A social enterprise, then, is the term somehow interchangeable with some other types of social ventures depending on the different schools of thought.

Regarding the theoretical and conceptual models of social enterprise, many scholars try to distinguish the different types of them. Dees (1998) introduced the social enterprise hybrid spectrum to explain the differences. The spectrum shows the continuum of option and opportunity along the linear line by addressing one end of the line to represent the venture with a purely philanthropic aim. In contrast, the opposite is purely commercial one, and social enterprise was located somewhere in between. Alter (2007) proposes four types of ventures, possibly called hybrid organisations, which are nonprofits with income-generating activities, social enterprises, social responsibility businesses, and corporations practising social responsibility. Figure 2.1 shows the area of hybrid ventures along the dichotomy spectrum. Alter (2007) proposed that they are classified by the degree of venture activities. However, one study reminds us that social enterprises may not decisively be divided into types since they can move along the boundaries of public, private and voluntary sectors, especially if the movement is not linear (Seanor et al., 2007). At this point, Seanor et al. (2007, p.7) explained that the venture could move "backwards and forward" on the spectrum "depending on good times or bad times of social enterprise". "Good time refers to the periods of secure funding in which social enterprise could move toward social aim rather than economic goal" (Seanor et al., 2007, p.7). Compared to the study of Alter (2007), it is feasible to state that social enterprise can float along the spectrum depending on how the incomes have been made, the expenses have been used, and the activities have been done. This flexibility within their operational and financial strategies makes it challenging to classify them into distinct types in practice.

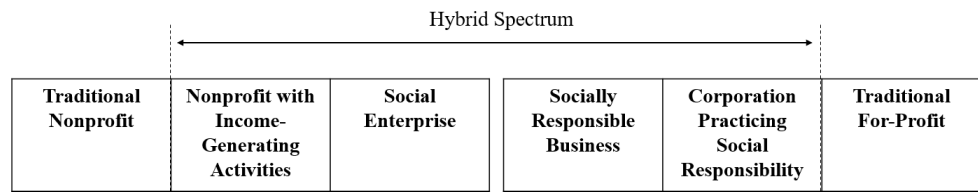


Figure 2.1 Hybrid Spectrum (Alter, 2007, p.14)

Recently, hybrid organisations have been used to conceptualise social enterprise (Doherty et al., 2014). The notion brought a broader view of social enterprise typology and perspective of social enterprise context and drivers. One interesting notion captures two types of social enterprise considering based on the concepts regarding the marketisation of nonprofit sectors. “The organic hybrid type refers to the venture which developed from classical, pure voluntary organisation to hybridity while the enacted hybrid refers to the venture initially established with social enterprise status” (Doherty et al., 2014, p.421). The organic hybrid concept correspondent to the literature part of that social enterprise was developed when nonprofit organisations, which usually got donation budget for the operation, were cut off, and the organisations turned to earning income as a source of nonprofit sustainability (Bielefeld, 2009, p. 70; Doherty et al., 2014). The enacted hybrid concept corresponds more to the initiative inducement of social innovation and social movement in business practice, which is more engrossing in the social mission than the commercial mission. This notion possibly results in the form of start-up social enterprises or social ventures such as Grameen Bank, which is the social business defined by Yunus (Yunus, 2007; Yunus et al., 2010), or the social enterprise certified as B-Corps, which is found mostly in the US (Chen & Kelly, 2015).

According to the literature on social enterprise, it is challenging to categorise social enterprises into specific types due to differences based on countries’ laws and regulations, organisational forms, historical and cultural aspects of their formation, and the varying circumstances and contexts of social problems across regions. Sasaki

and Koizumi (2016) acknowledged these difficulties in their study of social enterprise typology, highlighted the distinction and uniqueness of institutionalised mechanisms that influence social enterprises, and identified a potential social enterprise typology by revisiting its literature before elaborating on the types through the social enterprise spectrum frameworks introduced by Dees (1996). This framework captures the broadest range of social enterprise forms, leading to the introduction of two main types of social enterprise: philanthropy-based and commercial-based social enterprises. The classification differentiates the types by considering seven economic characteristic dimensions: economic nature of the operation, economic ownership, primary economic beneficiary, economic thoughts, economic sustainability, economic investment, and economic scalability (Sasaki & Koizumi, 2019, p.5). All aspects are concerned with the following issues: the kind of social problem addressed by social enterprise, the source of income that social enterprise relies on, the business approach and type of legal form chosen, and the utilisation of equity financing (e.g., dividend regulations). Consequently, this classification includes social enterprises such as nonprofit organisations, nonprofit corporations, community-interested companies (CIC) (e.g., the company limited by shares-based CIC, the company limited by guarantee-based CIC), Benefit Corporations, B-Corps certified firms, social cooperatives, and work integration social enterprise (WISE).

Additionally, regarding these two main types of social enterprises, Sasaki and Koizumi (2019) also propose a more precise social enterprise typology by splitting the two main types into four and considering the firm's financial sustainability and equity return system. The four types are “not self-sustainable social enterprise”, “self-sustainable with government support social enterprise”, “self-sustainable with no equity return social enterprise”, and “self-sustainable with lower equity return social enterprise”. Figure 2.2 shows this social enterprise spectrum, elaborating along the seven economic dimensions. The table shows four potential types of social enterprise under divergent conditions on economic dimensions and gives examples of each type of social enterprise in practice at the bottom. Interestingly, the literature on social enterprise typology, particularly the framework introduced by Sasaki and

Koizumi (2019), significantly enriches our comprehension of the diverse forms that social enterprises can take. However, categorising these entities into distinct types proves to be a challenging task.

		Philanthropy-based Social Enterprise				Commercial-based Social Enterprise	
Economic Dimensions	Purely Philanthropic Entity	Not self-sustainable	Self-sustainable with support	Self-sustainable with no equity return	Self-sustainable with low equity return	Mutual Ownership Entity	Purely Commercial Entity
	Donate money/time without return	Combination (donation and earned income)	Self-sustainable operation in quasi-market	Self-sustainable operation in market	Self-sustainable operation in market	For-Profit Entity with CSR	Self-sustainable operation in market
Economic Nature of Operation							
Economic Ownership	Not owned by financial contributors	Public	Member	Public	Shareholder		Shareholder
Primary Economic Beneficiary	Public	Public	Public	Public	Public		Shareholder
Economic Thought	Philanthropy	Making philanthropy more effective	Making welfare state more effective	Sustainable operation for public benefit	Public & Shareholder benefit balancing		Shareholder wealth maximization
Economic Sustainability (financial self-sustainable)	Reliant to outside financial resources	Not Sustainable	Sustainable	Sustainable	Sustainable		Sustainable
Economic Investment (Debt and Equity)	Not possible	No equity investment & Difficult for debt investment	Possible with conditions	No equity investment but possible for debt investment	Possible with conditions		Possible with conditions
Economic Scalability	Not Scalable	Low	Middle Low	Middle	Middle High		High
Examples of social venture in practice	Ordinary charitable organisation	Nonprofit Corporation	Social Cooperation	Nonprofit Corporation	Benefit Corporation Certified B Corp	Traditional cooperation, For-profit corporation with CSR mindset	Ordinary stock operation

Figure 2.2 Social Enterprise Spectrum, adapted from the Elaborated Social Enterprise Spectrum introduced by Sasaki and Koizumi (2019, p.17)

Social Enterprise Types in Thailand

In the early stages of mapping out the landscape of social enterprises in Thailand, there was a notable absence of clear criteria for classifying these entities into specific types. This gap was partially bridged by a 2016 report from Asia Fair Trade, as highlighted by Jaruwannaphong (2016), which offered a preliminary categorisation of Thai social enterprises into five groups: community-based organisations (comprising 39% of the total), SMEs and young enterprises (22%), cooperative groups (22%), nonprofit and non-government organisations (15%), and corporate subsidiaries (2%). This distribution underscored the complexity and diversity within the sector, illustrating how the boundaries between different types of social enterprises often overlap, with no explicit objectives guiding their categorisation.

Recognising the pivotal role of social enterprises in addressing societal needs, the Thai government subsequently took measures to support this sector more systematically. Despite opting not to define ‘social enterprise’ rigidly—to avoid constraining the diversity and innovation within this sector—the government introduced both legislative and promotional frameworks to aid social enterprises. Notably, the Social Enterprises Promotion Act B.E. 2562 (2019) emerged as a cornerstone, offering a framework for social enterprises seeking government registration and the associated benefits (TSEO, 2014). This legislative move by the Thai Social Enterprise Office and further discussions by Doherty and Kittipanya-Ngam (2021) underscored a deliberate shift towards formalising the sector while fostering an environment conducive to growth and innovation. This legislative framework acknowledges the multifaceted nature of social enterprises, allowing for a broad spectrum of activities and organisational forms to qualify for support. By not imposing a strict definition, the Thai government encourages a fertile ground for innovation within the social enterprise sector, allowing these entities to adapt and evolve in response to the dynamic needs of society.

According to Thailand's social enterprise policy, the Act specifies two distinct categories for social enterprise registration: non-profit sharing (Type A) and profit sharing (Type B) (TSEO, 2014; British Council, 2020). While only the former qualifies for the tax benefit of having corporate tax waived, the latter has more relaxed eligibility requirements. To register as a social enterprise in Thailand, a potential social enterprise must meet the following requirements outlined by the Act:

- 1) Obtain Thai legal person status, and this can take the shape of a corporation, a cooperative, or a charitable organisation.
- 2) Have a social mission, such as fostering the employment of disadvantaged populations or enhancing a community, society, or environment.
- 3) At least 50% of revenue must originate from selling products or services (only restricted to the profit-sharing type).
- 4) 70% or more of all earnings must be invested back into the community or social purpose (only applicable for the profit-sharing type).
- 5) Be governed well.
- 6) Have never had their registration cancelled.
- 7) The revoked entities did not have more than 25% of the partners, board members, or authorised representatives of the entity.

A comprehensive literature review on social enterprise typology has made it evident that financial self-sustainability and economic investment decisions, such as opting for no equity return or low equity return, potentially influence social enterprises' operational strategies and activities. Financially self-sustainable social enterprises can enjoy a broader spectrum of operational choices, which affords them enhanced flexibility in managing their workforce and selecting business activities. This financial independence allows these organisations to invest in innovative people management strategies and diverse business operations without the constant pressure

of financial constraints. Such flexibility is crucial for effectively navigating the operational challenges that frequently arise when striving to fulfil social missions. For example, a financially robust social enterprise can afford to offer competitive wages and invest in employee development programmes, which are critical for attracting and retaining skilled workers. Similarly, these enterprises can diversify their activities to include new and potentially riskier projects that align with their social goals but might not generate immediate profits. Ultimately, the ability to manage operations flexibly greatly enhances the enterprise's capacity to recruit, retain, and develop employees.

However, the task of categorising social enterprises into distinct types based on the social enterprise typology literature proves challenging, especially in Thailand. This complexity is not only due to the diverse financial sustainability models discussed in the literature but also includes types of social enterprises that are less common in Thailand (e.g., community-interested companies, B-Corps certified firms, Benefit Corporations), influenced by different laws, regulations, and the unique nature of social problems and societal structures found in the region. Additionally, the social enterprise sector in Thailand is still in its developmental stages, and the existing typology, divided into type A and type B, primarily aims to facilitate tax benefits and aid rather than serve broader analytical purposes. Moreover, according to the literature, Seanor et al. (2007) explained that the financial stability of a social enterprise can cause its categorisation to fluctuate along a spectrum. This implies that more financially stable enterprises are likely to increase their investment in people management, aligning more closely with commercial-based types. Conversely, those experiencing financial instability might reduce such investments, potentially reverting towards philanthropy-based types. This fluctuation underscores the challenges in definitively linking a social enterprise's type with its people management practices, especially in this research context that focuses on employee retention.

While the study of social enterprise typology does not directly lead to categorisation for this research, it provides substantial insights. The exploration of the literature reveals a significant diversity within the sector, enhancing the understanding of how these enterprises may vary in their operations and people management strategies. The review also sheds light on the diverse factors that potentially influence this variability, which could significantly impact organisational management and operations. Acknowledging the nuanced differences in operational approaches among social enterprises, potentially shaped by their financial strategies, mission focus, and business attributes such as industry, size, and type, is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the sector. These differences potentially affect how social enterprises manage their resources and implement their people management, and this perspective offers invaluable insights for understanding the research context, which will be beneficial for more accurately viewing and interpreting the data.

2.3 Section 2: People Management within Social Enterprise in Non-Western Context

This section is divided into two main parts: a review of human resource management (HRM) in a non-Western context and people management within the context of social enterprises. The latter part explains why this study prefers the term ‘people management’ over ‘human resource management.’ This literature review section underscores the importance of understanding people management within social enterprises, particularly in non-Western contexts, highlighting the critical roles of culture, values, and beliefs. These elements constitute the foundational value system that significantly influences the people management system. Furthermore, this section reveals the challenges social enterprises face in managing people and emphasises the importance of employee retention within this context. Additionally, it stresses the need for awareness that frameworks and theories developed in Western contexts, which typically apply traditional HRM models, may not be suitable for this study. This realisation guides the adoption of a more appropriate approach that respects the unique cultural dynamics of non-Western environments.

2.3.1 Human Resource Management in the non-Western context

Management literature has extensively studied Human Resource Management (HRM) for several decades, initially focusing on its relationship with organisational performance and its capacity to provide long-term competitive advantages. Historically, HRM research evolved from a narrow focus on personnel management to a broader exploration of how HRM adds value to organisations and developed into Strategic HRM (SHRM). Consequently, SHRM aligns HR practices with an organisation's strategic objectives to enhance performance and secure competitive advantages (Boxall & Purcell, 2000). Over time, this field has also embraced a more critical perspective, advocating for a 'balanced' view of HRM and its impact on performance. This discourse led to the differentiation between 'hard' and 'soft' HRM (Storey, 2007; Paauwe & Farndale, 2017). Hard HRM views human resources as a function within an organisation, treating individuals as valuable assets whose abilities and traits are based on their impact on organisational costs (Legge, 1995; Hendry & Pettigrew, 1986). In contrast, soft HRM refers to a 'more human aspect of HRM' in which the organisation will 'treat employees as valued assets and a source of competitive advantage,' advocating a balance between these perspectives to sustain organisational competitiveness (Ishak et al., 2011, p.214).

The distinction between hard and soft HRM styles is further emphasised by recognising differences between HRM practices in Western countries and those in Asia. Originally, HRM concepts were predominantly developed from a Western perspective. However, there is an increasing recognition of the nuances in HRM systems across different global regions, leading to terms like 'Asian HRM' and 'HRM in Asia-Pacific' becoming more prevalent in academic discussions (Ng & Warner, 1999; Budhwar, 2004). Research indicates that Western HRM concepts may not be directly applicable elsewhere (Afiouni et al., 2013), particularly in Asia, where HRM systems are deeply influenced by traditional values related to Confucianism and Buddhism and regional values and beliefs. These findings are supported by various researchers (Asma, 2001; Zhu & Warner, 2004; Morita, 2007; Kim et al., 2018; Vu, 2022).

In Asia, cultural values such as prioritising the group, maintaining unity, and adhering to hierarchical relationships significantly contribute to the implementation of a collectivist approach in HRM practices. These cultural values are not just incidental but deeply ingrained in HRM practices. For example, Asian HRM often emphasises group goals, group-based evaluations and rewards, and decision-making that considers the overall impact on the organisation. In contrast, Western HRM tends to focus more on individual goals, provides awards based on individual accomplishments, and encourages direct communication and competition (Zhu et al., 2007; Rowley et al., 2017). Additional elements such as informal networks, loyalty, and the importance of interpersonal relationships also play a crucial role in shaping Asian HRM systems (Rowley, 1997; Kim & Briscoe, 1997), along with a pervasive influence of paternalism (Warner, 2000; Lee, 2001; Rowley et al., 2017). However, it is important to recognise that elements of hard HRM are also present within HRM in Asia, albeit to a lesser extent, due to the dynamic changes in the HR landscape driven by globalisation, economic crises, and the interplay of various cultural, economic, and political forces (Zhu et al., 2007; Lawler & Atmiyanandana, 2004; Rowley et al., 2017).

While Asian HRM practices take a comprehensive role in the welfare of employees, akin to a familial approach, Western HRM is more contractual, focusing less on personal relationships and more on legal agreements and professional boundaries. Conflicts might arise from these inherent disparities in values and ideas (Aycan et al., 2000). For example, misunderstandings might occur due to different expectations of leadership, communication, and workplace norms. Additionally, applying Western HRM strategies in Asian contexts without sufficient adaptation can result in inefficiencies and decreased employee satisfaction. These potential conflicts highlight the need for a nuanced understanding of HRM practices in different cultural contexts.

Furthermore, there is a significant call among scholars for a more nuanced approach that integrates the distinctive cultural, economic, and institutional contexts of Asian countries into HRM and management research (Bruton & Lau, 2008; Meyer, 2006). This approach emphasises the need for contextualisation in HRM, as highlighted by Paauwe and Farndale (2017). HRM research should diligently account for the distinctive circumstances of Asian nations, where cultural, economic, and regulatory structures diverge significantly from those prevalent in the West, which have historically provided the foundation for a substantial portion of HRM theory (Tsui, 2004; Meyer, 2006; Cooke & Kim, 2018).

Research continuously demonstrates that prevailing Western theories and models are inadequate in capturing the fluid shifts in values, attitudes, and institutional contexts in Asian countries (Fang, 2010; Lowe et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2022). Moreover, the application of HRM strategies developed within a Western framework often proves inappropriate or ineffective in Asian contexts due to distinct social, cultural, historical, and political factors (Sanders et al., 2017). This mismatch underscores the fact that explanations and applicability of theories born in one region may be rendered obsolete or insignificant in another, especially in cases where substantial cultural and institutional disparities exist (Peng, 2005).

In response, scholars advocate shifting away from merely applying Western management theories in Asia towards adopting more indigenous research approaches. These approaches should respect and integrate the unique characteristics of the Asian context (Meyer, 2007; Fang, 2010; Sanders et al., 2017; Cooke et al., 2020). Such a paradigm shift would make HRM models more locally relevant and enhance their contribution to the global HR knowledge base, offering new perspectives and frameworks that respect the nuances of culture and values specific to Asia (Tsui, 2004; Fang, 2010). By aligning HRM research with local needs and conditions, scholars can develop a more diverse body of management knowledge that effectively serves global needs, including those specific to Asian countries (Tsui,

2004; Sanders et al., 2017). This reorientation towards contextually grounded research will contribute fresh insights to the global discourse on HRM, ensuring that management practices are both effective in and adapted to the diverse settings of Asia (Meyer, 2006).

2.3.2 People Management and the Importance of Employee Retention within Social Enterprises

In the unique realm of social enterprises, the approach to people management significantly diverges from that of traditional for-profit businesses due to their dual mission (Borzaga & Defourny, 2004; Lyon & Ramsden, 2006). These organisations not only aim for financial sustainability but also strive to create a meaningful social impact, and this dual focus profoundly influences both their operational strategies and people management systems. As Chapman et al. (2007) observed, managing people in social enterprises is often mistakenly perceived as merely engaging in morally commendable activities. In reality, effective people management in these organisations involves engaging a wide array of stakeholders, including employees, beneficiaries, and the broader community. Consequently, people management practices are deliberately designed to be inclusive and participatory, ensuring that employees are deeply involved in decision-making processes (Winkler & Portocarrero, 2018).

Moreover, Doherty et al. (2009) underscore that social enterprises typically adopt a flat organisational structure with the explicit aim of fostering work environments that are responsive and supportive. This structure is not just a formality but a crucial element in accommodating the various and occasionally contradictory institutional logics that these organisations encounter. It necessitates an adaptable organisational structure that can dynamically respond to the diverse requirements and expectations of stakeholders. The need for adaptability often encourages a management approach that is less hierarchical and more collaborative, fostering an environment where ideas may circulate freely and innovation can flourish (Doherty et al., 2014; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Winkler & Portocarrero, 2018).

Furthermore, the distinctiveness of social enterprises extends beyond their structural and operational strategies to encompass their foundational ethos and cultural practices. Scholars such as Borzaga and Defourny (2004) and Borzaga and Solari (2004) emphasise that social enterprises operate quite differently from for-profit, public, and traditional non-profit organisations. Therefore, their models and best practices, especially in terms of people management, must be contextualised to align with the organisation's cultural and social missions. This contextualisation is crucial for ensuring that the practices resonate with the internal stakeholders and contribute effectively to the broader social objectives the enterprise aims to achieve.

Managing people in social enterprises presents unique challenges, primarily due to resource constraints and inherent organisational tensions, as highlighted by Satar and John (2016). These enterprises often grapple with a scarcity of professional workers, complicating efforts in recruitment and retention. This issue is further exacerbated by their limited ability to offer competitive salaries and benefits due to funding restrictions, which makes it difficult to attract and retain skilled talent (Bhati & Manimala, 2011; Hsieh et al., 2018; Moses & Sharma, 2020). The complexity of managing people in social enterprises is also evident in the dual-value mission these organisations uphold. Employees are expected not only to possess the necessary skills and abilities but also to align with the social values of the enterprise. This alignment is not always present at the time of hiring but tends to develop as employees engage with the organisation's culture and objectives over time (Royce, 2007; Doherty et al., 2009; Sarti & Torre, 2015). Moreover, social enterprises often employ individuals who require additional support and training, such as those with disabilities or from disadvantaged backgrounds, leading to higher production costs (Amin, 2009; Bhati & Manimala, 2011; Dorado et al., 2022). These factors collectively contribute to a challenging landscape where the management must balance operational efficiency with social goals, often under tight budget constraints.

Additionally, the complexities of employee motivation within social enterprises present distinct challenges that surpass those encountered in more traditional organisational settings. The motivation of employees in social enterprises goes beyond financial incentives, which is a trait they have in common with employees in nonprofit organisations (Rawls et al., 1975; Cooper et al., 2020). These employees place significant emphasis on non-monetary aspects such as social interaction, personal development, and learning opportunities (Schepers et al., 2005), reflecting a deeper, value-driven engagement with their work. The motivational framework of social enterprise employees differs from those in both traditional nonprofit and for-profit sectors. They inherently exhibit pro-social behaviours (Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018) and demonstrate a strong commitment to their organisation's mission (Ohana & Meyer, 2010), akin to their counterparts in nonprofits (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003). Moreover, they value the broader implications of how their organisations operate, often driven by a desire to contribute positively to society, similar to those in the voluntary sector (Cunningham, 2001). Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge that these employees effectively manage their idealistic motivations alongside practical considerations. They demonstrate a keen interest in both financial incentives and the emotional and social impacts of their work (Schepers et al., 2005; Brolis & Angel, 2015; Li, 2018; Truong & Barraket, 2018; Roumpi et al., 2020). This multifaceted approach to motivation reflects a complex interplay of values unique to individuals working across different sectors. Considering the complex nature of this landscape, there is an urgent want for additional investigation into the motivational dynamics inside social enterprises, as highlighted in the existing literature (Brolis, 2018; Seet et al., 2021; Parker, 2024). Continued research will lead to a better understanding of the complex processes and methods involved in improving employee retention and optimising organisational efficacy in the context of social enterprises.

Based on existing literature, it is evident that employee retention is critically important for the success and sustainability of social enterprises (Haugh, 2005; Moses & Sharma, 2020). These organisations face unique challenges that complicate people management due to their dual mission, constrained budgets, diverse

workforces, and the complex motivations of their employees. Despite the recognised importance of retention, studies focused on this aspect within social enterprises are surprisingly scarce, though an emerging trend indicates a growing interest in this area (Cerdin et al., 2018; Moses & Sharma, 2020; Dorado et al., 2022; Godfroid et al., 2022). Dorado et al. (2022) highlight that a significant barrier to studying employee retention in social enterprises is the potential conflict between common HR practices and these organisations' ethical values. For example, offering competitive salaries is a standard strategy to retain employees in for-profit sectors. However, it can lead to ethical dilemmas in social enterprises, where financial resources are often intended primarily to advance social missions rather than maximise employee remuneration.

Royce (2007) highlights the challenge within social enterprises, where managers are often required to develop a set of complex skills over time which extend beyond their initial qualifications. These encompass recruitment, performance management, pay, attendance, training, and welfare, indicating a dynamic skill set that evolves as managerial roles expand. Building on this, Doherty et al. (2009) further emphasise the strategic importance of retention, particularly in sectors where specific skills are scarce. They underscore that retention is not just beneficial but crucial to the survival of social enterprises, thereby underlining the need for a well-formulated strategy to maintain skilled employees. This approach ensures that social enterprises can effectively manage and adapt to the multifaceted demands of their operations over time. Furthermore, Satar and John (2016) argue that social enterprises should employ individuals who possess relevant skills and are deeply committed to the organisation's social mission. This alignment helps sustain motivation and contributes to long-term organisational success. However, recruiting and retaining such uniquely qualified personnel without competitive salaries or compelling benefits presents a significant challenge.

A comprehensive literature review shows that the operation and people management within social enterprises are intricately linked to value systems. This connection significantly influences aspects such as employee motivation and the complexity of

balancing financial and social missions, which encompasses recruitment, selection, and retention practices. Moreover, the literature review highlights the critical need to recognise the cultural, value, and belief differences that distinctly shape people management systems in Western and Asian contexts. According to the literature, numerous studies from Asia suggest the prevalence of a paternalistic style in people management within social enterprises, which plays a significant role in supporting how social enterprises can enhance employee retention. This style often manifests as a family-like relationship between employees and management, a feature observed across several countries, including India (Moses & Sharma, 2020), Vietnam (Truong & Barraket, 2018), Thailand (Napathorn, 2018b), and Bangladesh (Ferdousi & Abedin, 2023). Conversely, paternalism in social enterprise's people management, especially in relation to employee retention, is rarely mentioned in Western literature. However, Ohana and Meyer's study (2010) observed this element in some French social enterprises. They noted that paternalism did not correlate with increased employee retention. In these instances, employees trusted their leaders to make decisions because they believed these leaders were more knowledgeable and capable. This trust was based on the perception that their leaders had superior knowledge and skills, which led employees to defer decision-making to them.

Indeed, the impact of paternalism on people management practices varies significantly between regions. Aycan et al. (2000) pointed out that in Western societies, paternalism is often viewed negatively, associated with authoritarianism and seen as undermining employee autonomy by promoting a unilateral decision-making style. Conversely, in Asian cultures, paternalism is often viewed positively, integrated with traditional values of familism and characterised by a hierarchical yet nurturing relationship, where leaders provide guidance, support, and protection, and employees demonstrate loyalty and deference. This nuanced understanding significantly affects the approach to studying people management and employee retention in social enterprises, particularly in the Thai context. As scholars have mentioned, Western theoretical frameworks and models may not always be applicable or effective in the Asian context due to these cultural differences. Therefore, research into people management, especially employee retention in Thai

social enterprises, requires a more contextually appropriate framework that embraces these Asian cultural specifics. In the subsequent sections of this chapter, the discussion on employee retention will be further elaborated, aiming to develop a new perspective for studying this issue in Thai social enterprises. This approach will integrate insights from non-Western studies to formulate a more relevant and effective research framework.

2.3.3 Using ‘People Management’ as a Term for This Research Study

To conclude this section, the review of the literature highlights that HRM systems in Asia and within social enterprises tend to favour a softer approach over a hard one. This softer approach prioritises cooperative practices and employee welfare, fostering trust, motivation, and a sense of belonging, which are the key elements of people-centric management styles (Cooke et al., 2020). Unlike the rigid, hierarchical structures which common in traditional business environments, Asian HRM practices and those within social enterprises, which emphasise mission alignment, are more inclusive and foster deep employee engagement. These practices facilitate the integration of employees into the organisational culture and identity, making the management style distinctly flexible and adept at handling people management challenges.

In this context, ‘people management’ emerges as a more fitting term to describe HRM in Asia and within social enterprises. It suggests a broader, more inclusive framework that encompasses not just formal HR policies and procedures but also the daily interactions that define workplace culture (Purcell et al., 2008; Storey, 2014; Knies et al., 2020). This term effectively captures the essence of HR practices that respect and incorporate leadership styles, cultural norms, and the social mission-oriented culture of social enterprises. It also reflects the diverse and evolving management practices across different contexts, blending modern Western management approaches with traditional Asian values and the unique characteristics of social enterprise.

Furthermore, while HRM is typically associated with structured and systematic approaches involving standardised policies, practices, and metrics, ‘people management’ is characterised by its less formal, more adaptable nature (Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007; Knies et al., 2020). This flexibility is particularly crucial for managing social enterprises in regions with diverse cultural, legal, and economic environments like Asia. Many Asian businesses still uphold their traditional management practices that might not align with Western-driven HRM models. Similarly, the diversity of social enterprise management also varies depending on its specific context. The term ‘people management’ aptly avoids the Western-centric connotations of HRM, embracing indigenous practices that emphasise seniority, community engagement, social harmony, and interpersonal relationships. Therefore, ‘people management’ not only captures the day-to-day employee interactions and organisational culture but also aligns well with the broader social and community-oriented objectives characteristic of social enterprises. This term is particularly suitable for this study, given its focus on non-Western contexts.

2.4 Section 3: Employee Retention and Motivation

2.4.1 Overview Concept of Employee Retention

Employee retention refers to an organisation’s ability to keep its employees and minimise turnover, the rate at which employees leave the organisation. High employee retention signifies that an organisation effectively maintains a stable workforce, while high turnover suggests that employees frequently leave. This turnover can represent a significant cost in terms of recruitment, training, socialisation, and disruption, as well as various indirect costs (Phillips & Connell, 2003). However, from the employee perspective, if employees are satisfied with their jobs, they are less likely to leave their organisation (Zheng, 2009). Mobley (1982) explained that the propensity of people to leave their jobs depends on their perception of their current jobs relative to the alternatives they perceive. For example, if an employee wants to leave their job, they will consider and compare what they will gain (the benefits and opportunities from the new job as the alternative) and what they will lose (benefits and opportunities from the current job).

If there appears to be more gain than loss in quitting the job, the employee will have a substantial likelihood of leaving the job.

In order to manage employee retention, organisations typically implement a range of strategies to retain employees, such as offering competitive salaries and benefits, fostering a positive work environment, providing opportunities for career development, and promoting work-life balance (Ramlall, 2004; Zin et al., 2012). These strategies are designed to enhance job satisfaction and organisational commitment, making employees more inclined to stay with the organisation. Literature suggests that high levels of job satisfaction and employee engagement are crucial for retention (Griffeth et al., 2000; Saks, 2006; Rubenstein et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2019). For instance, when employees feel valued, challenged, and engaged in their work, they are more likely to remain with the organisation. Key factors contributing to job satisfaction include recognition, a sense of achievement, supportive management, and alignment with organisational values.

Given a holistic view of the concept of employee retention management, Coff (2011) explained that organisations can reduce the turnover rate by either fostering the perception of the current position as increased job satisfaction or, alternatively, lowering the perception of available alternatives. Typically, organisations have less control over employees' perception of alternatives (e.g., seeing other jobs or opportunities as better than the current job and being willing to leave the current position). However, an organisation can offer firm-specific compensation (a special offer that makes employees feel they do not want to leave the firm or cannot find any equivalent alternatives). Thus, employees will find it hard to find comparable jobs or leave their current jobs. In short, it is the way the organisation creates switching costs for employees, making them reluctant to leave because they do not want to lose what they currently have.

In the context of social enterprises, investing in firm-specific compensation can differ significantly from traditional organisations due to their dual mission and the complex nature of employee motivation in the sector, as previously discussed. Social enterprises aim to achieve both financial sustainability and social impact, which adds layers of complexity to employee compensation and satisfaction. For instance, while traditional organisations might focus heavily on financial rewards to retain employees, social enterprises often need to balance financial incentives with non-financial aspects that align with their social mission (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Dorado et al., 2022). This means that managing non-financial elements, such as fostering a sense of social contribution and reinforcing organisational values, becomes crucial. Employees in social enterprises are often motivated by the opportunity to contribute to a cause they believe in, making value alignment between the employee and the employer a critical factor in retention.

Therefore, to invest in firm-specific compensation in a social enterprise, it is important to focus on enhancing job satisfaction through means beyond just financial rewards. This can include providing opportunities for meaningful work, recognising and celebrating social impact achievements, and ensuring that organisational practices reflect the values and mission of the enterprise (Satar, 2018; Truong & Barraket, 2018; Seet et al., 2021). However, aligning with employees' personal values can be even more complex in social enterprises. Employees who choose to work in these organisations often have strong personal values related to the social mission. This means that social enterprises must be particularly attentive to maintaining alignment between their organisational values and the personal values of their employees. Any perceived misalignment can lead to dissatisfaction and turnover, which implies that employees might leave to work for another social enterprise that they feel aligns better with their values, even if both organisations uphold similar social missions and values.

Moreover, some employee retention strategies typically used in conventional organisations may not be applicable to social enterprises. For instance, the selection process strategy is highlighted as a crucial factor in reducing turnover. Selecting employees whose values and behaviours align with the organisation's needs and culture can be more effective in reducing turnover than focusing on job satisfaction after hire, as organisations can better identify candidates who are likely to stay (Barrick & Zimmerman, 2005; Ployhart, 2006; Hausknecht et al., 2009). However, as found in the literature (Royce, 2007; Doherty et al., 2009), social enterprise managers and workers may not possess all the required skill sets (values, attitudes, task skills) at the time of recruitment. They typically develop their skills and attitudes and integrate their personal and organisational values during employment. Skills, attitudes, and shared values are developed through participation in activities, assigned tasks and responsibilities, and engagement with people within and outside the organisation. Therefore, although the selection process can enhance organisational employee retention, in the context of social enterprises, it may not be more important than job satisfaction and other factors related to personal and social values.

As such, while conventional retention strategies offer valuable insights, social enterprises may need to adapt them to their unique dual mission and the intrinsic motivations of their workforce. The following discussion topics will delve deeper into the specific challenges and literature regarding strategies for managing employee retention within social enterprises.

2.4.2 Employee Retention and the Social Enterprise Literature

2.4.2.1 The Literature Related to Employee Motivation Within Social Enterprises.

The literature on employee retention extensively explores various theories related to motivation (Ramlall, 2004), highlighting its crucial role in supporting employee retention within organisations. Doherty et al. (2009) suggest that the likelihood of retaining talented individuals increases when they perceive the organisational culture as fulfilling, providing both a sense of accomplishment and emotional engagement. In social enterprises, commitment to an organisational culture that aligns with an individual's personal beliefs and attitudes is especially pivotal (Storey, 2007; Doherty et al., 2009). Nguyen et al. (2020) further emphasise that the needs and expectations of employees within social enterprises significantly influence their motivation and job satisfaction. Therefore, it is critical to comprehensively understand and address the needs of employees in all aspects, including fundamental economic requirements like salary and job security, as well as more intricate psychological needs such as a sense of belonging, self-actualisation, expectations of social impact, and work-life balance. Aligning these needs with the organisation's social mission can foster a deep sense of commitment among employees. This alignment not only enhances their motivation and satisfaction but also plays a critical role in retaining them by fulfilling the implicit contracts they perceive with the organisation.

Numerous studies confirm that employees are often drawn to social enterprises for their social impact and the meaningfulness associated with the work (Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Satar, 2018; Sun et al., 2019; Seet et al., 2021). Caringal-Go and Hechanova (2018) note that employees in these organisations deeply value work that has a positive societal impact, deriving considerable job satisfaction and passion from their roles. This observation underscores the importance of people management strategies that boost job satisfaction through meaningful work and recognition, fostering a committed and stable workforce. Despite facing challenges such as job insecurity due to variable funding, employees in social enterprises often experience

significant satisfaction from their contributions to important causes (Amin, 2009). Furthermore, the literature indicates that employees in social enterprises often accept lower compensation in exchange for the intrinsic rewards that come from their impactful work (Depedri et al., 2010; Newman et al., 2018; Tortia et al., 2022). This trade-off highlights a key aspect of employee retention strategies within these organisations, emphasising the role of meaningful work over financial incentives.

The literature reveals that individuals who choose to work for social enterprises are often motivated by a commitment to social contributions and the meaningfulness of their work. Consequently, social enterprises strategically adapt their recruitment and selection processes to attract individuals whose values align with the organisational mission, thereby fostering a high degree of mission attachment. This alignment motivates employees by linking their day-to-day efforts with impactful outcomes that resonate with their personal beliefs or societal contributions. Although mission attachment and organisational commitment are effective strategies for attracting and retaining employees, research suggests they are insufficient for long-term retention as factors such as job satisfaction (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003; Ohana & Meyer, 2010), employees' perceptions of fairness regarding rewards and resources (fair treatment), overall work environment, effective leadership, career advancement, and compensation also play crucial roles in retention in social enterprise and organisations in the third sector (Kim & Lee, 2007; Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Brown & Yoshioka, 2003;).

In addition to the noted trend that employees in social enterprises often accept lower compensation in exchange for meaningful work, research also highlights the importance of other factors such as work flexibility, work-life balance, and a supportive work environment. These elements significantly influence their decisions to remain with an organisation, as employees often consider these benefits adequate trade-offs for lower compensation (Truong & Barraket, 2018; Satar, 2018; Roumpi et al., 2020). In fact, employees in social enterprises place a high value on emotional

attachment, which includes not only alignment with the organisation's mission but also personal satisfaction and well-being. This underscores the need for a comprehensive people management approach that addresses the workforce's varied and individualised values and needs. While the commitment to a mission is undeniably a strong motivator, employees' diverse and complex needs suggest that a more nuanced, multi-dimensional strategy is essential for effectively understanding and retaining staff in social enterprises.

2.4.2.2 The Literature Related to Employee Retention Study Within Social Enterprises.

According to the literature, research directly focusing on employee retention within social enterprises is relatively scarce, though it shows growing trends. It is often explored within the broader context of employee motivation and HR practices aimed at supporting retention. For instance, Truong and Barraket (2018) investigated how social enterprises in Vietnam employ high-involvement work practices (HIWPs) such as information sharing, knowledge development, power distribution, reward systems, and family-building practices to attract and retain employees in resource-poor environments. Similarly, Bhati and Manimala (2011) examined how innovative HR strategies can attract and retain talent in social enterprises. This theme is continued by Black (2021), who explored how micro-sized social enterprises utilise innovative HR practices to compensate and retain their employees. Moreover, Moses and Sharma (2020) analysed how HRM practices influenced by market and community logic affect firms' ability to acquire and retain staff in the healthcare sector in India. Dorado et al. (2022) also studied how social enterprises can design HRM practices that cultivate mission identification and support employee retention. Both studies suggest that social enterprises should adopt HR practices that are not only mission-aligned but also responsive to labour market conditions and tailored to the unique challenges of social enterprises. They emphasise the importance of being proactive in mission identification and retention efforts to build a strong person-organisation fit. As the identified results, several factors can support employee retention in social enterprises, including communication about organisational goals and social

contributions, providing additional training or opportunities for personal growth, enhancing organisational credibility through brand building, creating a sense of ownership among employees through participation in decision-making, and treating employees as integral stakeholders within the organisation, thereby making them part of the value-creation process, enhances and sustains their commitment (Nguyen, 2020). However, the effectiveness of these factors also depends on the specific business industry and context, including regional, cultural, and sector-specific characteristics. For instance, the healthcare sector in India (Moses & Sharma, 2020), the financial sector (Dorado et al., 2022), and micro-sized enterprises (Black, 2021) each face different challenges and opportunities. What works well in the healthcare sector may not be as effective in the financial sector, and factors found to be effective in micro-sized enterprises may not apply to larger or differently structured organisations.

In addition to studies on employee retention in social enterprises, another theme that emerges from the literature is the role of rewards. Porter and Lawler (1968) posited that if employees expect that their efforts will be rewarded and that the rewards are valuable, then enhanced motivation and performance will follow. Doherty et al. (2009) suggested that social enterprises could utilise this concept by studying employees' perceptions of the value of rewards and creating structures where the results of efforts are visible and acknowledged. This approach is particularly viable for social enterprises, which, despite not being able to offer competitive compensation, possess a wealth of intrinsic rewards. For example, the Total Reward Structure Model by Bloisi (2007), one of the many developed reward models (Rollinson, 2005), serves as a comprehensive tool for considering compensations to motivate and retain employees. This model extends beyond traditional monetary rewards to include a variety of elements designed to attract, motivate, and retain employees by addressing their diverse needs and desires, such as direct monetary and non-monetary rewards, including social and career rewards, pensions, insurance, training, sick pay, and childcare.

However, the literature showed that few studies directly focus on rewards within the context of social enterprises. Some studies highlight that social enterprise employees feel rewarded for their contributions to societal goals. Their rewards often encompass recognition and non-monetary benefits, leveraging the rewarding nature of the work itself (Amin, 2009; Napathorn, 2018a). The limitation of reward studies in this context may be due to the complexities associated with the social values upheld by individuals and cultural differences in perceptions of employee motivation and the various benefits and rewards (Thomas & Peterson, 2016). Moreover, the reward model links value to retention, emphasising the organisation's ability to recognise what their employees truly value. If employees do not perceive a clear link between their efforts and the rewards, or if they do not value the rewards offered, then the effectiveness of these rewards to motivate may be diminished (Royce, 2002; Doherty et al., 2009).

Although not extensively covered in social enterprise literature, the rewards theme introduces important considerations about the complex value systems within these organisations. It underscores the varying personal values of individuals working in social enterprises, which can evolve or diverge from the organisational culture over time. This theme brings awareness to the challenges organisations and leaders face in recognising and aligning with these evolving values, highlighting the nuanced understanding needed to engage and retain employees in social enterprises effectively. Based on the discussion above, it is clear that aligning the values of a social enterprise with employees' personal values can significantly enhance retention. However, fully understanding or recognising employees' personal values can be challenging, as this involves not only identifying what they value but also understanding the priority they assign to these values in relation to themselves while working with the organisation. While employees of social enterprises typically care about social contribution, their priorities can vary. Some may emphasise financial compensation more, while others might prioritise robust welfare benefits.

Apart from what was mentioned in the previous topic, where employee retention strategies typically used in conventional organisations may not be directly applicable to social enterprises, there is also a tendency for employee retention strategies developed in Western contexts not to be fully applicable elsewhere. For instance, in some cultures, social recognition and a sense of belonging might be more potent retention factors than monetary rewards, which are often emphasised in Western strategies. Besides, job security may be a more critical factor for employee retention in regions with less economic stability or higher unemployment rates than in more stable economies, leading individuals to prioritise job stability over career development opportunities. Consequently, employees in social enterprises across different regions and cultures, although valuing social contributions, may prioritise aspects related to retention differently. Therefore, studying employee retention within social enterprises, particularly in Thailand, requires a more contextualised approach.

2.4.2.3 Exploring an Effective Employee Retention Model for Social Enterprises

Although Western-developed models for employee retention may not be entirely applicable to this study, there is compelling literature on developing models that provide insightful explanations for why employees choose to stay or leave, aligning well with the context of social enterprises. Initially, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and job involvement were predominantly identified as related to turnover intentions (Holtom et al., 2008). This focus led researchers to delve more into the predictors of turnover causes and repercussions. However, when empirical investigations indicated that decisions to leave or stay are influenced by non-work-related elements and spontaneous or planned occurrences in an individual's personal life, the concept of turnover intention evolved. This evolution can be seen in the shift from traditional models focusing on causal mechanisms, like March and Simon's (1958) 'decision to participate model', to more contemporary frameworks like Allen and Griffeth's (2001) 'model of performance-turnover relationship'. This model provides a multifaceted and dynamic framework that includes external factors such as economic conditions and labour market dynamics. While previous models fell short of capturing the full spectrum of reasons behind employee departures and

overlooked some factors such as career transitions, relocation, social dynamics outside of work, social relationships within the organisation, and personal performance setbacks, recent studies in the field have indicated that these factors are related to reasons for leaving or staying and are not directly tied to causative mechanisms (Moynihan & Pandey, 2007; Grant & Hayron, 2011).

Interestingly, Job Embeddedness, introduced by Mitchell et al. (2001), expands the scope of analysis to include the impact of social constructs and the role of perceived alternatives in employees' decision-making processes regarding their continuation or departure from an organisation. This model addresses the complexities of social constructs in employees' lives and their relationships, revealing that positive relationships among employees—or even those developed outside the organisation—can foster an attachment that makes employees hesitant to leave or decide to stay. Mitchell and Lee (2001) further explain this in the “Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover”, which focuses on how people leave, and “Job Embeddedness”, which delves into why people stay.

2.4.3 Considering the Approach to Employee Retention Study in this Research Context

Based on the literature review, the factors that motivate employees to stay and contribute to social enterprises vary widely and include elements such as social values, beliefs, job satisfaction, flexibility, and work environment, which are prioritised differently by employees. Previous studies have examined employee retention primarily through human resources practices, rewards, and factors like employee satisfaction and commitment. However, this study will broaden its focus beyond organisational commitment and job satisfaction, as these factors alone provide a limited perspective on employee retention. The literature indicated that other elements, specifically relevant in the context of social enterprises, have a substantial impact on employees' choices to remain with the organisation or depart.

Furthermore, the study will move away from a solely rewards-based perspective, which may be excessively inflexible. Rewards might only serve as hygiene factors (not actually motivating employees but aiming to prevent dissatisfaction); thus, they may not be effective in understanding employee retention in the context of social enterprises. Moreover, considering factors such as work-life balance, which, if accepted as a motivational factor in the social enterprise context, studying solely on rewards may seem to focus on the drive rather than the true motivator that keeps employees happy and motivated. Integrating these kinds of factors requires a broader view (Doherty et al., 2009). In addition, while Western theories and concepts may not be entirely applicable to examining employee retention in Asia, the concept of Job Embeddedness has demonstrated its adaptability and perceptive nature. It comprehensively considers multiple aspects that influence employee decisions within the distinct social and cultural environment of Asian social enterprises.

Therefore, this research will employ Job Embeddedness as a framework to understand why employees leave or stay with social enterprises in Thailand. The next section of the research will elucidate why Job Embeddedness is particularly suitable for studying employee retention within the context of social enterprise in Asia. Additionally, a deeper exploration of Job Embeddedness highlights the shift in focus from solely employee retention to employee attachment, detailing the rationale for incorporating Social Capital and Human Capital theories. This approach will offer a more comprehensive analysis of these transitions.

2.5 Section 4: The Theoretical Underpinnings Guiding this Research.

According to the literature review, Job Embeddedness has emerged as an insightful framework for exploring employee retention within social enterprises. It helps these organisations understand why employees choose to stay or leave, thereby enabling the development of effective retention strategies. This section will provide a detailed overview of Job Embeddedness and explain why it is particularly suited for studying employee retention within social enterprises in Thailand. However, a deeper

exploration of Job Embeddedness shifts the focus from merely studying employee retention to understanding employee attachment. Consequently, this research incorporates Social Capital and Human Capital theories. This section will also elaborate on the reasons for this shift and provide detailed insights into both Social Capital and Human Capital theories.

2.5.1 Job Embeddedness Theory

2.5.1.1 Overview of Job Embeddedness

Job Embeddedness Theory is a framework in organisational psychology that explains why employees stay in their jobs. It emphasises the various factors that contribute to employees' strong connections and commitment to their roles and organisations (Holtom & Darabi, 2018). Mitchell et al. (2001) developed this fundamental concept by drawing from sociological literature, particularly focusing on social relationships and network links. According to Job Embeddedness Theory, the higher the level of an employee's integration into their job and organisation across all dimensions, the lower the probability of their quitting. This theory shifts the focus from traditional turnover models, which primarily emphasise job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and the casual effect, to a broader set of factors.

Job Embeddedness Theory comprises three constructs: 'Links,' 'Fit,' and 'Sacrifice,' each focused on both on-the-job (factors related to the job and organisation) and off-the-job (factors unrelated to the job and organisation) dimensions.

Firstly, 'Links' refers to the formal and informal connections between an employee and the institution or people (Holtom et al., 2006). In the on-the-job dimension, 'Links' encompass relationships among colleagues, workgroups, and supervisors. These connections, once established, create a favourable workplace atmosphere and beneficial interactions among employees, leading to increased job satisfaction and retention (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015). In the off-the-job dimension, 'Links' pertain to bonds in social and familial networks, such as friendships, spousal employment,

and community connections like church groups. When employees engage in community or off-work life, even if not provided by the organisation, they become reluctant to leave the familiar and pleasant experiences associated with their current job, further strengthening their job embeddedness.

Secondly, the 'Fit' construct refers to an employee's perception of compatibility and comfort with the organisation or community (Holtom et al., 2006). In the on-the-job dimension, 'Fit' involves the alignment of an employee's objectives, values, and future plans with the organisation's culture, job experience, and career reality. The greater the alignment (or more 'fit'), the stronger the attachment and embeddedness, leading to a longer organisational tenure. In the off-the-job dimension, 'Fit' encompasses employees' preferences for their surrounding environment or community, including cultural aspects, climate, amenities, and their residence's political and religious climate. When these factors align with an employee's preferences, they contribute to a sense of attachment, making employees unwilling to leave the organisation due to the potential loss of these attachments (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015).

Finally, the 'Sacrifice' construct refers to an employee's perceived cost of leaving or staying in an organisation, including material or psychological benefits (Holtom et al., 2006). This involves evaluating what one will gain or lose by quitting. The greater the perceived sacrifice, the more likely the employee is to stay. In the on-the-job dimension, 'Sacrifice' includes benefits such as pleasant coworkers, perks, engaging tasks, projects, and job advancement opportunities that would be forfeited upon leaving. In the off-the-job dimension, 'Sacrifice' pertains to the extent of loss felt if leaving the community and environment typically associated with their current job. According to Holtom et al. (2006), leaving a job often entails leaving a residence, resulting in the loss of desirable community attributes and neighbourhood safety, including the quality of local schools for employees with children (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015).

In summary, with its three constructs, Job Embeddedness provides a practical and comprehensive framework for understanding employee retention. This theory equips HR professionals and organisational leaders with valuable insights by considering the multiple factors that contribute to employees' attachment to their jobs and organisations. Figure 2.3, adapted from Ghosh & Gurunathan (2015) and Holtom et al. (2006), visually summarises the three constructs of Job Embeddedness across the two dimensions, including examples of incidents for each dimension.

	"on-the-job" Dimension	"off-the-job" Dimension
Links ➡	The formal and informal support and connections among people in an organisation can create an attachment for an employee when considering whether to leave or stay. For example, an employee may not leave an organisation if doing so would separate them from good relationships with friends, colleagues, and supervisors or from the comfort of knowing what to do and whom to contact to complete tasks.	The bonds and connections between an employee and other people, such as non-work friends, a spouse's employment, or engagement with the community, are significant. The warm and positive relationships that emerge from the employee's life outside of work can make an employee hesitate to leave an organisation. For example, if leaving the organisation would distance one from their involvement in a desirable community, they will likely choose not to leave the organisation.
Fit ➡	The employee's perceived compatibility and comfort while working with an organisation are crucial. The more the employee's personal goals, values, and future career plans align with the organisational climate and the realities of their current career, the stronger their attachment becomes. As tighter attachments form, the likelihood of the employee leaving the organisation decreases. An employee who enjoys their tasks and experience job fulfilment with an organisation would not likely leave this kind of 'Fit' for a lesser-fit organisation.	The employee's preferences regarding the surrounding environment or community can become an attachment that binds them to an organisation, even though it is not directly related to the organisation itself. This attachment could stem from the culture, art, and climate of the residence location. For example, an employee who is content with where they live or enjoys their community will hesitate to leave the current organisation if doing so would distance them from this Fit.
Sacrifice ➡	The evaluation of what one will sacrifice if one decides to leave an organisation. This evaluation is based on what the organisation can offer (e.g., good colleagues, enjoyable projects, or job advancement, which can be the attachments that keep one tied to an organisation).	The evaluation of what one will sacrifice by leaving the community and their surrounding environment is based on contentment that may not be provided by the organisation. For example, if leaving an organisation also means separating from the enjoyable community or desirable lifestyle to which one belongs during one's employment at the organisation, one will hesitate to leave.

Figure 2.3 The Three Constructs of Job Embeddedness under Two Different Dimensions

2.5.1.2 Why Job Embeddedness Fits in the Social Enterprise Context in Asia.

Based on the literature review on people management in Asia and within social enterprises, Job Embeddedness aligns well with the context of social enterprise and people management in Asia for several reasons. Although Job Embeddedness was developed in the West, its broad framework allows adaptation to local contexts, including Asia's diverse cultural, economic, and social environments. This flexibility

makes it an effective tool for understanding what keeps employees engaged within social enterprises across different Asian cultures. Several reasons support its suitability for studying employee retention in this context.

Firstly, Job Embeddedness provides a versatile framework that explains why individuals leave or remain in their roles by allowing for analysis at both organisational and community levels while focusing on the individual (Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015, p. 97). The constructs of 'Fit,' 'Links,' and 'Sacrifice' are flexible enough to encompass various reasons for employee retention or turnover, particularly in the Asian context. These constructs consider personal values such as community belonging, long-term relationships, and loyalty, which are prevalent in Asia. Additionally, Job Embeddedness covers reasons related to individual social missions, including community engagement and social welfare, which are common in social enterprises. This makes it an effective tool for understanding and addressing the unique factors influencing employee retention in Asian social enterprises.

Furthermore, the 'Links' construct, which refers to the relational aspect, encompasses all possible relationships that can tie an employee to their workplace, including both work-related and non-work-related connections. This is particularly relevant in the context of social enterprises, where social networks and community play a significant role in employees' daily lives. For example, social enterprise employees who feel deeply integrated into their work community may find it harder to leave due to these strong relational ties. The construct effectively acknowledges and incorporates these crucial aspects.

Additionally, the 'Off-the-Job' dimension allows for a comprehensive understanding of the external environment's impact on employees' satisfaction within social enterprises. This dimension includes factors related to employees' lives that extend beyond the organisation's boundaries but still affect their decision to stay or leave.

For example, participation in a church or other religious community, relationships with neighbours, and children's school environments. These seemingly unrelated factors can significantly influence employees' decisions to stay with or leave an organisation. It enhances the understanding of employees' roles in their communities and how these roles contribute to their overall job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation. In the 'On-the-Job' dimension, social enterprises can gain insights into factors influencing employee retention by considering how well employees' values, goals, and skills align with the organisation's mission and culture. By supporting these alignments and understanding what employees value or would miss if they left, social enterprises could develop strategies to enhance employee retention effectively.

In conclusion, Job Embeddedness provides a comprehensive framework that captures the complex, multifaceted reasons why employees stay at their jobs in the specific context of Asian social enterprises. This framework's emphasis on non-material rewards, social ties, and cultural alignment helps explain retention in environments where these factors play a significant role. This versatility makes it a valuable tool for comprehending employee retention in diverse settings, such as social enterprises in Thailand.

2.5.1.3 The Limitations of Job Embeddedness and the Shift Toward Social Capital and Human Capital Theories.

Job Embeddedness offers a well-suited framework for studying employee retention in the context of social enterprises. In such settings, employees often remain committed to their roles not just for financial reasons but also due to a strong alignment with their personal values, purpose, and community connections. However, while Job Embeddedness Theory effectively explains why social enterprise employees stay or leave, there is a limitation due to its specific constructs, lacking the nuance needed to understand how employees develop an attachment to a social enterprise.

The 'Links' construct refers to the relationships that create employee attachment. Good relationships between workers or within the community can lead to strong employee attachment. However, the theory does not explain how these social ties are formed and integrated. Soltis et al. (2013) indicated that Job Embeddedness lacks the depth to fully understand the nature of social ties, the specific relationships that lead to attachment, and their antecedents. This limitation makes it difficult to understand and support the development of employee attachment through relationships. Incorporating social capital theory can extend the study by exploring how social ties are developed and maintained, providing a deeper understanding of the role of relationships in employee attachment.

Similarly, the 'Fit' construct refers to how well an employee's values, goals, and skills align with the organisation's culture and job requirements. The more compatibility and alignment, the more likely employees are motivated to stay. This aspect is directly related to employee motivation, which is recognised as a form of human capital that enhances organisational success, as motivated employees apply their skills and knowledge more effectively, adding greater value to the organisation (Lepak et al., 2011; Jeki & Sulastri, 2019; Harini et al., 2020). In the social enterprise context, this alignment often evolves over time as employees develop attitudes and values that align with the organisation (Royce, 2007; Doherty et al., 2009; Dorado et al., 2022). This evolving compatibility is crucial for understanding employee motivation, which can change throughout their working life and potentially foster a commitment to stay. Recognising employee motivation as a form of human capital highlights its significant impact on employee attachment development. Incorporating human capital theory into this study allows for a comprehensive exploration of how evolving employee motivations contribute to strong and sustained employee attachment. However, Job Embeddedness does not fully explore how this alignment transforms into attachment. Understanding this transformation is essential for supporting motivation-based attachment and providing deeper insights into employee attachment.

Therefore, this research shifts focus from solely studying employee retention to understanding the development of employee attachment. The study incorporates Social Capital and Human Capital theories, recognising that relationships and motivation play a crucial role in attachment. Social capital is employed to explore the aspect of relationships, while human capital is employed to examine motivation.

In essence, while Job Embeddedness provides a solid framework for understanding why employees stay in their jobs, it falls short of fully explaining the development of employee attachment, particularly in complex social environments like social enterprises. Therefore, this research fills a crucial gap by integrating social and human capital to study the development of employee attachment within the context of social enterprise. The subsequent sections will delve into the detailed application of social capital and human capital in this study.

2.5.2 Social Capital Theory

2.5.2.1 Overview of Social Capital and Its Forms.

Social Capital Theory is a conceptual framework that examines the role of social ties and networks in enhancing the efficiency and achievements of people and collectives. The theory postulates that social connections offer significant resources such as information, assistance, and opportunity, and these resources can be accessed through the networks that individuals belong to, such as their families, communities, and workplaces (Gedajlovic et al., 2013). According to Field (2003), the core of social capital lies in membership within networks that share common values. In contexts where social capital is significant, networks facilitate connections and actions through informal systems. For example, engaging in conversations with friends can enhance well-being by sharing common values and experiences.

Halpern (2005) noted that social capital has been studied and applied across various academic fields, often employing contrasting concepts to examine its effects. While some studies highlight its benefits, such as promoting cooperation, facilitating market opportunities like career progression (Burt, 2005; Baker, 2000), supporting poor and marginalised communities (Lin et al., 2001), fostering mutual trust and commitment, and reinforcing identity and social solidarity (Nahapiet, 2008), others point out its drawbacks. Excessive bonding can lead to isolated social networks, restricting individual freedom and creating the exclusion of outsiders, thereby promoting non-cooperative behaviour between isolated groups (Li et al., 2003; Van Deth & Zmerli, 2010; Patulny & Svendsen, 2007). Patulny and Svendsen (2007) indicated that social capital has an elusive definition, with its variables in flux, resulting in a lack of conceptual clarity. One reason for this ambiguity is that academics from various fields with different backgrounds have contributed to its definition (Halpern, 2005). However, the core proposition of social capital theory concerns “the social ties that can establish a valuable resource for the conduct of social affairs, enabling individuals and groups to achieve outcomes that they might not otherwise achieve, or could only achieve at a higher cost” (Nahapiet, 2008, p.3).

According to Field (2003), three foundational authors on the concept of social capital are Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam. Bourdieu’s work emphasises that social capital is an asset for the privileged, used to maintain their superiority, with less mention of the benefits for less privileged individuals and groups (Bourdieu, 1986; Field, 2003). On the other hand, Coleman’s work highlights that the benefits of social capital are not limited to powerful individuals or groups; it can also convey advantages to poor and marginalised communities (Lin et al., 2001). Putnam’s work focuses on the features of social capital, such as trust, norms, and networks, which can improve societal efficiency by facilitating coordinated action (Putnam, 1993; Field, 2003). Despite differences in their perspectives, all three authors agree that social capital consists of personal connections and interpersonal interactions associated with shared values.

Various scholars present diverse viewpoints to elucidate the concept of social capital theory. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) believe that social capital consists of networks and the assets that can be mobilised through these networks. They categorise social capital into three dimensions. The three dimensions encompassed in a network are the structural dimension, which refers to the pattern of connections between actors within a network; the relational dimension, which involves the types of relationships such as trust, obligations, and personal identity that emerge from being part of a network and create emotional bonds; and the cognitive dimension, which is the extent to which common schemas and systems of meaning are shared, leading to a shared understanding. All three dimensions shape the outcomes of relationships and affect social capital outcomes.

Putnam (1993) initially proposed that social capital consists of networks, norms, and trust. He later refined this to focus on networks and norms and introduced the concepts of bonding and bridging social capital to expand the understanding of social capital theory (Field, 2003). Halpern (2005) simplified these components into social networks, social norms, and sanctions. Social networks refer to individuals' relationships and connections with others they regularly interact with, whether for casual greetings or providing help in times of need. These networks can vary in density (the population of people) and closure (the proportion of links between communities). Social norms are the shared values, expectations, and behaviours that community or network members define. These norms dictate how individuals are expected to behave, such as helping neighbours, being courteous, and maintaining communal areas. These norms may also involve more particular reciprocity behaviours, such as looking out for each other's children or lending each other equipment. Sanctions refer to the informal rewards and punishments that help maintain social norms. While not always formal, like legal consequences, they regulate behaviour within a community. These can be direct, such as an angry exchange or disapproving glance, or indirect, like gossip or positive praise. Sanctions ensure that individuals adhere to the expected behaviours within their community, reinforcing social norms.

Apart from explaining social capital through these components, Putnam identified social capital forms to explicate the characteristics and outcomes of network structure, thus enhancing our comprehension of social capital. These forms are bonding and bridging (Putnam, 1995; 2000). Bonding refers to relatively closed and strong reciprocal ties within a network, characterised by high levels of trust and exclusive identities, often manifesting as strong ties like family relationships (Andriani, 2013). Bridging refers to networking within diverse groups to connect people who are typically apart (Halpern, 2005). It encompasses networks of friends, neighbours, and acquaintances, representing the strength of weak ties (Andriani, 2013). In other words, bonding focuses on strong, multiplex ties within a group, whereas bridging focuses on external connections (Nahapiet, 2008, p. 8). Later, another form of social capital called linking was introduced (Woolcock, 2001). Linking refers to relationships that connect groups or individuals to those in different groups, functioning as a vertical form of bridging that supports infrastructure. While bridging connects groups of similar institutional power, linking connects groups with different political and financial power (Sabatini, 2009). In essence, bridging encompasses more distant ties, such as loose friendships or work relationships within a group, while linking involves reaching out to different communities or groups to access resources unavailable within one's own group, with both groups representing different political and financial power.

To illustrate a comprehensive understanding of social capital, incorporating bonding, bridging, and linking, Figure 2.4, inspired by Andriani (2013), depicts the three forms of social capital in three different areas. From the figure, each dot refers to the members in groups. The circles refer to the groups to which members belong, and the three areas represent the different belonging groups (i.e., companies, communities, and institutions). The bonding lines represent the strong ties in a group, bringing community bonding, the feeling of belonging, and maintaining homogeneity (Field, 2003). The bridging lines represent the weak ties between members of different groups. The linking lines draw across three different areas, referring to the

relationships or connections that allow various group members access to information and resources across the different institutional powers (Sabatini, 2009).

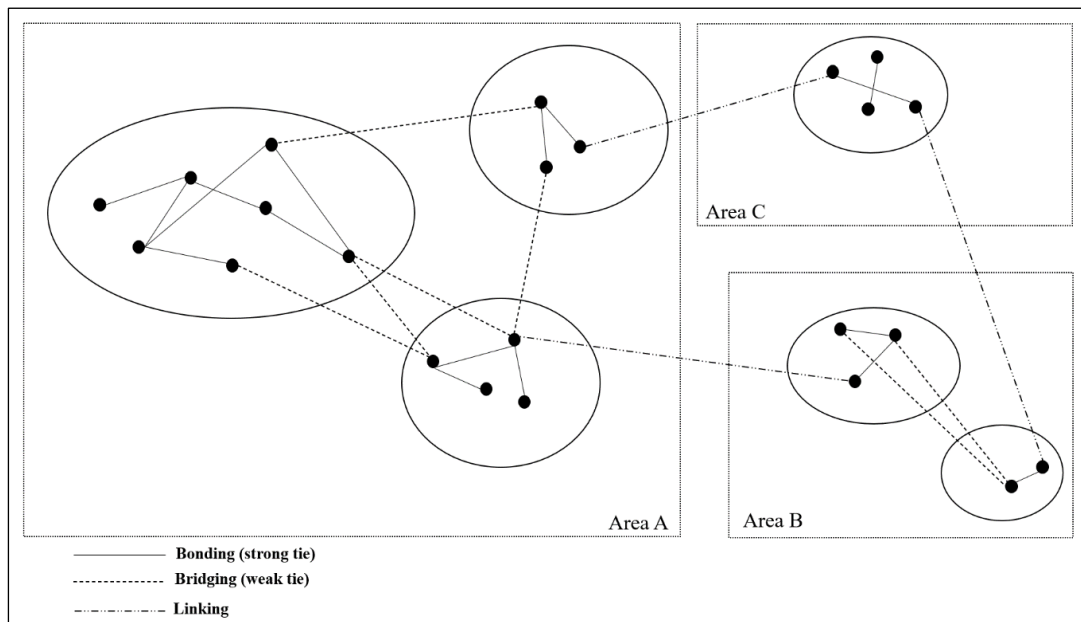


Figure 2.4 The Three Forms of Social Capital (Thammadee et al., 2021)

According to the literature on social capital, bonding and bridging social capital bring different benefits, playing crucial roles in forming networks (Walker et al., 1997). Bonding social capital strengthens network stability, facilitates trust, promotes cooperation within groups (Baker, 2000), and helps reduce transaction costs for organisations (Dasgupta, 2000). Bridging and linking social capital enable connections between individuals within and across different groups, which is essential from the beginning of the formation process by allowing members to access information and resources not available within their immediate groups (Field, 2003). Burt (2005) supports the idea that bridging social capital facilitates information accessibility between diverse groups, thereby bringing more capital to the community.

Despite these insights, there remains a notable gap in understanding the development and maintenance of these forms of social capital over time. Existing studies predominantly focus on the outcomes and roles of social capital but lack a comprehensive exploration of its formation processes. This gap is particularly relevant in the context of employee attachment within social enterprises, where social capital can play a pivotal role. Thus, a more detailed examination of how social capital is formed and sustained is essential to create an appropriate framework for studying employee attachment. This necessitates a further review of the literature to capture better the mechanisms underlying the formation of social capital, providing a deeper understanding that could enhance the development of employee attachment in social enterprises. The following section will delve into the formation of social capital.

2.5.2.2 Social Capital Formation

Considering social capital formation, the existing literature review indicates that social capital arises from interactions and relationships within social structures, such as families or communities, facilitating certain actions and providing support (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) indicated that these relationships involve shared goals and trust during interactions. Putnam (2000) extended this understanding by noting that social capital is formed through community engagement, civic participation, and the development of trust and norms of reciprocity. This means that individuals and groups actively participating in their communities and contributing to communal activities help build social capital by fostering trust and mutual support. Besides, Lin (2008) further elaborates that social capital is built through social networks and the resources embedded within them, and these networks can include connections with family, friends, colleagues, and broader community members, all of which provide various resources and support.

The existing literature provides further perspectives on how social capital is created, highlighting two main approaches. First, it can be directly built through deliberate investment. Bourdieu (1986, p.22) explains that ‘social capital built directly’ and ‘the network of relationships is the product of investment.’ This means that networks of relationships can result from strategies aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships for future use. Therefore, organisations can purposefully design environments to facilitate the building of social capital (Lang, 2012, p.32). In contrast, Coleman (1988) and Baker (2000) believed in the ‘by-product’ view of social capital, meaning it arises as a result of other actions or activities. This view suggests that social capital intentionally emerges through the actions of individuals or actors, independent of specific rules or environments promoting that emergence. Nevertheless, empirical research revealed that social capital is generated through both methods (Lang, 2012). Lang (2012) further suggested that additional research is needed to enhance the understanding of social capital formation and expand the theory into a more comprehensive framework.

In fact, the literature on social capital formation is relatively scarce. Most studies in the field focus on the effects and applications of social capital rather than its development. This highlights a need for more research on social capital formation to enhance the depth and breadth of theoretical development (Glaeser, 2001; Pastoriza et al., 2008; Dolfsma et al., 2009; Ellinger et al., 2011). Nahapiet (2008) and Lang (2012) pointed out that literature has rarely delved into the processes of building social capital. Additionally, Gedajlovic et al. (2013) noted that social capital research often ignores the factors and processes that lead to the development of relationships. This gap in the literature suggests a need for more research to provide a deeper understanding of how social capital is formed, maintained, and utilised. Such studies could validate theoretical frameworks and have practical applications in policymaking, community development, and organisational management. Consequently, scholars in the field call for more comprehensive studies on the emergence, maintenance, and use of social capital to extend and refine social capital theory.

According to the existing literature on social capital formation, Gedajlovic et al. (2013) indicated that the lack of clarity in defining social capital and its constructs has led to an overreliance on network theory, which often fails to capture the full scope of social capital's impact and processes. To address this limitation and guide the study on social capital in the form of employee attachment, the researcher has found another perspective that seems more suitable: the contextual approach.

According to social capital analysis, Adler and Kwon (2002) identify two primary approaches to analysing social capital: structural and contextual. The structural approach focuses on networks, connections, and the nature of ties, including weak and strong ties, bridges, bonds, and decision-making processes. This approach examines how these elements contribute to the formation and function of social capital. In contrast, the contextual approach emphasises the development of trust and the establishment of norms and ethical values within groups, communities, or organisations. Bull et al. (2019) highlight that to fully understand interpersonal trust within a community or group, it is crucial to look beyond the structural features of social networks. They argue that exploring the shared beliefs, norms, and values that unite members is essential, as these elements shape expectations, guide behaviour, and determine trust levels within the group.

To delve into the deeper and often intangible aspects of social capital, a contextual approach is essential. Bull et al. (2019, p. 241) explain that while the structural approach in social capital studies primarily focuses on connections and ties between people ('who you know, not what you know'), it does not adequately explain how information is communicated. The number of connections alone is insufficient to capture the quality of these relationships and how they were formed. This insight necessitates adopting a contextual approach, especially when network structures do not adequately reflect the quality of relationships within a network. By focusing on the shared beliefs, norms, and values within a community, a contextual approach

provides a more comprehensive understanding of social capital, enabling researchers to explore how these elements influence social capital formation.

Therefore, this research focuses more on the contextual approach to investigate social capital formation. It is important to acknowledge that this contextual approach is not inherently superior to the structural approach. Rather, it is chosen because it aligns more closely with the study's objective of tracing how relationships develop into employee attachment.

2.5.2.3 Social Capital Theory in This Research

The social capital literature on social enterprises predominantly focuses on organisational growth and success. Studies have shown that social capital supports organisational sustainability in various ways. It enhances network capabilities for accessing resources, exchanging knowledge, and identifying opportunities (Anderson & Jack, 2002; Evans & Syrett, 2007; Hidalgo et al., 2024). Additionally, social capital decreases transaction costs and facilitates navigating through bureaucratic systems (Boudreaux & Nikolaev, 2019), fosters innovation (Datta, 2011; Weerakoon et al., 2020), and enhances the social impact of enterprises (Mohiuddin et al., 2023).

In the context of social capital and people management within social enterprises, there are relatively few studies. Some research indicates that social enterprises can leverage connections and social networks to access human resources, such as recruiting and selecting workers through employee referrals and internship programmes (Napathorn, 2018c). Additionally, research indicated that engagement and good relationships between employees and community members can help social enterprises retain their employees (Moses & Sharma, 2020). Besides, Satar (2018) found that increased trust and closeness among employers in social enterprises enhance feelings of belonging and self-esteem among employees, compensating for the lack of competitive salaries in these organisations.

Despite the extensive research on social capital's effects on organisational achievement and sustainability, the specific links between social capital and people management, particularly in relation to employee attachment within social enterprises, remain underexplored. This study addresses this gap by exploring how social capital within social enterprises can evolve into employee attachment. The findings from this part could potentially transform the understanding of social capital formation, offering new insights into the dynamics of employee attachment and its role in the sustainability of social enterprises.

2.5.3 Human Capital Theory

2.5.3.1 Overview of Human Capital Literature

The human capital theory is fundamentally developed in the economic field. It regards the skills, knowledge, and experience humans possess as types of capital that can increase productivity and economic worth (Becker, 2009). The theory has traditionally focused on increasing the productivity and wealth-creating potential of individuals through activities that enhance their economic productivity. The traditional perspective focuses on human capital attributes to productivity. Based on the literature, early human capital theory views human resources from an appraisal perspective, focusing on prices and production factors that should be assessed quantitatively. This means organisations traditionally invest in human capital only if the perceived gains outweigh the costs (Burton-Jones & Spender, 2011). For instance, a company might only pay for employee training if it believes the enhanced skills will significantly boost productivity and profits.

Over time, research on human capital has evolved from a limited perspective that focused on specific worker traits and desired performance outcomes to a broader social approach. The concept of human capital has been expanded to encompass not just acquired skills and knowledge through education and training but also workers' intrinsic talents and abilities. Besides, the outcome also encompasses the effects of human capital (Nahapiet, 2011). In light of the transition to a knowledge-based

economy, there has been an evolution in the understanding of human capital to acknowledge its complex nature and the unpredictable value it possesses. During the latter part of the twentieth century, human capital emerged as a crucial component of economic prosperity, with knowledge workers being pivotal to national economic success. This shift reflects a more comprehensive view that includes the social impacts of human capital. According to Baron and Armstrong (2007), this broader perspective acknowledges the significant role of human capital in driving innovation, fostering growth, and contributing to the overall well-being of society.

The OECD (1998) initially defined human capital as the knowledge, skills, competence, and other attributes embodied in individuals that are relevant to economic activity. Later, this definition was expanded to include a more holistic view: “the knowledge, skills, competencies, and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social, and economic well-being” (OECD, 2001, p.18). This broader definition recognises that investments in human capital contribute not only to economic growth but also to personal fulfilment and societal welfare. The later concept of human capital encompasses more than just economic returns; it includes the broader impact that human capital can have, such as employees’ personal and social well-being (Bowman & Swart, 2007; Keeley, 2007). For instance, investing in employee health not only increases productivity but also enhances their overall quality of life, leading to higher job satisfaction and loyalty.

The growing social perspective on human capital theory can also be observed through the development of social capital research. Keeley (2007) indicated that most studies on human capital have focused on its economic benefits, primarily emphasising knowledge, skills, and, to a lesser extent, health. However, there has been a scholarly call for a broader perspective incorporating social and cultural dimensions. Scholars have highlighted the limitations of traditional human capital theory and advocated for including more social perspectives. Marginson (2019) highlighted that human capital theory, which posits that increased education results

in greater productivity and subsequently higher earnings, fails to consider important social factors such as family background, social networks, and cultural capital, which also play a role in determining economic outcomes. Similarly, Tan (2014) argued that human capital theory should not reduce education and learning to mere economic outputs, neglecting the broader social, cultural, and personal benefits of education. The traditional view primarily measures the value of education by its ability to enhance economic productivity and increase personal income. However, education also contributes to the development of critical thinking, cultural understanding, and social cohesion—elements that are difficult to quantify economically but are crucial for a well-rounded and functioning society.

Therefore, it is recommended that the application of human capital theory should expand its scope to acknowledge these social and cultural advantages. This includes aspects like social cohesion, civic engagement, and personal development, as the social and cultural attributes people inherit are advantages just as significant as the education they receive (Tan, 2014; Bonal, 2016; Marginson, 2019). Additionally, Bonal (2016) emphasised that applying human capital theory requires a context-sensitive approach. For instance, when formulating educational policies, it is essential to consider educational inequalities and the complex realities of decision-making processes among disadvantaged groups. Social, cultural, and economic factors significantly influence individual behaviour, and failing to account for these factors can lead to ineffective or even detrimental policies.

Ultimately, scholars suggest that applying human capital theory should involve being aware of diverse socio-economic contexts and incorporating a broader understanding of social and cultural dimensions. By adopting this approach, the theory can provide a more precise depiction of the complex characteristics of human capital and its genuine influence on both individuals and society.

2.5.3.2 Employee Motivation is a Form of Human Capital

According to the literature, Schultz (1961) defines human capital as the skills and knowledge possessed by individuals, emphasising its significance for both economic development and organisational effectiveness. Becker (1967) provides additional details on this idea by classifying human capital into three specific tiers: national, industrial, and organisational. Every level has a significant impact on the overall economic situation, as the presence of skilled employees in an organisation can vary and be influenced by many circumstances. Besides, Ulrich (1998) expanded the definition to include a wider range of skills, experience, and knowledge, asserting that human capital consists of employee competence and commitment, emphasising the employee's willingness to contribute. In the context of the organisation, Subramaniam and Youndt (2005, p.451) describe it as the "knowledge, skills, and abilities residing with and utilised by individuals." Han et al. (2008, p.390) studied human capital indicators and posited that human capital is the core asset of an organisation, encompassing skills, experience, competence, attitude, commitment, and individual personal characteristics. These elements are transformed into intangible assets that generate profits and productivity.

Scholars recognised that human capital is an intangible asset, encompassing individuals' genetic inheritance, education, experiences, and attitudes about life and business, as well as complementary skills and tacit knowledge (Hudson, 1993; Storey, 1995; Han et al., 2008). They stress the importance of human capital for developing a sustainable competitive edge and enhancing organisational performance. Therefore, highlighting that investing in human capital can take various forms, including educational programmes, training, and development initiatives to improve employees' skills and knowledge, including fostering an environment that supports knowledge sharing and continuous learning (Bontis & Fitz-Enz, 2002; Hsu, 2008; Vargas-Hernandez & Noruzi, 2010; Jiang et al., 2012).

According to human capital research, numerous studies have been conducted to determine how organisations can invest in human capital to achieve favourable results. For instance, investing in knowledge management can lead to organisational success, resulting in a more competent, innovative, and cohesive workforce (Liebowitz & Hopkins, 2004; Hsu, 2008). Additionally, investing in the education and training of employees enhances organisational performance (Kucharcikova et al., 2023). Furthermore, developing HRM practices that include employee empowerment and involvement in decision-making effectively enhances human capital and contributes to a firm's innovative outcomes and overall performance (Cabello-Medina et al., 2011; Al-Tit et al., 2022). Ultimately, investments in developing human capital through methods such as knowledge management, employee education, and strategic HRM practices yield significant benefits, enhancing both the individual capabilities and the collective success of organisations.

Bontis and Fitz-Enz (2002) emphasised the substantial impact of job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation on enhancing employees' skills and knowledge. The aggregate sentiment of employees referred to as 'employee sentiment,' plays a crucial role in defining an organisation's 'work environment and culture, ultimately influencing its overall performance. In a study conducted by Jeki and Sulastri (2019), the connection between human capital, employee motivation, and work satisfaction in improving employee performance was examined. The findings emphasised the importance of implementing successful motivating techniques as valuable investments in an organisation's human capital. Undoubtedly, motivated employees play a crucial role in the success of an organisation, as emphasised by Lepak et al. (2011). In addition, Njoroge and Yazdanifard (2014) highlighted the crucial role of employee motivation in achieving success for any organisation. They stated that traditional management approaches primarily emphasised rational and analytical factors, sometimes neglecting the influence of employees' emotions on their performance. Recognising employee motivation not just as a tool for enhancing performance but also as a form of human capital itself underlines its integral role in driving organisational growth and effectiveness.

According to the literature, most research on employee motivation from the perspective of human capital primarily studies it through human capital development (HCD) or HR practices that can enhance employee motivation, leading to positive outcomes for organisations. For example, Harini et al. (2020) and Nafiu and Nafiu (2023) discuss how investments in employee development, which boost motivation, lead to greater organisational productivity and performance, thus reinforcing the concept of motivation as a valuable aspect of human capital. Gardner et al. (2011) examined HR practices to enhance employee motivation and found that effective practices lead to higher levels of collective affective commitment among employees, indicating that employees are more likely to stay with an organisation when they feel motivated and connected to its goals and values.

Building on these insights, further research underscores the impact of HR practices on proactive employee behaviour, which anticipates positive organisational outcomes. Al-Tit (2020) highlights that when engaged proactively, employees can plan for future needs, drive innovations, improve processes, and manage crises more effectively. Moreover, Brdulak et al. (2017) argue that recognising employee motivation and managerial behaviours linked with the lifestyle concept can enhance human capital management across various organisational types. Furthermore, Getz (2009) also noted that organisations that create environments satisfying employees' needs for autonomy and competence foster higher levels of self-motivation and initiative-thinking behaviour. These motivated employees who are capable and willing to take the initiative are invaluable assets, representing the human capital that drives the organisation's success. These studies collectively reveal the profound effects of HR investments that elevate employees' sense of belonging, safety, and availability, thereby boosting organisational effectiveness and efficiency. In particular, Humeera et al. (2023) emphasises the role of training and development, inclusive participation, and regular, constructive feedback in motivating employees. These practices enhance skills and prepare employees for future challenges, creating an environment where they feel more committed and engaged in their roles. Echoing this sentiment, Kianto et al. (2017) recognise employees' skills and motivation as

intangible properties that generate value for organisations, impacting innovation and overall performance. They propose that organisations can effectively leverage their human capital to drive innovation and enhance performance by fostering an environment that encourages motivation through targeted HR practices.

This comprehensive literature review underscores the importance of viewing employee motivation not merely as a byproduct of organisational practices but as a form of human capital in its own right. Recognising and investing in motivational strategies as a deliberate component of human capital development can offer substantial returns by enhancing workforce engagement and organisational resilience. Therefore, it is crucial for future research to delve deeper into understanding and cultivating employee motivation, ensuring that it is prioritised as a strategic asset within organisational investment portfolios.

2.5.3.3 Human Capital in This Research

Human capital theory traditionally focuses on factors such as education, experience, training, and skills that improve an individual's productivity and economic worth to organisations. Research on human capital has traditionally focused on quantifying investments to achieve favourable organisational outcomes (Kearns, 2006; Nahapiet, 2011; Rodrigues et al., 2020). However, contemporary studies increasingly adopt a more contextual approach, incorporating a social perspective that includes factors such as social networks, cultural alignment, emotional intelligence, and organisational commitment (Han et al., 2008; Lepak et al., 2011; Al-tit et al., 2022). This shift highlights the importance of intangible elements within human capital, reflecting a broader understanding of what drives organisational success.

Based on the literature reviewed, employee motivation is identified as a critical component of human capital, particularly within social enterprises where core values and a strong sense of purpose profoundly influence employee behaviour. Scholars like Gardner et al. (2011), Kianto et al. (2017), and Humeera et al. (2023) highlight

that employee motivation is a vital element of human capital that enhances an organisation's capabilities and performance. They indicated that motivated employees are often more productive, creative, and committed to their roles, thereby boosting organisational success. Recognising employee motivation as a form of human capital is especially pertinent when examining employee attachment in social enterprises. As motivation transitions into deeper employee attachment, it not only aligns employees with their immediate roles but also with the organisation's broader social and economic missions, yielding significant benefits.

The literature emphasises that in social enterprises, human capital is a key driver of success and sustainability (Kolstad & Wiig, 2013; Ko & Liu, 2015; Black, 2021) and plays a critical role in enhancing the organisation's social impact (Sarti & Torre, 2015; Woo & Jung, 2023). Despite these valuable insights, the specific study of human capital in relation to employee motivation remains underexplored. While substantial research has been conducted on the broader aspects of human capital, there is a notable gap in understanding how employee motivation, as a crucial element of human capital, specifically develops and transitions into deeper employee attachment within social enterprises. This gap is significant because the existing research overlooks the intricate processes and factors that drive employee commitment and engagement, which are essential for the unique operational and social missions of these organisations. Further research in this area could provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms by which motivation influences attachment, ultimately enhancing organisational effectiveness and sustainability.

This study aims to bridge this gap by examining how employee motivation can develop into deeper employee attachment. When employee attachment is embedded with commitment and motivation, it refers to the alignment of employees with their organisations, which can contribute to positive outcomes for organisations. This employee attachment is worth studying, especially in the context of social enterprises. Understanding this transformation will provide valuable insights into

how social enterprises can strategically develop their human capital. In simpler terms, this research seeks to explore the transition from employee motivation to attachment, facilitating organisational success and sustainability. Findings from this study could significantly enrich the literature on human capital by incorporating a contemporary social perspective, highlighting employee motivation as a crucial and investable form of human capital.

2.6 Theoretical Framework for This Study

Based on a comprehensive literature review, this study recognises that effective people management is pivotal for the sustainability of social enterprises, particularly concerning employee retention. Employee retention has been identified as a critical area in both practice and academia, yet it remains underexplored within the context of social enterprises. This gap underscores the importance of focusing on this issue. The review of employee retention literature suggests that the concept of Job Embeddedness offers a valuable framework for understanding why employees choose to stay or leave a social enterprise. This theory incorporates cultural, value, and social contexts, which are particularly relevant in social enterprises where employees often remain committed not solely for financial reasons but also due to a profound alignment with their personal values, a sense of purpose, and community connections.

Despite its strengths, Job Embeddedness lacks detailed insights into how employees develop a deep-seated attachment to their organisations. To address this gap, this research shifts its focus from merely retaining employees to exploring employee attachment and how employees develop an attachment to social enterprises. This shift is crucial as developing a strong emotional and value-based connection can significantly influence an employee's decision to stay long-term and contribute meaningfully to the organisation's mission in the social enterprise context.

Consequently, this study delves deeper into the intersections of social capital and human capital theories, particularly from the social perspective, to enhance the understanding of employee attachment. By integrating these perspectives into the research's theoretical framework, this section outlines how the framework was developed. Specifically, it combines the Job Embeddedness lens with social and human capital theories to examine the development of employee attachment within a social enterprise setting.

Drawing from the Job Embeddedness framework, as previously discussed, it is clear that individual relationships and motivation are critical elements that potentially foster employee attachment. Within this framework, the 'Links' construct focuses on relationships that influence an individual's decision to remain with an organisation, while the 'Fit' construct addresses motivational factors that encourage retention. To enhance the exploration of these dimensions, the study incorporates social capital theory to examine the role of relationships in developing employee attachment and human capital theory to assess how motivational aspects evolve into employee attachment.

Integrating social capital theory with the Job Embeddedness framework allows for a refinement of focus from the general benefits that relationships provide to organisations or groups to the specific interpersonal connections that foster employee attachment within the organisation. Social capital, when examined alone, typically addresses the broader benefits of relationships with social enterprises or collectives. However, by coupling it with the Job Embeddedness framework, the focus is specifically targeted at those relationships that evolve into deep, meaningful attachments among employees. This nuanced approach necessitates the introduction of the term **“organisational relationship tie,”** encapsulating all aspects of positive relationships that contribute to employee attachment, including the emotional and psychological bonds that develop willingly between employees and their workplace.

Similarly, human capital theory with the Job Embeddedness framework allows for a refinement of focus from employee motivation as a form of human capital found in literature that can benefit the organisation to the specific employee motivation that fosters employee attachment within the organisation. This refined approach prompts the introduction of a new term, “motivation tie.” The **“motivation tie”** refers to all aspects of motivation that contribute to employee attachment, encouraging employees to stay willingly and enhancing organisational productivity. The following Figure 2.5 illustrates the theoretical framework for this study.

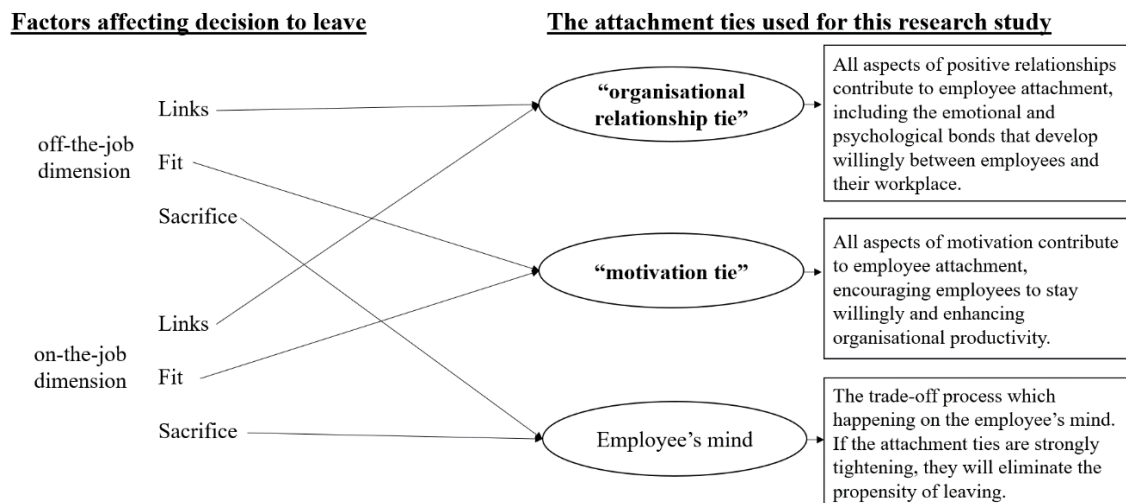


Figure 2.5 The Research Theoretical Framework

According to Job Embeddedness theory, the ‘Sacrifice’ construct represents the perceived cost or loss employees associate with leaving an organisation. This element involves rational thinking about the pros and cons of staying versus leaving. Essentially, if employees are happy and satisfied, they are likely to stay. Conversely, if the perceived benefits of leaving outweigh the costs, they may choose to depart. In this context, if the “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” are strong enough, employees are more likely to remain with the social enterprise. This decision-making process reflects employees’ internal evaluations when considering

whether to stay or leave. Therefore, although the ‘Sacrifice’ construct appears in the research framework, it will not be the focus of further study in this research. This is because it does not form a specific tie that leads to employee attachment, as it primarily resides in the subjective evaluations of staying or leaving, which are captured through data received from employees or research participants. Once employees articulate their reasons for staying or leaving, it indicates that they have already undergone the process of evaluating their choices.

Building on the developed framework, it is essential to emphasise that the constructs “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” are central to understanding employee attachment. These terms specifically capture employees’ genuine desire to remain with the social enterprise and contribute meaningfully, rather than a sense of obligation or without genuine interest. To concisely summarise the research framework presented in Figure 2.5, this study operationalises the Job Embeddedness constructs—Links, Fit, and Sacrifice—within the specific context of employee attachment. Here, ‘Links’ is associated with an “organisational relationship tie,” which is explored through the lens of social capital, while ‘Fit’ is connected to a “motivation tie,” studied through the perspective of human capital. The ‘Sacrifice’ construct, however, is acknowledged as a factor that remains within the employees’ personal judgment as they assess the costs and benefits of staying or leaving. This approach recognises that it is ultimately up to the employees to evaluate their situations and make decisions based on their assessments.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive explanation of the research methodology. The chapter begins by discussing the philosophical foundations, encompassing the researcher's philosophical stance and the philosophical basis of the research questions and aims. The following sections will outline the research methodology, ethical considerations, data collection, pilot study, and data analysis process. The final section of this chapter presents an overview of participant demographics, which serves as the background backdrop for each participant before transitioning to the subsequent chapter for data analysis.

3.2 Philosophical Underpinnings

Research philosophy is intimately connected to the foundational assumptions and beliefs concerning how knowledge is developed. It delves into ontological assumptions about the nature of reality, epistemological considerations regarding what is recognised as valid knowledge, and axiological concerns about how a researcher's values influence the research process (Saunders et al., 2019. p.131). Recognising and articulating these philosophical underpinnings are pivotal for researchers in choosing an appropriate methodology. This approach not only enhances the coherence and consistency of the research process but also fosters critical reflection, enabling researchers to identify and address biases in their work (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Following these insights, this study will use a methodological framework guided by its philosophical approach.

According to the researcher's standpoint, I believe that reality is complex and socially constructed. Saunders et al. (2019) delineate the continua philosophical assumptions between two polar positions, objectivism and subjectivism. Saunders et al. (2019) outline the philosophical assumptions that exist on a spectrum between two opposing positions: objectivism and subjectivism. Objectivism assumes that social reality is external and independent; social actors have no influence on the social world and reality, whereas subjectivism views reality as stemming from individuals' perceptions, feelings, and consequences or as a projection of human imagination, portraying humanity as purely spiritual and conscious beings (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). Within this context, social constructionism emerges as a moderated form of subjectivism (Saunders et al., 2019), aligning closely with my own worldview. As an ontological stance, social constructionism posits that reality is crafted through social interaction and cultural contexts. It emphasises that knowledge and facts are not simply uncovered but are actively constructed by society (Pittaway et al., 2018).

Building on this ontological position, the research's epistemological underpinnings suggest that our understanding of the world is profoundly influenced by social processes, language, and cultural norms (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). This perspective contends that knowledge emerges from social constructs, underscoring the necessity of acknowledging the social conditions that facilitate the production of knowledge and facts. Echoing this sentiment, it follows that there are no universal truths; they are contingent upon cultural and historical contexts (Weinberg, 2009).

Aligned with the principles of ontology and epistemology, axiology examines the role of values in research. This research takes an axiological attitude that shifts away from the concept of 'value-free' research and towards a value-bound approach. This recognises that personal perspectives and experiences will inevitably influence the study, making it impossible to completely separate the researcher's opinions and values from their work, as these aspects profoundly determine the production and

interpretation of reality. As a result, the researcher values reflexivity (Hamati-Ataya, 2014), ensuring transparency and integrity by publicly acknowledging and commenting on their own opinions and biases throughout the study process.

3.3 Research Philosophy and Interpretivism Paradigm

In order to improve clarity and provide a more effective explanation of research philosophy, the term ‘paradigm’ is introduced. A paradigm, defined as a set of assumptions reflecting the philosophical stance of research, serves as a tool to organise concepts, methods, and the research framework (Burrell & Morgan, 2017). It enables researchers to articulate how research philosophy influences their approach and design, thereby justifying methodological choices (Neuman, 2012). Saunders et al. (2019) outline five research paradigms: Positivism, Critical Realism, Interpretivism, Postmodernism, and Pragmatism, each presenting a unique philosophical perspective towards research.

Positivism asserts that the social world may be examined using the same scientific approach as the natural sciences and that knowledge must be certain and universal (Shand, 2003). Positivist researchers focus on measurable facts since reality is objective, whereas values and beliefs, including human interpretations, may be invalid and inaccurate, resulting in biases. Thus, the researcher would conduct a study that was as value-free as feasible (Saunders et al., 2019).

Postmodernism posits that the concept of absolute truth is non-existent as external power dynamics exert a substantial influence on individuals’ conceptions of what constitutes knowledge (Park & Allaby, 2017). This perspective posits that our comprehension of reality is influenced by cultural, societal, and linguistic elements, with knowledge being a construct of social processes and language. Postmodern scholars aim to uncover a range of viewpoints that are frequently ignored by mainstream discussions, thereby questioning the fundamental assumptions of conventional knowledge. The authors, Saunders et al. (2019), highlight the

significance of power and ideologies in shaping knowledge and reality. Their objective is to analyse and challenge existing interpretations by deconstructing researched phenomena and emphasising their inherent unpredictability.

Critical Realism (CR) is a philosophical perspective that transitions between natural science and social science. CR is interested in structure (the way an object is constituted), and mechanism and causal powers (causation of objects exist and can make an event/effect) (Blundel, 2007). CR embraces epistemological relativism (mildly subjective) as causality can be explained not only in statistical correlation. Thus, it sees science as the improvement cycle(s) driven by mechanisms/structures, and resulting in observable reality (Reed, 2005).

Pragmatism is concerned with actions, situations, and consequences – the application of what works and what the problems' solutions are (Patton, 1990). Pragmatism emphasises the research problem (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010) and does not see the world as an absolute unity (Creswell, 2014). Pragmatists believe that truth is what works at the time. Thus, there is no final truth. Nonetheless, there is a critique of an absence of ontology since pragmatists believe that no matter whether social reality is real or subjective construction, it is a metaphysical question, and truth is a practical concern in the discovery of useful explanations for a phenomenon (Chambers, 2014).

Interpretivism asserts that reality is subjective, and understanding knowledge and truth involves analysing individuals' experiences and their interpretations of the universe (Saunders et al., 2019). It perceives knowledge as a product of social construction rather than as an objective and universally applicable scientific truth (Turyahikayo, 2021). Interpretivists posit the existence of many realities, which are shaped by individuals' perceptions and interpretations. Therefore, comprehending many viewpoints is essential for comprehending the complexity of human behaviour and social contexts, providing access to knowledge and truth.

Considering the philosophical assumptions in relation to entrepreneurship literature, Bygrave (2007) explores the philosophical foundations of entrepreneurial literature by examining the connections between several scientific disciplines, such as mathematics, biology, psychology, sociology, economics, and business. The author advises against overly simplistic approaches in entrepreneurship, as it is a field still emerging in applied social science, highlighting the importance of understanding the human elements behind strategic decisions, as scholars cannot study strategy purely by excluding the understanding of humans who made the strategic decisions. Similarly, within the realm of social entrepreneurship, there is a differentiation between social and natural sciences. This emphasises the intricate nature of human behaviour and the necessity for a more profound comprehension of social phenomena (Barinaga, 2012). Despite the predominance of an objectivist approach in research, the subjectivist perspective remains vital, influenced by the nature of the field, phenomena, context, and inquiries (Seymour, 2012).

Selecting a research paradigm requires the researcher to extensively review to grasp the diversity of available approaches and how methodologies can be effectively tailored to their specific research objectives and questions. It is essential, therefore, to consider the research objectives and questions alongside the philosophical stance and chosen paradigm before determining the most suitable research methodology. This preparatory step ensures that the methodology aligns well with the foundational aspects of the study. Therefore, the aims, research objectives, and research questions are revisited in short.

This thesis primarily aims to explore how social enterprises manage their employees, starting with understanding the motivations driving individuals to work in these organisations and how employee attachment develops within this context. Additionally, it explores management practices to provide insights into how social and human capital can be leveraged to retain social enterprise employees while upholding their dual missions of social impact and commercial success.

The following are the Research objectives:

1. To explore how social enterprises manage their employees while upholding both social and commercial missions, using the case of Thailand.
2. To understand the motivations of individuals working in social enterprises, specifically regarding their decisions to join, stay, or leave.
3. To understand the development of employee attachment within the dynamic environment of social enterprises.

Research questions:

1. How do social enterprises manage and retain their employees?
2. How does employee attachment develop within social enterprises?
3. How do social enterprises develop social and human capital to retain their employees while upholding both social and commercial missions?

Given this research's philosophical stance, aims, and objectives, it is evident that the underpinning philosophy diverges from the Positivism paradigm. This study seeks to delve deeply into understanding human motivation and how relationships evolve into employee attachment, suggesting that behaviours and events within organisations cannot be universally explained or predicted by fixed laws. A profound exploration of these aspects necessitates an authentic comprehension of participants' perspectives, highlighting that Positivism, with its focus on observable and measurable facts, does not align with the nature of this research.

The philosophical foundations of this research also diverge from the Postmodernism paradigm. Unlike Postmodernism, which critically examines and often challenges

conventional beliefs about knowledge, truth, and reality and scrutinises power dynamics behind prevailing perspectives, this study does not primarily seek to deconstruct these elements. Instead, it focuses on a detailed understanding of human motivation and the development of employee attachment without the intent to question the underlying power structures or dominant narratives. Consequently, the Postmodernism paradigm, with its emphasis on critiquing established norms and exposing power relations, does not closely align with the objectives of this research.

While the critical realism paradigm provides an appropriate philosophical foundation for entrepreneurship research by allowing for the contextualisation of entrepreneurial phenomena and theoretical integration across disciplines (Blundel, 2007), this study focuses primarily on the development of employee attachment. It aims to delve into how employees' motivations and relationships develop, emphasising the need to understand the social world from the participants' perspectives. Critical realism, with its emphasis on discovering causal mechanisms behind social events, does not entirely connect with the study's objectives, which do not prioritise revealing causal relationships or structures underlying employee decisions and behaviours. Instead, this research seeks a deeper exploration of subjective experiences, making paradigms like Pragmatism and Interpretivism more suitable due to their focus on individual perceptions and the interpretive nature of social reality.

When comparing Pragmatism and Interpretivism, both paradigms acknowledge the importance of understanding subjective human experiences. This aligns well with the study's focus on the development of employee attachment, motivation, and retention within social enterprises. However, while Pragmatism emphasises practical solutions, the aim and objectives of this research are to understand phenomena within their context and provide insights specific to social enterprises in Thailand rather than to solve problems. This research prioritises an in-depth exploration of human experiences and social contexts over addressing practical management issues, aiming to enrich the literature on social enterprise management. Interpretivism, with its

emphasis on understanding the nuances of human experiences and social dynamics, is better suited to the main aims and objectives of this study. Therefore, Interpretivism is the most appropriate paradigm for this research, as its focus on the interpretive complexities of participants' experiences offers valuable insights into the diverse and dynamic nature of social enterprises.

3.4 Research Approach

The philosophical stance of this research, rooted in social constructionism, closely aligns with the philosophical position of Interpretivism. This alignment, coupled with the study's aims and objectives, naturally guides the research towards a qualitative approach, adopting an inductive standpoint. This methodological choice reflects a commitment to understanding the nuanced, subjective experiences of individuals within their social contexts, emphasising the construction of knowledge through social interactions and interpretations. Saunders et al. (2019) highlight that the inductive approach allows the researcher to explore the topic, catch the meaning that emerges from data collection to build or extend the theory, and not restrict the use of existing theory. This would facilitate the exploration steps of this research on the complexity of the social construct of the employee's lives in relation to their motivations, relationships, and people management in social enterprise.

Although the qualitative approach faces limitations regarding generalisability, and some scholars in the field of entrepreneurship advocate for more quantitative methods to enhance generalisability, the diversity within the entrepreneurship field (Gartner, 2001; Welter, 2011) along with calls for studying social enterprises in various contexts (Doherty, 2018) continue to justify the use of qualitative approaches (Seymour, 2012).

3.5 Research Methodology and the Choice of Narrative Inquiry

The purpose of this study is to understand how employee attachment develops within the context of social enterprise and how people management in social enterprise is, especially how social enterprises retain their employees. Based on the research question and objective of understanding the development of employee attachment, this research explores it via the “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” developed to be employee attachment. At this point, a deep understanding of how the ties emerge and develop into an employee attachment is significant. These evolutions directly involve the participants’ lives, experiences, values, and beliefs. Therefore, data and information related to participants’ lives and experiences need to be explored.

Based on the research objective and question of how social enterprises manage and retain their employees, this research delves into the contextual nuances of people management in social enterprises. Given the scarcity of empirical studies on employee retention in social enterprises highlighted in existing literature, this study aims to fill this gap by capturing and analysing the experiences and narratives of individuals working within these organisations. By examining these firsthand accounts, the research seeks to understand people management practices, observing how they have been initiated, adapted, and refined over time to meet the unique challenges and needs of social enterprises. This approach not only sheds light on how social enterprises manage and retain their workforce but also contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamic interplay between organisational practices and employee engagement in this sector.

In this regard, this study will involve two distinct groups of participants: social enterprise founders or leaders, who will mainly offer insights into organisational practices, people management, and how they retain their employees, and employees who will share their experiences on the development of their motivation and

relationships that become employee attachment. This dual-perspective approach will enrich the study, providing a comprehensive view of people management, retention, and employee attachment within social enterprises. The study of this perspective would help the researcher to capture both the organisational strategies and the personal experiences that shape employee attachment, ensuring a well-rounded understanding of the factors contributing to employee retention and engagement within the social enterprise sector.

In qualitative research, Creswell (2007) identifies five approaches: narrative research, phenomenological research, grounded theory research, ethnographic research, and case study research. Considering the preceding discussion, Narrative Inquiry emerges as the optimal choice for this study. The following discussion will delve into the nature of narrative inquiry, explore why other qualitative approaches may not align as closely with this study's objectives, and elucidate why narrative inquiry is the most suitable match.

Narrative Inquiry

The concept of narrative research is based on the idea that individuals see and interpret their reality by constructing stories that link events in a sequential fashion, resembling a plot with a clear beginning, middle, and finish (Josselson, 2011). Kim (2016, p.6) stated that the term 'narrative' originates from a Latin term and indicated that narrative represents a 'form of knowledge that catches the two sides of narrative: telling as well as knowing.' Saunders et al. (2019) stated that the term 'narrative' can refer to a story of a person who interprets an event or sequence of incidents (p.209), and it can refer to any text or discourse (Creswell, 2007, p.54). According to narrative inquiry research, the usage of the term 'narrative' is different from its common meaning when characterising the nature or outcome of a qualitative interview. Based on the narrative study, Chase (2018) stated that there is a 'shift from a focus on the narration of past events to the narration of experiences, allowed for accounts about feeling and thoughts as well as about present, future, and hypothetical

experiences' (p.547), the narrative becomes a kind of communication that provides meaning to personal encounters without necessarily arranging them in a chronological sequence (Patterson, 2013). Chase, thus, provides the definition:

...is meaning making through the shaping of experience; a way of understanding one's own or others' actions; of organising events, objects, feeling, or thoughts in relation to each other; in which they can be seen over time (Chase, 2018, p.549).

In this regard, narrative inquiry focuses on individuals' stories to understand their experiences and the meanings they ascribe to those experiences. It is grounded in the idea that human beings make sense of their lives through narratives, in stories that are told and retold, which reflect their identities, experiences, values, and beliefs (Kim, 2016).

According to Burner (1986), humans use two distinct forms of thinking or knowing while trying to make sense of the world: the paradigmatic and narrative modes. Generating knowledge in paradigmatic mode is influenced by Positivism, which focuses on objective truth and relies on theory with the product made abstract and context-free. In addition, the narrative mode of generating knowledge utilises stories to grasp the significance of human actions and experiences, navigating through the fluctuations and obstacles of life events and unravelling the intricacies of human behaviour. This approach seeks to weave events into cohesive narratives, situating experiences within specific times and places, thereby offering a contextual understanding of these occurrences (Kim, 2016).

Nevertheless, narrative scholars do not aim to communicate stories as precise depictions of reality; rather, they aim to present interpretations of occurrences constructed by specific individuals for a particular purpose during a specific era. As

narrative truth pertains to a constructed account of experience, it does not precisely reflect what actually transpired but rather the way in which events are perceived and structured (Josselson, 2011). In this regard, Van Manen (2015) emphasises the importance of storytelling in human and social scientific research, citing several reasons that narrative inquiry can be a significant methodological strategy. Stories, for example, provide insight into a wide range of human experiences. Furthermore, through stories, people might indirectly meet situations, feelings, and events outside of their daily lives, broadening their understanding of the human condition. Additionally, stories allow for meaningful consideration of life as it unfolds. Thus, storytelling goes beyond being just a research tool; it becomes a strong means of profoundly understanding and communicating human life's complexity, beauty, and subtleties, establishing it as a core approach in social science studies (Van Manen, 2015, p.70).

From a methodological standpoint, narrative inquiry focuses on identifying chronological connections among events as narrated by participants (Saunders et al., 2019). As a researcher, this approach enables me to delve into the significance of events in people's lives by listening to their stories. This method is particularly suitable for this research because it offers a holistic understanding of human experiences over time, allowing for the integration of events, actions, and outcomes into a cohesive narrative. Additionally, analysing participants' stories will enable me to uncover and comprehend the interconnections of relationships and motivations within their narratives, thus gaining a comprehensive understanding of their life's consequences, trajectories, pivotal events, and turning points (Savin-Baden & Niekerk, 2007), and how relationships and motivations become attachments. Furthermore, their storytelling about the development and evolution of people management practices in their social enterprises provides deeper insights, contributing to a more nuanced understanding and enriched knowledge of the subject.

Through the utilisation of a qualitative research methodology and a specific emphasis on narrative inquiry, I can thoroughly explore the profound realities that are influenced by the experiences of the participants. This approach allows me to uncover significant insights into the development of employees' motivations, social relationships, and networks, all of which play pivotal roles in fostering their attachment to a social enterprise.

Furthermore, this approach sheds light on the intricacies of people management within social enterprises. By examining the narratives provided by participants, particularly those from founders or leaders, I can gain a deeper comprehension of the strategies employed to nurture and retain employees. Listening to their stories, understanding their feelings, and learning about the initial steps they took to support their staff will enrich our understanding of effective people management practices in the unique setting of social enterprises. This narrative inquiry sheds light on both the practical elements of employee care and the emotional and relational dynamics involved, offering a full understanding of people management within the realm of social enterprise.

Before deciding on the most suitable qualitative approach for this study, other methodologies, including phenomenological research, grounded theory research, ethnographic research, and case study research, were carefully considered. However, these approaches were ultimately deemed less aligned with the specific aims and objectives of this research for several reasons. While the phenomenological approach deeply values and seeks to understand individuals' experiences, it primarily aims to explore the essence of a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Considering the context of this research, the objective is not merely to uncover the reasons behind employees' decisions to stay, leave, or join. Instead, the focus is on comprehensively understanding context-rich narratives, for instance, that illustrate how individuals construct reasons for joining, staying, or leaving, which involve their values and beliefs that vary significantly. This research aims to delve into the personal and

cultural dimensions that shape the process of how employee attachment forms and persists. It seeks to explore the nuanced ways in which attachment is developed and maintained within the framework of individuals' lived experiences and the social enterprise context. Therefore, narrative inquiry, with its emphasis on capturing and analysing stories, presents a more fitting approach.

Case studies are excellent for exploratory research, especially when a phenomenon is not well-understood, as they can provide in-depth insights by analysing phenomena in their real-world context, including people's experiences within organisational structures (Yin, 2018). However, case studies often prioritise a thorough understanding of the case itself, emphasising organisational processes and outcomes rather than the rich personal narratives of those involved. This study seeks to understand the process and contextual aspects that influence the development of employee attachment and understanding of people management in social enterprises. Therefore, case studies, with their emphasis on organisational analysis, may not adequately capture the individual-level processes at the heart of this research.

The decision to forego the ethnographic approach for this research stems from considerations beyond the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. An ethnography focuses on an entire cultural group (Creswell, 2007). Specifically, the need for in-depth immersion within the community is not deemed essential for gathering the necessary data and insights. While the ethnographic method facilitates rapport building and provides a deep understanding of participants, it is not the only pathway to access valuable information. Narrative inquiry, with its focus on individuals' stories, offers an alternative means of delving into participants' thoughts and experiences. This approach allows researchers to explore the subjective meanings and insights conveyed through storytelling, providing a rich understanding of the phenomena under study without the necessity of physical immersion in the community.

The study's primary objective guides the decision to forego grounded theory in this research. Grounded theory focuses on developing new theories through rigorous data analysis, making it an invaluable method for research aimed at theory creation (Aparnam et al., 2017). However, this study aims to deepen our understanding of established concepts, particularly within the domains of social and human capital and employee attachment. Rather than generating new theories, it seeks to enrich and apply existing theoretical frameworks to explore and address specific knowledge gaps, notably the development of employee attachment and the under-explored area of social enterprise management. In this regard, narrative inquiry offers a path to deepen our comprehension of these concepts by allowing for an exploration of participants' stories and experiences. This approach is particularly suited to examining the nuanced processes of social and human capital development as they unfold in participants' narratives. By focusing on storytelling, narrative inquiry enables the researcher to uncover rich, context-specific insights that can significantly contribute to and enhance our understanding of existing theoretical frameworks, thereby bridging identified gaps in the literature.

In light of the above discussions, this research is better undertaken using a qualitative methodology, specifically narrative inquiry. This approach is in line with the study's objectives and aims to deeply explore and understand the personal experiences and stories of individuals within the context of social enterprises.

3.6 Narrative Research Genres

Various narrative research genres exist based on the narrative approach. Kim (2016) categorised narrative inquiry forms into three areas: Autobiographical Narrative Inquiry, Arts-Based Narrative Inquiry, and Biographical Narrative Inquiry.

Autobiographical narrative inquiry involves a researcher using themselves as the subject of the research and telling their own story. Within the autobiographical narrative genre, there are two main types: autobiography and autoethnography. Autobiography centres on the individual life story, whereas autoethnography prioritises analysing personal experiences to comprehend and criticise cultural and social phenomena.

Arts-based narrative research involves incorporating artistic elements into the investigation and storytelling process. This method utilises a range of artistic mediums such as short stories, fiction, novels, poems, pictures, and videos to communicate the desired messages of participants. It uses many art genres to explore and present scientific findings. The arts-based narrative inquiry includes two genres: Literary-based and Visual-based. Literary-based inquiry uses text and language (i.e., creative fiction, short story, novel, poetry, and drama) to engage readers through creative visualisation and intellectual thought, whereas Visual-based inquiry focuses on visual art forms (i.e., photovoice, photographic narrative, archival photographs, and digital storytelling), utilising components like composition, colour, and shape to convey a message effectively.

Biographical narrative research encompasses several subtypes, including Bildungsroman, oral history, life story, and life history. Essentially, this genre of research is dedicated to exploring the “life experiences and perspectives that people have of their daily lives, including their past, present, and future, focusing on how they make sense of the meaning they give to the stories they tell” (Kim, 2016, p.125).

Life history research examines how an individual’s personal experiences interact with historical, cultural, and social influences during their lifetime. It examines how changes in society affect individual paths and identities. Life story study focuses on

individual narratives to understand their identities, values, and the socio-cultural factors that shape their lives. Oral history research is gathering and analysing historical data by conducting interviews with individuals who possess firsthand knowledge of past events. It centres on analysing historical events via the viewpoints of individuals who lived through them. Bildungsroman is a German term roughly translated to 'formation story' or 'education story.' (Kim, 2016, p.127). Researchers who employ the Bildungsroman genre would analyse or construct narratives that closely examine an individual's personal development and self-discovery over time.

Considering these four types of narrative research, the genres of life history, life story, and oral history do not closely align with the aim of this study. This study prioritises examining individuals' experiences through participants' narratives. It does not aim to concentrate on particular historical events or the influence of specific values or cultures on a particular group of people. The Bildungsroman genre is the most suitable choice for this topic since it focuses on personal growth and self-development, allowing researchers to capture the process of personal development, the nurturing and shaping of one's mindset via intellectual and moral efforts (Kim, 2016, p.127). Accordingly, this thesis allows the researcher to track and understand the participants' development of their relationships and motivations in their personal and professional lives. Furthermore, regarding people management in social enterprises, the stories about how employee care is developed and how employees in social enterprises are retained can reveal deeper insights, providing a more comprehensive understanding of people management in social enterprises.

In conclusion, this study adopts a qualitative research approach, utilising biographical narrative inquiry alongside the Bildungsroman technique. The use of Bildungsroman facilitates a deep engagement with participants' stories, enabling an exploration of how motivations evolve to foster a strong connection to one's job and organisation, as well as the development of relationships that enhance organisational commitment. This approach relies significantly on the participants' abilities,

discernment, and expertise, which are essential for narrative reasoning and the subsequent conversion and expression of their stories for sharing with the researcher. Such an approach grants the researcher access to a wealth of information from the participants, aligning perfectly with the study's main research questions and objectives. It is particularly useful for analysing employee motivation dynamics and the development of ties to employee attachment, including the context of people management within social enterprises.

3.7 Ethical Considerations and Compensation

The nature of the study using narrative inquiry concerns the way participants tell stories and share their experiences. Therefore, ethical issues may arise in the process of listening to and sharing the participants' stories. Ethical considerations for narrative inquiry can include the following concerns (Kim, 2016; Wertz, 2011).

1. Protecting the emotional integrity of the participants and upholding their dignity through the process: The researcher respects the participants' privacy and personal lives, conducts an interview with empathy and compassion, and makes a moral investment in the relationship with the participants.
2. Confidentiality: In this study, maintaining the anonymity and privacy of participants has been prioritised. To achieve this, all 50 participants have been assigned pseudonyms to ensure their anonymity. The pseudonyms are sequentially designated as 'Participant P1' through 'Participant P50'. Each pseudonym is assigned to a distinct participant. This labelling approach is used in research documents to refer to individuals without disclosing their real identity. This method enables us to analyse the results and understandings obtained from the interviews while upholding the rigorous confidentiality of participant data.

3. The integrity of the process: Participants were thoroughly briefed on the activities and interview questions involved in the data collection phase. They were explicitly informed of their right to decline participation or to withdraw from the study at any stage. This information was communicated both verbally and in written documents prior to the commencement of the interviews. Consent forms detailing the use and protection of their information were distributed. Additionally, the researcher provided clear explanations about the potential implications of their contributions, ensuring that participants were fully aware of the significance of the stories they shared.
4. The authentic stories: In the context of this research topic, the likelihood of participants fabricating their stories is minimised due to the nature of the narratives being solicited. The stories shared by participants are unlikely to result in negative representations or consequences for them. Moreover, according to the narrative inquiry research, Savin-Baden and Nierkerk (2007) posit that individuals typically do not conceal truths while recounting their tales, and any attempts to do so are frequently revealed through comprehensive data analysis.
5. Risk management: The potential risk to the investigator is significantly reduced as the researcher has opted not to conduct fieldwork during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interviews are conducted online, with participants and the investigator engaging through virtual platforms, eliminating any physical risk to both parties. Nonetheless, the inherent risk and discomfort for participants may stem from the nature of the narrative inquiry study, particularly through sharing personal stories. At this juncture, ethical protocols involving the use of pseudonyms and adherence to rigorous research procedures are instrumental in mitigating risks and discomforts for the participants, ensuring a safe and respectful environment for sharing their narratives.

6. Compensation: The majority of participants requested that the researcher send them the research findings once the project has been completed. Some of them requested volunteer teaching from the researcher through their free online courses, while others sought future contributions on a voluntary consulting basis for their social projects. The researcher accepted and completed all voluntary activities that are legally permissible.

3.8 Data Collection and Sampling

The data collection phase of this research lasted around 15 months. The pilot study took place from January to March 2021, with primary data collection finished by March 2022, encompassing a total of 50 participants. The following sections provide detailed information about this research phase, including the participants' selection criteria, the methods and approaches used for data collection, essential documents, and the interview protocol. These components collectively offer an in-depth overview of the data collection process for this study.

3.8.1 Defining Social Enterprise in Thailand

This study defines social enterprises following the Social Enterprises Promotion Act B.E. 2562 (2019). Although the Thai government does not define social enterprise, the Social Enterprise Act provides a framework to identify a social enterprise in Thailand (British Council, 2018, 2020; Doherty & Kittipanya-Ngam, 2021). According to the Act, to be registered, the social enterprise must be established under Thai law with the goal of doing business to sell goods or provide services. In addition, it must aim to promote employment, solve social problems, help local communities, and develop societies or the environment. Also, social enterprises must not focus on maximising profit for shareholders/partners. Instead, it must reinvest at least 70% of its profit into the business or donate to farmers, the poor, the disabled, the disadvantaged, or the environment (Nuchpiam & Punyakumpol, 2019; NESDB, 2017).

Drawing from the literature on social enterprise typology and the specific classification of social enterprises in Thailand, registration with the government distinguishes enterprises into Type A (non-profit sharing) and Type B (profit sharing). However, within the scope of this research study, such categorisation does not directly pertain to the aspect of people management within social enterprises. Consequently, this study will not adhere to these specific categories. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that numerous organisations in Thailand are dedicated to social and environmental causes, operating with self-generated funds without formal registration as social enterprises. Thus, this study adopts a broader definition of social enterprises, not confined to only those officially registered. It encompasses entities that self-identify as social enterprises, as evidenced through official documents, media, or websites affiliated with the SE Thailand Association, the Thailand Social Enterprise Office (TSEO), or the Stock Exchange of Thailand's Social Impact (SET Social Impact) initiatives. This inclusive approach ensures that all entities recognised by these bodies as social enterprises are considered within the framework of this study, reflecting the diverse landscape of social enterprise activities in Thailand.

Furthermore, a review of the literature on social enterprises across various contexts reveals that differences in the environment in which these enterprises operate can lead to distinct operational methods, encompassing aspects of people management and employee retention strategies. Consequently, the criteria for selecting potential social enterprises for this study aim to encompass a broad spectrum of business industries, sizes, and geographical regions to capture this diversity effectively. In line with this objective, the study intentionally includes both non-WISE and WISE categories within its sample.

3.8.2 Selecting Social Enterprises to Approach for this Research.

Given that this study focuses on the context of social enterprises in Thailand, and social enterprises are also diversified depending on the context, selecting a suitable

social enterprise to approach for potential participants necessitates particular criteria. The following criteria were created for this purpose:

1. The social enterprise should comply with the Thailand Social Enterprises Promotion Act B.E. 2562 (2019). Given the absence of an official definition from the government, this Act serves as a framework for defining a social enterprise in Thailand. Additionally, the literature indicates that third-sector organisations not engaged in entrepreneurial activities should not be considered social enterprises (Galera & Borzaga, 2009); thus, traditional NGOs and foundations are excluded from this study. Moreover, venture builder organisations, intermediary organisations, and entities supporting social enterprise scale-up (such as business accelerators and incubators) are also excluded from being categorised as social enterprises in this research. This is because their primary roles are to support social enterprises, and their organisational context and the level of tension in operational activities differ from those of social enterprises. These differences can potentially influence an employee's attitude towards their career, life goals, and motivations.
2. The social enterprise should have been operating for at least three years, as this duration is sufficient to assure business viability.
3. The social enterprise organisational model should be able to depict the organisational structure that can contribute knowledge on people management in organisations.

3.8.3 Participants

This study leverages in-depth interviews to gather insights from two primary groups: employees of social enterprises and the founders or leaders of these organisations. Initially, the research aimed to explore the motivations, personal relationships, and factors contributing to employee attachment among the employee group while focusing on the dynamics of people management within social enterprises among leaders and founders. However, findings from the pilot study indicated that both groups could offer valuable perspectives on people management as well as employee attachment, shaped by their distinct experiences and narratives.

Narratives from founders and leaders typically illuminate the evolution and growth of people management practices across various social enterprises in Thailand. Conversely, employees' personal stories provide a unique lens through which people management is viewed, reflecting their individual opinions and experiences. Moreover, while the investigation of employee attachment, including relationships and motivation, initially seemed to depend predominantly on employee experiences, it became evident that both groups (employees and founder/leader groups) contribute valuable insights into these areas, particularly when their life experiences intersect with their professional roles.

For instance, some founders have backgrounds as employees in other social enterprises before establishing their ventures. Similarly, certain employees have garnered experience across multiple social enterprises or have navigated various roles within the same organisation due to promotions, thereby offering a richer perspective. Consequently, engaging both groups as participants significantly enriches the research, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of people management, employee motivation, personal relationships, and the development of employee attachment. This dual-perspective approach underscores the complexity and interconnectedness of these factors within this social enterprise ecosystem.

Criteria for selecting the group of employees who work for social enterprise:

1. The participants can be of any gender, have no background requirement, and must be employed by social enterprises in Thailand.
2. The participants must work or have/had worked in any social enterprise for at least a year as it is long enough to engage with organisational activities, establish their social relationships, and acknowledge their changeable motivations. Thus, they can give stories about their rational motivations at work, raise experiences related to their careers and lives, and address stories about the growth of their relationship and social ties that may impact their decision and feelings regarding their work.
3. The participants must be full-time employees only. Volunteers will not be included since they have different perspectives on career motivation and different strategies for managing volunteers in the organisation, as volunteers can leave whenever they prefer (Farny et al., 2019).

Criteria for selecting the group of founders/leaders of social enterprise:

1. The participants can be of any gender, and there is no requirement for the participant's background.
2. The participants can be the social enterprise founder or co-founder or those involved in the entrepreneurial process, establishing the social enterprise, with the organisational operation, especially in people management.

3.8.4 Sample size

According to the sample size of the qualitative research, the number of scholars identified varies depending on the context of the research (Ritchie et al., 2003). However, Baker and Edwards (2012) indicated that identifying how many are indeed depends on the practical issues, time available, epistemological and methodological questions about the research nature and purpose, and the number of interviews will not be judged by the assumption of a large number. In research methodologies, the approach to sample size and the goal of generalisation differs significantly between qualitative and quantitative studies. Quantitative research focuses on statistical generalisations, aiming to draw conclusions that apply to larger populations. This necessitates larger sample sizes to ensure the statistical significance of the results. On the other hand, qualitative research seeks to generalise theoretical insights rather than statistical applicability. It delves deeper into individual or group experiences, behaviours, and perceptions, which typically requires a smaller, more focused sample size.

For narrative inquiry, the number of participants can go from one person to more than fifty, as the research concerning life stories is likely to entail a much smaller sample size (Kim, 2016; Baker & Edwards, 2012). The scholars also indicated that twelve interviews suffice for the aim to discern themes (Charmaz, 2012, p.21) and the broad range of between twelve and sixty was also identified, in which the number 30 sample size can be the mean of sample size (Adler & Adler, 2012, p.10). Although identifying how many interviews depends on many factors, most qualitative researchers aim to get data until saturation and in a broad range. As a result, the preliminary sample size for this study was determined to be 30 to 40 people. However, the final count exceeded expectations, with 50 participants. The sample included a higher proportion of social enterprise employees than founders, reflecting the typical organisational structure in which the number of employees outnumbers the number of founding partners. This distribution reflects the natural demographic tendency within organisations, with employees constituting a greater segment than founding members.

3.8.5 Recruitment and Approach Strategy

The Approach Process

This research employed two methods to recruit participants: through the researcher's personal connections and a formal direct approach to potential social enterprises. The personal connection method involved a screening process based on the above-specified criteria. The formal direct approach began with desk research, identifying potential social enterprises from government reports, books, and official websites related to social enterprises in Thailand, such as the Office of Social Enterprise Promotion, The SET Social Impact (The Thailand Stock Exchange Social Impact), and the Social Enterprise Thailand websites. Upon identifying viable candidates, the researcher selected social enterprises that met the criteria and compiled a list for approach.

Given the diversity of social enterprises and their different contexts, as highlighted in the literature, the aim was to recruit a varied mix of social enterprises, including Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISEs) and non-WISEs, across different business industries. Furthermore, recognising the heterogeneous nature of the workforce in social enterprises, characterised by employees with varied needs and interests, the recruitment process was designed to encompass a wide age range and diverse occupations among participants. This approach acknowledges the generational diversity within a single organisation and the differing motivations and factors that influence employee attachment, which are often dependent on demographic attributes. Consequently, the recruitment strategy was crafted to include a broad spectrum of ages and occupations, facilitating a thorough exploration of these dynamics to gain a holistic understanding of employee attachment within social enterprises.

Following this, the researcher emailed invitation letters and necessary documents. In response to inquiries from potential participants, many sought further details about the interview questions and the research's purpose and objectives. This communication phase was crucial for ensuring participants fully understood the research project, their rights to decline participation, the personal details and experiences they would be sharing, and the measures taken to protect their anonymity. During this process, some potential participants opted out of the project. However, this phase ultimately facilitated rapport building with those who agreed to participate, contributing to a smoother interview process, increased willingness to share stories, and access to deeper, more significant information.

Once participation was confirmed, interview appointments were scheduled at the convenience of the participants. In preparation, the researcher developed an interview script and tailored specific questions based on the participants' backgrounds, which were known through a preliminary questionnaire linked in the invitation email. This questionnaire collected the participants' age, tenure in the social enterprise, and role, whether as employees or founders, allowing for the creation of personalised interview questions.

After each interview, the snowball sampling technique was utilised, asking participants to recommend other potential contributors to the project. This iterative process helped to broaden the research's participant base further.

Preparing Documents and Invitation Letters

As Thailand is the context of this study, all interviews and communications between the researcher and participants were conducted in Thai. Consequently, all documentation related to the recruitment process and interview procedures was created in both Thai and English. For the formal direct approach, the invitation email, accompanied by the official invitation letter, Participant Information Sheets (PISs), Consent Forms, and the university's Privacy Notice for Participants, was sent to

potential participants/social enterprises. In this direct approach, the researcher approached potential social enterprises without prior knowledge of anyone's willingness to participate in the project. With the intention of recruiting both groups of participants—founders and employees—from the social enterprises, the PIS and Consent Forms for both participant groups, in both languages (Thai and English), were distributed. These documents detail the participants' rights to refuse participation or withdraw at any time during the study, the study process, the time spent during the interview, and data protection details. For the personal connection approach, all processes are similar to those of the direct approach method but are conducted in an informal manner, such as contacting potential participants via personal contacts or personal social media channels.

Since the researcher approached participants through their organisations, a QR code and a Qualtrics link were created as alternative response forms to protect participants' privacy. This was taken into consideration for those who might wish to participate without informing their founders or colleagues. These links were included in both the email content and the official invitation letter. The latter measure ensures that if the organisation prints and displays the invitation letter on a company board, interested participants can easily scan the QR code to express their willingness to participate discreetly. The link directs to a short questionnaire that collects essential participant details such as name, organisation name, age, email address, preferred contact method (e.g., Line application, which is popular used in Thailand), role for the interview (founder, employee, HR professional), length of service at the organisation, and the organisation's operational duration (refer to Appendix A for the form). This brief questionnaire, attached to the response form, allows the researcher to learn about the potential participants' backgrounds. Additionally, if potential participants wish to understand more about the project before deciding to participate, the researcher can easily reach out to them using the contact information provided.

3.8.6 Pilot Study

Pilot studies in social science are typically categorised into two main types: smaller versions of studies, known as feasibility studies, and the pre-testing or trial runs of study protocols (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Padgett (2017) highlighted that a pilot study is crucial for enhancing the quality of research. It serves as an effective method for gathering feedback on the data collection process, interview protocols, and the set of interview questions. This enables the researcher to identify any necessary modifications to the questions and procedures to ensure the process is conducive to collecting rich data (Malmqvist et al., 2019). Consequently, this study incorporates a pilot study, focusing on the trial run of study protocols, with details provided in the subsequent sections.

3.8.6.1 Data Collection and Interview Process in the Pilot Study

The interviews for the pilot study were conducted in two phases. The first interview was scheduled for 15 minutes, aiming to establish rapport and clarify the project details with the participants. Once the invitation email was sent out, the researcher could check the responses in two ways: through direct replies to emails and the Qualtrics pool. After potential participants responded to the invitation email and agreed to participate, the researcher contacted them back to arrange the initial 15-minute interview via the Line application (or any other application preferred by the participants) to ensure they understood the research procedure. The researcher would then provide an overview of the study, verify the participants' qualifications, explain the interview process, confirm that the candidates would not have difficulty articulating their experiences and career life, obtain the consent form, and set a date for the following interview.

In the initial interview, participants were asked to bring any work- or career-related photographs to the next interview session if they wished. This approach was designed to help the researcher gain insight into the employees' working environments and a deeper understanding of their work-life settings. Additionally, it

offered the participants more opportunities to discuss their lives and experiences through the photographs they chose to share. However, bringing photographs was not mandatory and depended entirely on the participants' preferences.

For the group of employee participants, the second interview was scheduled to last a maximum of two hours. The interview topics included the participants' backgrounds, the evolution of their motivation related to their intentions to stay with or leave the organisation, and the development of relationships and networks that keep them attached to the organisation. For the group of founders/leaders participants, the second interview was set to last a maximum of one hour, focusing on the participants' backgrounds, the background of the social enterprise, and its people management practices.

In this research project, the researcher employed two distinct tools for recording interviews to ensure the reliability and comprehensibility of the data collected. The primary method of recording was through the software integrated into the teleconferencing platform, such as the recording feature available on Zoom video conferences. A secondary tool dedicated solely to audio recording was also utilised as a precautionary measure to safeguard against potential malfunctions of the primary recording method. Before commencing with the interview, participants were informed about the recording process and their permission to record was explicitly sought and obtained. This approach not only adheres to ethical research practices but also guarantees that no part of the conversation is lost or overlooked, ensuring the integrity of the data collection process.

After each interview, the researcher consistently sent an email to thank the participants for their contribution. This gesture of appreciation was recognised as an exemplary practice, reinforcing the importance of expressing thanks or, in certain instances, reaffirming commitments to provide voluntary teaching as requested by

participants. Such follow-ups have proven to be effective in fostering rapport for future engagements. The researcher discovered that this practice was highly valued by participants, many of whom provided feedback on the usefulness of their involvement in the project. They noted that reflecting on the interview questions allowed them to revisit past experiences and emotions, re-evaluate their motivations, and reconsider their life plans. In some cases, participants offered additional insights related to their responses during the interviews, enriching the data with more profound, comprehensive, and thoughtful information. This process enhanced the quality of the research data and contributed to the participant's personal growth and self-awareness.

The pilot study was conducted from January to March 2021, with a sample of five participants from the group of employees and two participants from the group of social enterprise leaders. The table below outlines the interview process and timeline for data collection.

Table 3.1 Process and Timeline for Data Collection (Pilot Study)

Process	Time spent	Tool	Objectives/Activities
Sending the invitation email with an online response link	N/A	E-mail	To get the potential participants and inform them about the project, the researcher sent an invitation email with a Qualtrics link to potential participants/social enterprises.
1st interview	15 mins	Zoom, Line, or Microsoft Team	To confirm the participation process and obtain the consent form, the researcher instructed participants to bring five work- or career-related photographs that showcase their working environment for the next interview. The date and time for the subsequent interview were established during this initial meeting.
Confirm the appointment	N/A	E-mail	The researcher sent an email to confirm the agreed-upon date and time of the second interview and prepare the interview script tailored for the participant.

Process	Time spent	Tool	Objectives/Activities
2nd interview for the group of employee participants	2 hours maximum	Zoom, Line, or Microsoft Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To excavate the stories and experiences shared by the participants. - To explore their motivations and understand the evolution of motivation that can attach them to the organisation. - To identify the factors that deter them from leaving their jobs, such as relationships, engagement, achievements, mission and vision, ideology, and career development.
2nd interview for the group of founder/leader participants	1 hour in maximum	Zoom, Line, or Microsoft Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To investigate and understand the people management practices and systems adopted by social enterprises, especially in terms of employee retention. - To comprehend the perceptions, expectations, and opinions on how to look after their people.
In the last process, an email was sent out to everyone to express appreciation for the participants' contribution.			

3.8.6.2 Pilot Study Feedback and the Modification of the Interview Process

Following the pilot study, adjustments were made to both the participant recruitment and interview processes. Below are the modifications implemented:

1. The initial 15-minute interview was deleted as all activities and information can be acknowledged via email. Besides, participating in a two-part interview requires significantly more effort than engaging in a single interview session.
2. The online questionnaire was adjusted by removing the gender question and changing the participation choice from 'No' to 'Not Sure.' This change allows potential participants to indicate their interest in participating and their need for further information or inquiries about the research project. Consequently, the researcher can follow up with them to discuss the project and participation in more detail.

3. The details regarding the interview duration for each participant group were updated in the invitation email. For employee participants, the scheduled interview time was set to 90-120 minutes (instead of 120 minutes), while for founder/leader participants, the scheduled interview time was set to 60-90 minutes (instead of 60 minutes). However, in practice, interviews with employee participants often extended to 120 minutes and, in many cases, up to 150 minutes. Similarly, interviews with founder/leader participants occasionally lasted between 90 and 150 minutes. The duration varied based on the participants' backgrounds, eagerness to share, and availability. Throughout the interviews, the researcher consistently monitored the time, regularly reminding participants of the elapsed duration and encouraging them to indicate if they wished to conclude the interview.
4. An essential piece of feedback from the pilot study concerned the choice of words (in Thai) used during the interviews. Certain terms were perceived as sensitive, particularly in conversations with founders. Table 3.2 below presents the modified words, along with explanations for how and why these changes were made.

Table 3.2 Modification of Thai Word Choices for Interviews Following the Pilot Study

Previously used	Change to	Reasons
<p>“Employee”</p> <p>In Thai is/พนักงาน/ (i.e. your employees)</p>	<p>nóng-nóng /น้องๆ/: refers to younger siblings, brothers, and sisters. It is a polite pronoun for addressing someone younger.</p> <p>phee-phee /พี่ๆ/: refers to older siblings, brothers, and sisters. It is a polite pronoun for addressing someone older.</p> <p>pêuuan- pêuuan /เพื่อนๆ/: refers to friends, team, or teammate.</p>	<p>The word “employee” /พนักงาน/ is perceived as having a negative connotation when referring to employees in an organisation. This term seems to convey a sense of high-power distance between employer and employee.</p> <p>The participants conveyed that employees are viewed as more than just workers; they compared them to family members, friends, and siblings. Thus, in later interviews, the researcher altered the terminology used when referring to employees within the organisation.</p>

Previously used	Change to	Reasons
<p>“policy”</p> <p>In Thai, it is /นโยบาย/ (i.e. people management policy)</p>	<p>Næwthāng /แนวทาง/: refers to the word ‘guidelines’</p>	<p>The word “policy” (/นโยบาย/ in Thai) carries some negative connotations. It reflects a substantial power distance between employee and employer within the organisation, suggesting an elevated level of authority in enforcing rules and regulations.</p> <p>During the pilot interview, the researcher realised that instead of using the term “policy,” the word “Næwthāng” should be used. Participants mentioned that they do not adhere strictly to something as formal as a policy in their organisation, implying that the term is too burdensome and seems to compel employees and everyone else to follow.</p>

This pilot study is essential for improving the study methodology and the interview process. It gives the researcher a valuable chance to test and improve the questions and interview guide comprehensively. Participants’ feedback is crucial for researchers to make improvements that enhance the questions’ clarity, relevance, and sensitivity. These improvements are crucial to guarantee the accuracy and credibility of the gathered data.

Furthermore, the modifications in word selection based on participant input provide valuable insight into managing people in social enterprises. It indicates that people management in such enterprises tends to opt for a ‘soft’ approach over a ‘hard’ one, particularly when examined from the perspective of organisational people management. This indicates an emphasis on management approaches prioritising individuals and relationships, demonstrating a profound comprehension of the corporate culture and values commonly seen in social enterprises.

3.9 Interview Protocol

According to the structure of the narrative interview, there are two distinct phases: the narrative phase and the conversation phase (Kim, 2016). The narrative phase involves extensive storytelling by the participants, during which the researcher minimally intervenes, merely facilitating the continuation of the narration. For this reason, open-ended interviews are utilised to elicit narratives from the participants. The conversation phase follows, characterised by semi-structured, in-depth questioning or dialogue, where the researcher seeks clarification on points raised during the initial narrative. Kim (2016, p.169) notes that both phases can be conducted in a non-linear fashion. Therefore, this study integrates both open-ended and semi-structured questions within the interviews to facilitate a more effective data collection process and ensure seamless interactions with participants.

The interview protocol was tailored to accommodate different participant groups by developing two sets of guidelines: one for employee participants and another for founders/leaders. The set geared towards the employee group aimed to delve into their motivations and the formation of “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” within their professional lives. Conversely, the set designed for the founders/leaders group sought to investigate people management practices in social enterprises and strategies for employee retention.

Each set of interview guidelines comprises two main sections. The first section collects background information about the participants. In contrast, the second section focuses on the core interview questions directly related to the research frameworks and study questions (as detailed in Appendix B).

However, during the interviews, it became apparent that participants often provided insights that transcended the confines of a single guideline set, attributed to their dual roles, for instance, owing to their experiences of first being employees in one social enterprise and subsequently becoming founders or leaders of a different social enterprise. Consequently, the selection of questions for each interview was further customised based on the participants' unique experiences and backgrounds, revealed during the interviews, along with their willingness and availability. This adaptable approach ensured that the interviews were comprehensive and tailored to the participants' rich and diverse backgrounds, thereby enriching the depth and relevance of the data collected.

3.10 Data Analysis

3.10.1 Data Analysis for This Research

In the realm of narrative inquiry research, data analysis can be divided into two distinct approaches, as outlined by Polkinghorne (1995). The approaches are known as 'analysis of narrative' and 'narrative analysis.' Bruner (2009) elucidated this distinction, describing 'analysis of narrative' as a paradigmatic-type narrative inquiry, whereas 'narrative analysis' is described as a narrative-type narrative inquiry. This classification highlights each approach's different methods to understand and analyse narrative information.

The analysis of narrative seeks to identify common themes, concepts, and categories discovered from the data, based on the analysis goal of minimising ambiguity, whereas the narrative analysis is conducted to pay attention to a particular human action in a specific time and place, based on the analysis goal of understanding why and how things happened (Kim, 2016, pp.196-197). In other words, the analysis of narrative strives to identify the common elements and locate common themes or conceptual manifestations within the datasets collected (stories), resulting in a description of themes across stories or the taxonomies of story's types, whereas the narrative analysis seeks to collect the descriptions of the events and synthesise them

in relation to plots, resulting in stories (Polkinghorne, 1995). The analysis of narrative ‘moves from stories to common elements’ while narrative analysis ‘moves from elements to stories’ (Polkinghorne, 1995, p.12).

Saunders et al. (2019, p.675) classify narrative analysis into two specific approaches: ‘thematic narrative analysis’ and ‘structural narrative analysis.’ The former, thematic narrative analysis, aligns with what is described as the ‘analysis of narrative.’ Its primary aim is to identify analytical themes in a narrative by focusing on the content rather than the structural composition. This method prioritises understanding the sequence and context, which are crucial for crafting a comprehensive and nuanced interpretation of each narrative. Moreover, when examining multiple narratives, comparing and contrasting these findings is vital to uncover broader insights. On the other hand, ‘structural narrative analysis,’ corresponding to the previously mentioned ‘narrative analysis,’ focuses on the narrative’s construction. The emphasis here is on the narrative’s formation and the use of language rather than the narrative content itself. A prominent method employed in this approach is the technique developed by William Labov and Joshua Waletzky in 1967 (Saunders et al., 2019, p.676) and further refined by Labov (1972). This approach entails examining six narrative elements: abstract, direction, complicated action, evaluation, result or resolution, and coda, as per Labov’s model (Kim, 2016). Researchers scrutinise the narrative’s structure through this lens to understand its assembly and impact.

In this research, ‘analysis of narrative’ or what is termed ‘thematic narrative analysis’ was utilised for data analysis. This methodology aligns perfectly with the research questions and objectives. It enables the researcher to identify commonalities in the stories collected from individual experiences, thereby facilitating the extraction of concepts and insights directly from the participants’ experiences. Riessman (2008, p.53) indicated that this approach is sometimes confused with grounded theory; however, they are different. In thematic narrative analysis, the insight or theory will be theorised from ‘the case rather than from component themes (categories) across

cases.’ This method helps the researcher thoroughly explore social and human capital, conceptualised through “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie.” It provides a detailed examination of how these forms of attachment emerge in the participants’ lives, as depicted in their personal narratives. Additionally, this approach offers insights into the motivations behind employees’ decisions to join, depart from, or remain with social enterprises, analysing these choices within the context of their stories. Moreover, it proves invaluable in studying people management within social enterprises, offering perspectives on employee retention strategies based on participants’ lived experiences and narratives. Through this technique, researchers can better comprehend the internal dynamics within social enterprises, especially regarding the management and retention of their workforce.

3.10.2 Reflexive Thematic Analysis

The researcher evaluates various thematic analysis methodologies before choosing thematic narrative analysis to conduct the data analysis. Braun and Clarke (2022) classify thematic analysis (TA) into three main approaches: the Coding reliability approach, the Codebook approach, and the Reflexive approach. Each method provides a unique structure for examining data.

The Coding reliability approach to thematic analysis adopts a broadly (post)positivist stance, operating under the premise that coding can achieve accuracy and reliability (Braun & Clarke, 2022). This approach typically employs a structured codebook and emphasises the development of themes at an early stage of the analytical process. In this context, themes are perceived as encapsulations of participants’ responses as ‘summaries of what participants said in relation to a particular topic or the questions posed during data collection’ (Braun et al., 2019).

The Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) emphasises the researcher's dynamic involvement in creating knowledge, considering codes to reflect the researcher's understanding of meaningful patterns in the dataset. This approach is seen as a nuanced reflection of the researcher's interpretive analysis, situated at the confluence of three key elements: the dataset itself, the theoretical underpinnings of the analysis, and the researcher's analytical competencies and resources. RTA opposes the pursuit of 'accurate' or 'reliable' coding practices or seeking agreement among multiple coders and emphasises subjective interpretation above objective agreement (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

The Codebook approach to TA combines qualitative research's interpretive value with a structured methodology. It falls between RTA and the Coding reliability TA. This method involves developing and using a codebook or coding framework to direct the analysis in a structured but less flexible way than RTA. Like the Coding reliability TA, this method uses a structured codebook to interpret themes as condensed representations, viewing themes as summaries of specific domains within the data. However, it distinguishes itself by acknowledging the interpretive nature of data coding, thereby incorporating a degree of reflexivity.

Given the diverse methods within TA, RTA is considered the most suitable method for conducting thematic narrative analysis for several compelling reasons. To begin with, RTA emphasises the researcher's active involvement in the analytical process, highlighting the significance of reflexivity. This aspect is closely aligned with thematic narrative analysis, requiring thorough contextual comprehension and interpretation of narratives. It promotes reflexivity to elevate the analysis beyond mere categorisation, fostering an in-depth understanding that reflects the researcher's interpretive stance. This method is vital for grasping the essence of participants' stories within their unique social, cultural, and personal contexts, enabling a more comprehensive and context-specific examination.

Secondly, RTA's flexibility and reflexivity play a crucial role in creating a well-structured, comprehensive, and integrated thematic analysis. This method allows for a detailed study of themes inside individual narratives and across various narratives, enhancing the research with depth and complexity. By leveraging RTA, researchers can engage in a systematic exploration that goes beyond identifying thematic patterns to delving into the underlying reasons and contexts of narrative content.

Moreover, the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study, particularly social and human capital concepts, are relatively nascent in the scholarly discourse, especially concerning the aspects of capital formation explored in this study. There is a noticeable paucity of literature solidifying the theoretical underpinnings of social capital formation. Similarly, exploring human capital from a social perspective remains underdeveloped, with scant literature available. Given this context, RTA is the most suitable analysis method for delving deeply into the nuances and insights of the data, thereby enriching the theoretical conversation. RTA fosters the themes' organic and iterative development instead of being pre-determined and coded. This method is particularly effective for creating new knowledge in theories that prioritise revealing insights through a flexible and exploratory research process rather than following established codes or themes associated with current theoretical frameworks.

Additionally, RTA aligns closely with the objectives of thematic narrative analysis. Saunders et al. (2019, p.674) highlight that analysing data for the narrative inquiry approach is distinct from other approaches like thematic analysis, template analysis, or grounded theory, which tend to segment original data into codes before categorising them analytically. The nature of data analysis in narrative inquiry research usually treats data holistically, preserving and examining narratives in their entirety while still allowing for the identification, coding, and analysis of categories, themes, and content facets. These processes are integrated within the narrative context. Although this research employs thematic narrative analysis, preserving the

data's narrative form is essential. In this regard, RTA's flexibility is pivotal, empowering the researcher to form themes grounded in participants' stories inductively. It prompts the researcher to question and re-examine the data and interpretations consistently. This ongoing reflective process is indispensable for thematic narrative analysis, aiming to understand narratives not merely as isolated pieces of data but as interconnected sequences that reveal deeper meanings and patterns.

3.10.3 Analysis Procedure

According to RTA, Braun and Clarke (2022) outline a six-phase process designed to guide researchers through the intricacies of thematic analysis. This structured approach aims to assist researchers in navigating the analysis from start to finish, ensuring a comprehensive and reflective examination of the data. The six phases include:

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes.

Phase 3: Generating initial themes.

Phase 4: Developing and reviewing themes.

Phase 5: Refining, defining, and naming themes.

Phase 6: Writing report.

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data.

During the initial phase of the analysis, the researcher carefully transcribed the interview recordings into Thai, ensuring a verbatim capture of the conversations before translating them into English. This process involved detailed note-taking to document the researcher's reflections, thoughts, and questions that arose during transcription. Initially, separate documents were maintained for the Thai and English transcripts. However, nearing the completion of this phase and transitioning into the

next phase, these were merged into a single document, aligning the two languages side by side to streamline the coding process.

In this phase, a concise narrative for each participant was crafted to depict their life trajectories and experiences within their professional journey. Additionally, a 'life storyline sheet' was developed in Microsoft Excel. This tool was instrumental in organising comprehensive details of each participant's background, including age, profession, length of service, educational history, industry and organisation affiliations, career progression from their first job to their current role, and pivotal moments that influenced their career decisions, particularly transitions into the social enterprise sector. This file can reveal each participant's career path and offer a panoramic view of their professional experiences, enabling the researcher to identify patterns and contrast the development of their relationships and motivations across the narratives. It also provided valuable context for understanding why some participants transitioned between social enterprises, traditional foundations, and for-profit organisations. The life storyline sheet proved crucial for narrative analysis, offering a rich source of data for interpreting each participant's life experiences and contextual backgrounds, thereby enhancing the depth and accuracy of the analysis. Manually transcribing from interview records to Thai, translating Thai to English, creating the life storyline sheet, and taking researcher reflexive notes are incredibly time-consuming at this phase; however, it is well worth the effort.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes.

During this step, codes and labels were allocated to the data items considered significant and pertinent to the study and research questions. Aligning two languages side by side in the interview transcript helps the searcher effectively code and label data items, ensuring that the latent meaning in what participants say in the Thai context is not overlooked. This practice helps minimise the risk of misinterpretation while coding (Clandinin, 2007). The researcher started coding by printing the transcript and using coloured pens and markers. However, it was discovered that this method is not very convenient when the researcher needs to refer back to the

assigned codes and labels. The researcher then used Microsoft Word to code the data by applying the comment function. However, it lacked flexibility when the researcher wanted to assign more than one code to the same narrative. Hence, the researcher used the Nivivo programme for this initial coding phase.

For the coding technique, although it was recommended to use succinct code to label data items, the researcher discovered that excessively short coding was not effective. Using longer sentences or phrases to label the data items proved to be beneficial for narrative analysis. This approach assisted the researcher in accurately capturing interpretations and facilitated the grouping of data into categories. Besides, using the NVivo programme provides many benefits to the researcher. As mentioned, the NVivo programme was used solely to generate initial codes. The coding procedure proceeded through multiple cycles to refine these codes, which were manually done using Microsoft Word and Excel. In order to get through this process, NVivo's 'export codebook' feature was instrumental in exporting all initial codes and categories before they were revised or modified by the researcher. As Byrne provided (2022, p.1401), the example table for manually tracking code changes proved valuable for refining the codes and categories in this phase. Being able to monitor the evolution of codes offered clear guidance when the researcher was engaged in other phases of analysis but needed to understand the reasoning behind earlier code iterations. An additional benefit of using the NVivo programme for initial code generation was the ease with which the researcher could locate data items grouped under similar codes. This task is notably more challenging when relying on traditional methods such as paper and pen or Microsoft Word, especially when dealing with large amounts of data from many participants. Another helpful technique during the coding process involves labelling data items as 'unknown but important' when they convey some significance, yet the appropriate codes are initially undetermined. This approach enables the researcher to reassess these data items in the future. Lastly, for researchers working with non-English original interviews, specific data may be challenging to code when translated into English. In such instances, retaining the original terms within the codes allows for more accurate interpretation and can be refined in later phases of analysis.

Phase 3: Generating initial themes.

In this phase, the review and analysis of coded data are undertaken to explore how various codes share common meanings and can be grouped together to construct the candidate themes or sub-themes (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.78). The key to this phase is identifying meaningful patterns among the developed themes and sub-themes. At this stage, the researcher discovered that visualising themes, sub-themes, and emerging ideas through drawing can effectively generate ideas and conceptualise the relationships and significance among codes, themes, and sub-themes. Consequently, the researcher opted for electronic drawing tools. While initially experimenting with pen and paper, it was found that digital tools offer greater convenience for adjusting themes, sub-themes, or ideas. However, it is important to note that this thematic map functioned primarily as a foundational aid, supporting the ideation and development process for themes and sub-themes rather than being the thematic map of the research (see the example of these initial thematic maps in Appendix C).

The researcher observed that compiling the most recent codes into a table and exploring their significance and interrelationships to conceptualise themes and sub-themes proved more effective, particularly in preparation for subsequent phases of analysis. During this and the following phase, decisions were made to discard some codes and themes or merge them with others. Maintaining a record of these changes in different versions of the thematic table allowed for tracking all modifications, enabling the researcher to revisit previously excluded themes and sub-themes. This approach proved crucial, as some themes initially deemed irrelevant were later recognised as significant and reintegrated into the study as prominent themes in the latter stage.

Phase 4 - 6: Developing and reviewing themes, Refining, defining, and naming themes, and Writing reports.

Articulating the analysis process phase-by-phase presents challenges due to the intertwined and recursive nature of the steps involved. Consequently, this discussion merges phases 4 to 6 for a more cohesive presentation. Phase 4 primarily focuses on

evaluating the validity and integrity of the emergent themes. Byrne (2022) succinctly outlines a two-tiered approach for this verification. The initial step involves examining the coherence of data items, codes, and their contributions to each theme and sub-theme, assuring logical consistency in their development. This involves iterative adjustments and refinements to thematic tables, evolving through multiple iterations. The subsequent step entails critically examining how these provisional themes align with the overall data set and their capacity to illuminate the data in relation to the research questions. The researcher found inconsistencies or lack of coherence may arise during the report writing phase, prompting further changes in codes, sub-themes, and themes. This dynamic process involved the researcher switching back and forth between data, ongoing analysis, and report preparation. Throughout this voyage, thematic tables are significantly altered, themes may transfer to sub-themes, codes are rewritten, and previously abandoned themes are reviewed and reintegrated. For this process, printing out the thematic tables, piecing them together, and viewing them collectively in a larger context aids the researcher in conceptualising, modifying, and readjusting the findings appropriately (see the example in Appendix D). In this stage, the revised version of thematic tables can be printed several times to adjust and check the validity and integrity of the emergent themes before finalising them. However, this process is ongoing in the working of phases 5 and 6.

In Phase 5, the researcher's primary focus is on refining, defining, and naming the themes within the thematic framework. This phase sets the stage for Phase 6, where the main task shifts to producing the final report. Braun and Clarke (2022) state that writing is crucial in the analytical process. They recommend that themes and sub-themes are continuously refined and developed until the report is finished. In this process, the researcher found that a crucial foundation for success is the comprehensive utilisation of various resources, including the researcher's notes, the participants' life storyline sheets, and detailed characteristics of the participants. These tools are invaluable for visualising the sequence of events in each participant's life and experiences, the identified motivations and personal relationships, and the circumstances at each turning point of each participant, offering a detailed background for analysis.

This careful analysis process aligns with the essence of thematic narrative analysis, which entails comparing and contrasting data within the context of participants' stories and their broader life experiences. As such, these notes and sheets are indispensable throughout the data analysis process, helping the researcher to interpret and analyse the data accurately up to the report writing phase. This aspect was identified as one of the analytical challenges of this study. Thematic narrative analysis relies on participants' experiences and life journeys as a backdrop for examining the data set before drawing conclusions. In reality, participants' work-life journeys are not linear; some have experienced both as founders and employees, while others transition from one social enterprise to another. Their life circumstances and emotions during each decision are critical factors to consider throughout the data analysis process. Although this intricate process is complex and time-consuming, it is invaluable for yielding deep, insightful, and meaningful results from the study.

3.11 Dependability, Credibility, and Transferability

According to measures of research quality, the concepts of reliability and validity may not be appropriate techniques for use in qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2019, p.216). For internal validity, the theoretical relationships guiding the research can help establish quality. Regarding external validity, which relates to the generalisability of the results, Saunders et al. (2019) argue that enhancing the quality of qualitative research through replication and generalisability is unnecessary. This is because qualitative research is philosophically oriented towards interpretation within specific settings. Instead, a detailed explanation of the research design, context, and methods can demonstrate the integrity and quality of the research. In this context, Saunders et al. (2019, p. 217) reference Lincoln and Guba (1985), noting that in qualitative research, the quality criteria are termed 'dependability' for assessing reliability, 'credibility' for evaluating internal validity, and 'transferability' for examining external validity. This study will explain its research quality using the criteria of 'dependability,' 'credibility,' and 'transferability.'

To ensure dependability, the researcher carefully records all changes occurring throughout the research process, documenting them clearly for external evaluation and comprehension. In this study, the researcher maintained detailed notes and memos to chronicle the progression of the study, closely monitoring any deviations and modifications encountered. The thesis systematically presents comprehensive details regarding the research plan, data collection, and analysis procedures, including a thorough record of all changes, ensuring transparency and reliability.

To ensure the credibility of the research, the researcher actively seeks to clarify interpretations by reaching out to participants for further explanation on unclear responses or for additional details as needed. This effort is underpinned by establishing positive interactions with participants during the interview process and sending thank-you messages afterwards, which have proved invaluable. Establishing a strong rapport and maintaining personal interaction from the early stages of data collection have allowed the researcher to keep in touch with participants for data review, background checks, and validation of their narratives beyond the initial interviews. Before each interview, the researcher always informs the participants that they are free to ask questions or seek clarifications at any point, facilitating an open and credible communication channel. This approach, coupled with the way the researcher uses clarifying questions like ‘Do you mean...?’ has encouraged participants to feel more at ease and open during their interviews, resulting in richer and more detailed conversations. Furthermore, the concluding part of the interview regarding participants’ characteristics, background, and sequences of events in their storytelling serves as an additional measure to verify the authenticity and accuracy of the information provided. This method has proven effective, as evidenced by instances where participants, upon reflection, proactively reached out to offer more details or correct any inaccuracies in their earlier responses. This process not only enriches the data but also reinforces the credibility of the research findings by ensuring that the interpretations are based on authentic and accurate participant narratives.

To enhance transferability, the researcher ensures that the research questions, design, findings, and interpretations are thoroughly detailed, allowing readers to comprehend and apply the research process within different contexts. Following this approach, the thesis carefully documents all adjustments and the rationale behind them throughout the research journey, and these details are comprehensively presented in the thesis report. This careful documentation facilitates the replication of the study in varied settings, thereby extending its applicability and relevance.

3.12 The Summary of Participant Demographics

The qualitative data consists of responses from 50 participants, with 16 primarily serving as founders or leaders and 34 as employees. These participants represent various social enterprises across different industries in Thailand, including five unique work-integrated social enterprises (WISEs). The data covers approximately 30 social enterprises.

Table 3.3 provides an overview of the participants' job experiences, offering insights into their career paths. Table 3.4 presents the characteristics and demographic information of participants in employee roles, while Table 3.5 details the characteristics and demographic information of participants in founder/leader roles.

Table 3.3 The Narrative Summary of Each Participant's Career Path

Participant	A short summary of participants' background and life story	Ages
P1	The participant is an environmentalist with four years of experience as a research assistant and academic teacher before beginning a two-year position with a social enterprise.	28
P2	The participant worked for nearly two years in a commercial company before becoming interested in social issues and volunteering to teach in a rural location. After completing the volunteer job, the participant worked for a social enterprise and ended up working for a foundation for four years, coordinating numerous social projects in Thailand.	32

Participant	A short summary of participants' background and life story	Ages
P3	The participant has a background in social development study. The participant has journalistic experience and aspires to work for a social enterprise. Later, the participant elected to work for a foundation, as the social enterprise's social initiative fell under the foundation's operation. After working for the first foundation for two years, the participant resigned and has since been employed by the second foundation for two years.	26
P4	The participant has a background in the study of social and community development. Following graduation, the participant worked for two years in the first social enterprise. After the employment contract with the first social enterprise ended, the participant worked for almost three years in the second social enterprise.	27
P5	The participant has a background in political science education. The participant works for an NGO for two years following graduation. Later, the participant worked for the public sector for two years before resigning to work for a social enterprise for an additional two years. The participant had quit to pursue further education. Currently, participants are studying and volunteering in numerous social projects.	30
P6	The participant has a background in education. Following graduation, the participant volunteered at a foundation before becoming a full-time employee. The participant had worked for a year before resigning and working for two years in the first social enterprise. After that, the participant worked for the second social enterprise for two years before resigning to start their own social enterprise.	35
P7	The participant has a fine Arts and media background and is interested in the environment and nature. Following graduation, the participant worked at the social enterprise for four years.	26
P8	The participant has a background in education. Following graduation, the participant worked full-time at a foundation for almost two years. Later, the participant resigned and worked in a social enterprise for nearly four years before leaving the job and joining a for-profit organisation.	28
P9	The participant has a media and design study background and has been interested in nature and animals since their first year of college. Following graduation, the participant worked as a creative planner for commercial organisations. The participant subsequently joined a social enterprise for two years before leaving.	29
P10	The participant had a background in architecture study and became interested in social issues and community architecture after attending the university-sponsored rural development camp and a social enterprise workshop. The participant worked for the social enterprise for two years after graduation.	25

Participant	A short summary of participants' background and life story	Ages
P11	The participant has a background in architectural study. After graduation, the participant completed a community development internship at a public sector organisation before leaving to work in a social enterprise. In addition, the participant had participated in and attended many activities and contests related to architecture for the community. The participant has spent more than 15 years working for the social enterprise.	40
P12	The participant studied Arts and Humanities and worked at a start-up company and various commercial companies before entering the social-economic sector. Later, the participant had been worked for a social enterprise for four years before leaving and currently works for a for-profit organisation.	31
P13	The participant had a background in business management studies and received a job offer from a social enterprise despite not having completed her studies owing to a lack of funds. Following graduation, participants continue working for the social enterprise, and the participant has worked here for the past 25 years.	48
P14	The participant has a background in Entrepreneurship and Marketing study and completed an internship at a social enterprise. After finishing their studies, they decided to work at the same social enterprise and originally planned to start their own business after working there for a while. However, after four years of working there, the participant decided to pause those plans as they were enjoying their current job at the social enterprise.	28
P15	The participant has a background in business management study. Following graduation, the participant worked in commercial companies for two years before resigning and entering the social-economic sector. The participant has worked for a social enterprise for eight years until now.	30
P16	The participant started volunteering during the time they stayed in the community. Later, they eventually became the leader of a community for a province in Thailand. Afterwards, they worked for a social enterprise before resigning to run their own business while continuing to volunteer.	45
P17	The participant, with a background in food science, previously worked for several international companies before joining a social enterprise, where they have been working for 19 years.	44
P18	The participant spent three years working at a foundation before starting their social enterprise. Their interest in social issues and work began in their youth and grew as they became more aware of the difficulties faced by minority groups and those in the community. As a result, they decided to address these challenges by conducting community meetings and determining which business could be established as a social enterprise to support and empower those in need.	35

Participant	A short summary of participants' background and life story	Ages
P19	The participant has studied tourism and development and participated in numerous university-organised social projects. After completing an internship at a social enterprise, the participant decided to work as a full-time employee at the same social enterprise. After a year of employment, the participant resigned and founded their own social enterprise	30
P20	The participant has a background in engineering. After graduation, the participant worked for a for-profit organisation before starting their social enterprise. Their interest in social issues dates back to their first year in university, and they have consistently volunteered for various social projects since then.	32
P21	The participant holds a background in business management and is currently working as an HR professional. They previously worked at a first international NGO for seven years, followed by a 6-year tenure at a second international NGO. After leaving the NGO, the participant gained one year's experience at a social enterprise before transitioning to freelance work.	43
P22	The participant has a background in law and works as a lawyer. They previously worked at a commercial organisation before transitioning to a director position at a foundation. During their time at the foundation, they established their own social enterprise. Currently, the participant is dedicated to managing various social projects and volunteering through their own successful social enterprise.	51
P23	The participant has prior experience in the farming industry, having worked for a commercial enterprise. However, they later resigned to establish their own enterprise, which they successfully transformed into a social enterprise.	59
P24	The participant has a background in Applied Statistics and Public Policy. They have worked as a social activist who has long volunteered for various social projects before starting their own business and establishing a social enterprise. The participant has worked tirelessly at their social enterprise and volunteer work for the past ten years.	32
P25	The participant holds a degree in Economics. After graduation, they and their co-founders established a social enterprise to which they have dedicated the past ten years of their professional careers.	33
P26	The participant has a background in Community Development Studies. After graduation, they worked as a community builder at a social enterprise for two years. After their contract ended, they took on a role with a public sector organisation for an additional two years before leaving due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The participant is employed by another social enterprise, where they have been working for the past two years.	27

Participant	A short summary of participants' background and life story	Ages
P27	The participant has a background in construction studies from their pre-degree and went on to receive a degree in public relations before graduation. They then secured a job as a radio broadcaster and worked in that role for five years. Upon becoming a beneficiary of a foundation, the participant chose to leave their job and work for the foundation. During this time, they pursued higher Education in Social Work Studies. After some time working with the foundation, the participant decided to start their own social enterprise while still maintaining a connection with the foundation, and the social enterprise has been operating for eight years.	42
P28	The participant has a background in Medicine and Surgery Studies and has primarily focused on their career as a medical professional. However, they have had the opportunity to contribute to numerous national public health projects. In addition to their career, the participant has also been involved in various social work endeavours and decided to establish their own social enterprise. They continue to work in both their main career and with their social enterprise, which has been operating for eight years.	56
P29	The participant has a background in education studies and has worked as a freelance language teacher for 12 years. They later became a beneficiary of a social project under a foundation. After that, they decided to work for the social enterprise under the foundation, where they have been employed for the past two years.	35
P30	The participant began their involvement with the social enterprise as a volunteer for one project. After some time as a freelancer for the same organisation, they were offered a full-time position and have been a dedicated employee at this social enterprise for six years.	27
P31	The participant has extensive experience working for the public sector and has been volunteering for over 15 years at an association that provides social services to people. They were once a beneficiary of a social project under this association. When the association established a social enterprise, the participant decided to join the team.	70
P32	The participant has a background in marketing studies, and upon graduation, the participant secured a job with a commercial organisation. However, they later decided to leave that role and work as a freelancer for a social enterprise. After a period of time, they became a full-time employee and had been working at the same social enterprise for two years and still counting.	25
P33	The participant has a language and humanities studies background and has previously worked for commercial organisations. After transitioning to the social-economic sector, they worked for their first social enterprise for two years before becoming a freelancer at a second social enterprise. Later, they resigned from the first social enterprise and has now been employed at the second social enterprise as a full-time employee for two years.	32

Participant	A short summary of participants' background and life story	Ages
P34	The participant has a background in business management and worked as an HR professional in commercial organisations. With the aim of supporting local students and schools, they decided to establish a social enterprise, which has been in operation for the past five years.	48
P35	The participant has an artistic background and expertise in painting and book writing. Upon learning of the online community formed around the participant's written work, they joined this group to contribute to society positively. Together, they established a social enterprise that has been in operation for the past five years.	53
P36	The participant has a background in business studies and fifteen years of experience working for advertising agencies. Later, the participant opted to enter the social-economic sector and spent nearly a year working for a social enterprise before returning to the commercial organisation. The participant later established their own social enterprise.	44
P37	The participant has a background in jurisprudence and has been actively involved in a social project to assist people with disabilities since their first year of university. Upon graduation, the participant worked for a commercial company while continuing to volunteer for the self-founded social project. Eventually, the participant left their job to focus on the project and teamed up with a co-founder to establish a social enterprise that has been in operation for three years.	30
P38	The participant has a business management background and worked for several commercial organisations after graduation. However, the participant eventually resigned to work for a foundation. After some time, the participant left to pursue further education in environmental studies. Upon graduation, the participant worked for NGOs dedicated to environmental protection. After the contract with an NGO ended, the participant started their own social enterprise, which has been successfully running for the past five years.	45
P39	The participant has a background in computer engineering and worked for a commercial organisation after graduation. Later, the participant gained experience in the telecommunications and automobile industries, working for three years. Eventually, the participant decided to transition to the social sector by volunteering for almost a year before establishing their own social enterprise. This enterprise has been in operation for 15 years and continues to thrive.	40

Participant	A short summary of participants' background and life story	Ages
P40	The participant has a background in entrepreneurship and has been passionate about social issues and social enterprises since participating in university-organised social projects. The participant also completed an internship at a social enterprise. With experience working at a venture builder supporting social businesses, the participant later resigned to work for a university, where they focus on educating the next generation of social entrepreneurs.	25
P41	The participant has a wealth of experience, with 15 years in the socio-economic sector. With a background in language and humanities studies, the participant has been interested in social issues since their first year of university. After graduation, the participant worked for a commercial company before resigning to work for several international NGOs and social enterprises. The participant also volunteered for various social projects and eventually transitioned to a social activist, working as a freelancer on various initiatives.	39
P42	The participant has a teaching background and a wealth of experience in human resources, having worked in commercial organisations for over ten years. Additionally, the participant has dedicated over a decade to volunteering for an association that provides mental health services. Upon retirement, the participant joined the association's social enterprise.	65
P43	The participant has a background in business management and worked in the real estate industry for five years before transitioning to marketing for a decade. The participant then established a successful consulting firm that operated for 20 years. Later, the participant became interested in the socio-economic sector and started their own social enterprise, which has been in operation for the past five years.	57
P44	The participant has a background in both food science and business management. After two years of work experience at a commercial organisation, the participant resigned to work for NGOs for over a decade, focusing on environmental caring organisations. Later, the participant transitioned to work for a social enterprise, where they have been employed for the past five years.	39
P45	The participant has a social work background and first-hand experience as a beneficiary of a social project. During their university studies, the participant participated in a social project organised by a student group. After graduation, the participant completed an internship with a social enterprise, got a promotion, and has worked at the same organisation for the past two years.	24
P46	The participant has a background in accounting and has worked for over a decade in commercial organisations. The participant became involved in the social sector by volunteering at a social enterprise for nearly a year before ultimately deciding to work there full-time. The participant has now been employed at this social enterprise for three years.	45

Participant	A short summary of participants' background and life story	Ages
P47	The participant has a background in computer software development and has worked for a software development company for 12 years. The participant became interested in social issues through a corporate social responsibility (CSR) project organised by their employer. After resigning from the job, they started working for a social project of the foundation. It is finally transformed to be a social enterprise affiliated with the foundation, and the participant has been working here for 11 years.	47
P48	The participant is a professional nurse with over ten years of experience working in a hospital. During that time, the participant volunteered as a nurse in a social project for three months before the project ended, and the volunteer work ceased. After the social project transformed into a social enterprise, the participant decided to join the enterprise and has been working there for four years recently.	45
P49	The participant has a background in business management and over ten years of experience as an HR professional in commercial companies. After developing an interest in the socio-economic sector, the participant transitioned to working for a social enterprise, where they have now been employed for a year.	39
P50	The participant has a background in business management and has worked in the marketing field for over 35 years. The participant's interest in social issues prompted a move to working for a social enterprise, upon the invitation of a close friend. The participant has now been working at the social enterprise for 4 years.	53

Table 3.4 The Characteristics and Demographic Information of Participants in Employee Roles

SE EMPLOYEES	AGES	BUSINESS SECTOR/ ORGANISATION SIZE**	PROFESSION/POSITION	LENGTH OF SERVICES*	GENDER	REGION IN THAILAND	BACKGROUND OF STUDY
P1	28	Education (35 employees)	Environmentalist	2	Female	Northern, north-eastern, Southern	Bachelor of Environment and Resource Studies
P2	32	Youth/ Community Development (40 employees)	Management professional (assistant consultant)	5	Female	The central part of Thailand	Bachelor of Economics
P3	26	Consulting (15 employees)	Management professional (consultant)	3	Female	the central part of Thailand	Bachelor's in Social Development Study
P4	27	Community-based (3-5 employees) [Pracharat social enterprise]	Management professional (community builder)	5	Female	north-eastern	Humanities and Social Science Study
P5	30	Auditor/Consulting (Public Policy) (13 employees)	Management professional (project manager)	2	Female	the central part of Thailand	Political Science Study
P6	35	School /Education/Agriculture (1 st organisation; 20 employees 2 nd organisation–Pracharat social enterprise; 3-5 employees)	Management professional (project manager)	5	Male	north-eastern	Community Development Study
P7	26	Education (34 employees)	Graphic designer and photographer	4	Female	Northern, north-eastern, Southern	Fine Arts Study (Media Arts)
P8	28	Education (20 employees)	Management professional (project manager/teacher)	4	Female	the central part of Thailand	Education/ Teaching
P9	29	Education (38 employees)	Creative and planner	6	Female	Northern, north-eastern, Southern	Media and Design Study
P10	25	Architecture/ Education/ Consulting (100 employees)	Architect	2	Female	the central part of Thailand	Architecture
P11	40	Architecture/ Education/ Consulting (100 employees)	Architect/teacher /HR/Director	15	Male	the central part of Thailand	Architecture
P12	31	Community Development (5 employees)	Management professional (community manager)	4	Female	the central part of Thailand	Arts, Language and History Study
P13	48	Agriculture/ Food /Manufacturing (160-200 employees)	Management professional (Sales/HR)	25	Female	north-eastern	Bachelor of Business Management
P14	28	Agriculture (Community-led) (18-35 employees)	Management professional (assistant manager)	5	Female	Northern	Bachelor of Business Management, Marketing
P15	30	Agriculture (Community-led) (18-35 employees)	Barista (manager)	8	Female	Northern	Bachelor of Business Management

SE EMPLOYEES	AGES	BUSINESS SECTOR/ ORGANISATION SIZE**	PROFESSION/POSITION	LENGTH OF SERVICES*	GENDER	REGION IN THAILAND	BACKGROUND OF STUDY
P16	45	Community-based (3-5 employees) [Pracharat social enterprise]	Community leader	5	Female	Northern	N/A
P17	44	Agriculture/ Food /Manufacturing (160-200 employees)	Food scientist/ engineer (plant manager)	19	Female	North-eastern	Food science
P21	43	Consulting (15 employees)	Management professional (manager/HR)	1	Female	the central part of Thailand	Bachelor of Business Management
P26	27	Community-based (3-5 employees) [Pracharat social enterprise]	Management professional (project manager)	3	Male	Northern	Community Development Study
P29	35	Healthcare (WISE) (18 employees)	Management professional (project coordinator)	2	Female	the central part of Thailand	Education/ Teaching
P30	27	Education (15-20 employees)	Management professional (project manager)	8	Female	the central part of Thailand	N/A
P31	70	Healthcare (WISE) (18 employees)	Psychic therapist/ Consult	1	Female	the central part of Thailand	Mental Health
P32	25	Education (15-20 employees)	Management professional (project manager)	2	Male	the central part of Thailand	Bachelor of Business Management, Marketing
P33	32	Tourism /Hospitality (20 employees)	Tourist guide	2	Male	the central part of Thailand	Tourism Management
P36	44	Agriculture/ Technology (10-15 employees)	Management professional (operation manager)	1	Female	the central part of Thailand	N/A
P40	25	Education (1 st organisation; 15-20 employees/ 2 nd organisation 50-60 employees)	Management professional (project coordinator)	1	Male	the central part of Thailand	Entrepreneurship study
P41	39	Consulting (20 employees)	Management professional (project manager)	6	Female	the central part of Thailand	Education/ Teaching
P42	65	Healthcare (WISE) (18 employees)	Management professional (teacher/HR)	3	Female	the central part of Thailand	Education/ Teaching
P44	39	Consulting (Environment) (5-10 employees)	Engineer	5	Male	the central part of Thailand	Food Science/ Business Management
P45	24	Technology (600 employees)	management professional (administrator)	3	Male	the central part of Thailand	Bachelor's in Social Work
P46	45	Media/ Education (5-10 employees)	Management professional (accountant)	4	Female	Eastern	Accounting and Finance Study
P48	45	Healthcare/ Community-led/ Education (WISE) (50 employees)	Nurse	4	Female	Northern	Nursing Study

SE EMPLOYEES	AGES	BUSINESS SECTOR/ ORGANISATION SIZE**	PROFESSION/POSITION	LENGTH OF SERVICES*	GENDER	REGION IN THAILAND	BACKGROUND OF STUDY
P49	39	Tourism/ Community-based (28 employees)	management professional (assistant/HR manager)	1	Female	the central part of Thailand	Bachelor of Business Management
P50	53	Agriculture (5-10 employees)	management professional (operation manager)	4	Female	Northern, Southern	Bachelor of Business Management

* For participants who have worked in more than one social enterprise, the provided information reflects the length of service in the social enterprise they primarily discussed during the interviews.

** For participants who have worked in more than one social enterprise, the provided information regarding social enterprise size reflects the enterprises primarily discussed during the interviews.

*** A community-led initiative is driven by the community itself (the community holds the power and owns the process), while a community-based initiative is driven primarily by an outside organisation.

Table 3.5 The Characteristics and Demographic Information of Participants in Founder/Leader Roles.

SE FOUNDER	AGE	BUSINESS SECTOR/ ORGANISATION SIZE	PROFESSION/ EDUCATION BACKGROUND	LENGTH OF OPERATION	GENDER	REGION IN THAILAND	BACKGROUND OF STUDY
P18	35	Agriculture (Community-led) (18-35 employees)	social activist	11	Male	Northern	N/A
P19	30	Tourism /Hospitality (20 employees)	management/Tourism management	3	Male	the central part of Thailand	Tourism Industry Study
P20	32	Tourism /Hospitality/ Community- led (86 employees)	engineer	6	Male	the central part of Thailand	Industrial Engineering
P22	51	Food/ Restaurant (50-60 employees)	lawyer	13	Female	north-eastern	Law Study
P23	59	Agriculture/ Food /Manufacturing (160-200 employees)	management/experience in agriculture	29	Male	north-eastern	N/A
P24	32	Agriculture/ Hospitality/ Community-led (10 employees)	social activist	10	Male	the central part of Thailand	Applied Statistics (Bachelor), Public Administration-Public Policy (Master)
P25	33	Education (15-20 employees)	management/Economics	10	Male	the central part of Thailand	Bachelor of Economics
P27	42	Environment/ Community-led (WISE) (100 employees)	social activist/Public relations, social work	8	Male	the central part of Thailand	Public Relations (Bachelor), Social Work (Master)
P28	56	Healthcare (WISE) (100-300 employees)	doctor (Cardiologist)	9	Male	the central part of Thailand	Medicine and Surgery Study
P34	48	Food/ Technology (100 employees)	management/Manufacturing	5	Male	the central part of Thailand	Bachelor of Business Management
P35	53	Media and Entertainment/ Education (5-10 employees)	artist, writer	5	Male	Eastern	Fine Arts Study (Painting)
P37	30	Technology (WISE) (600 employees)	lawyer/ Jurisprudence	5	Female	the central part of Thailand	School of Law Study
P38	45	Consulting (Environment) (5-10 employees)	management/Environmental management	5	Female	the central part of Thailand	Business Management (Bachelor), Environmental Study
P39	40	Media and Entertainment/ Technology (25 employees)	software engineer	12	Male	the central part of Thailand	Computer Engineering Study

SE FOUNDER	AGE	BUSINESS SECTOR/ ORGANISATION SIZE	PROFESSION/ EDUCATION BACKGROUND	LENGTH OF OPERATION	GENDER	REGION IN THAILAND	BACKGROUND OF STUDY
P43	57	Agriculture (5-10 employees)	management/ business	4	Female	Northern, Southern	Bachelor of Business Management
P47	47	Healthcare/ Community-led/ Education (WISE) (50 employees)	software engineer	11	Male	Northern	Computer Software Development Study

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the study's findings, which investigate key aspects of working within social enterprises in Thailand, including people management, employee attachment, motivation, and the formation of social capital. The insights are derived from an in-depth analysis of two main participant groups: the founders/leaders of social enterprises and employees who work for social enterprises. These findings are crucial for understanding how various elements within social enterprises interplay to influence overall organisational effectiveness, social capital, and human capital.

A significant aspect of this research is exploring how social capital, characterised as “organisational relationship tie,” and human capital, represented by “motivation tie,” contribute to employee attachment. Additionally, employing a narrative inquiry approach, the study provides a nuanced examination of the relationships among individuals in social enterprises and their impact on the formation of social capital.

To present these findings coherently, they have been organised into four thematic groups, each highlighting a different facet of the social enterprise environment:

Group 1: People Management in Social Enterprises - This group explores the strategies and practices of managing staff in the unique context of social enterprises.

Group 2: Employee Motivations within Social Enterprises - This group delves into the factors that motivate employees, including reasons for joining, staying, and potentially leaving.

Group 3: The Evolution of “Motivation tie” and “Organisational relationship tie” - This section investigates how the interplay between motivation and organisational relationships can evolve into employee attachment.

Group 4: Social Capital in Social Enterprises and Its Formation - This group examines the development and nurturing of social capital within social enterprises.

Table 4.1 displays the thematic table that provides a comprehensive description of all themes and subthemes categorised under each thematic group. In addition, Figure 4.1 is provided as a thematic map to help understand these thematic groups. It visually illustrates the relationships and extent of the study's findings.

Table 4.1 The Thematic Table

Group 1: People Management in Social Enterprises
<p>Themes 1: People management practices in social enterprises depend not only on the philosophy of being a social enterprise but also on the organisational goals.</p> <p><i>Subthemes 1:</i> Financial mission and market mechanism shaping people management practice.</p> <p><i>Subthemes 2:</i> Social mission shaping people management practice.</p> <p><i>Subthemes 3:</i> Organisational goals shaping people management practice.</p>
Theme 2: People management practice is tailored depending on the group of the workforce.
<p>Theme 3: Founders' views and leaders' values shape people management implementation.</p> <p><i>Subtheme1:</i> Founders and leaders' views</p> <p><i>Subtheme2:</i> Dilemma in practice implication</p>
<p>Theme 4: Diverse employee retention needs in social enterprises: Unconventional reasons beyond traditional businesses.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 1:</i> Employee retention is important but may not be necessary for social enterprise.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 2:</i> Employee retention is important and needs to be done.</p>
<p>Theme 5: An unintentional employee retention system is created.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 1:</i> Systems and practices that enhance the development of the "organisational relationship tie."</p> <p><i>Subtheme 2:</i> Systems and practices that enhance the development of the "motivation tie."</p>
Theme 6: Considering the life condition of employees can support employee retention.
Group 2: Employee motivations within social enterprises.
Theme 1: Employees' initial motivation.
<p>Theme 2: Demotivation, continuing motivation, and factors leading to departure.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 1:</i> Factors influencing employee demotivation.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 2:</i> Factors relating to the decision to depart.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 3:</i> What Enhances Employees' Motivation in Social Enterprises</p>
Theme 3: The interactive and contagious motivation of people who work for social enterprises (motivation momentum)
Theme 4: Evolution of employee motivation in social enterprises

Group 3: The evolution of “motivation tie” and “organisational relationship tie.”
Theme 1: Potential elements that can develop and become the “motivation tie.”
<p>Theme 2: The development of positive relationships into the “organisational relationship tie.”</p> <p><i>Subtheme 1:</i> The relationships develop to be a tie through the organisational atmosphere and the positive relationships among employees, teammates/colleagues, and founders.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 2:</i> The elements and conditions in the development of the “organisational relationship tie”</p>
<p>Theme 3: Thai social norms drive the development of employee attachment.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 1:</i> Bunkhun drives the development of the “organisational relationship tie.”</p> <p><i>Subtheme 2:</i> Bunkhun drives the development of the “motivation tie.”</p> <p><i>Subtheme 3:</i> Kreng jai drives the development of the “organisational relationship tie.”</p> <p><i>Subtheme 4:</i> Kreng Jai drives the development of the “motivation tie.”</p>
<p>Theme 4: Meaningful work and meaning in life; enhancing employee attachment.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 1:</i> Meaningful life of employees in social enterprises</p> <p><i>Subtheme 2:</i> The transition process of meaning-making.</p>
Theme 5: Life conditions are a key factor in maintaining employee attachment.
Group 4: Social capital in social enterprises and its formation
<p>Theme 1: The cultivation of social capital in social enterprises.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 1:</i> Personal connections bring more than potential employees to social enterprises.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 2:</i> Positive relationships bring more capital to all parties.</p>
<p>Theme 2: Social capital formation in social enterprises.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 1:</i> Jing jai and the emergence of trust in social enterprises.</p> <p><i>Subtheme 2:</i> The value transmission in the quality social capital formation process.</p>

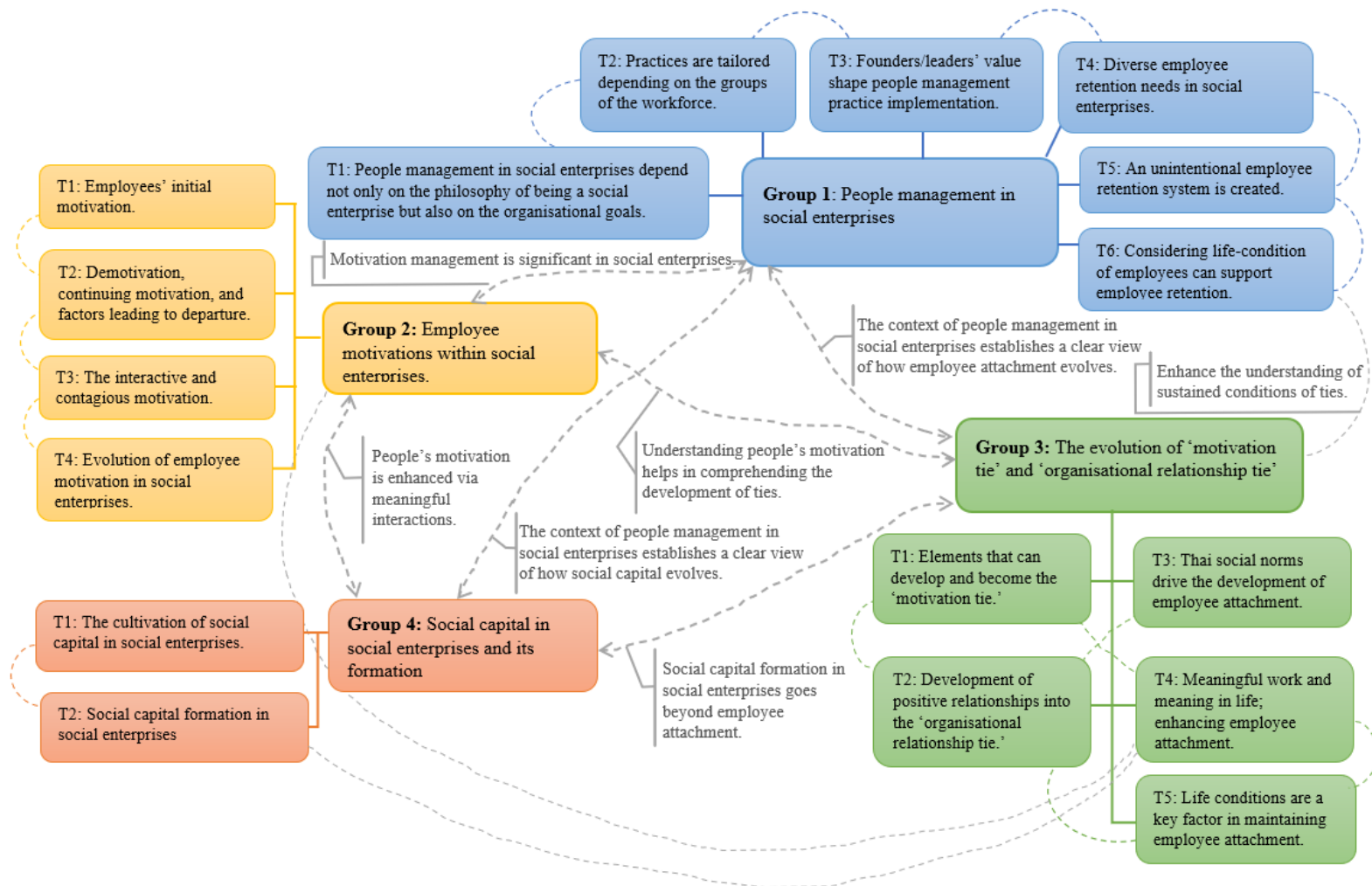


Figure 4.1 Thematic Map of the Study

4.2 Group 1: People management practices in social enterprises

4.2.1 Introduction

This thematic group provides a thorough perspective on people management and employee retention strategies within social enterprises. It uncovers the varied driving forces that shape people management practices across different social enterprises. Additionally, concerning employee retention, the analysis highlights the diversity of needs and approaches in its implementation. This thematic category deepens our understanding of people management fundamentals in the context of social enterprises. The analytical outcomes have identified six overarching themes, which are:

Theme 1: People management practices in social enterprises depend not only on the philosophy of being a social enterprise but also on the organisational goals.

Theme 2: Practices are tailored depending on the group of the workforce.

Theme 3: Founders/leaders' values shape people management practice implementation.

Theme 4: Diverse employee retention needs in social enterprises.

Theme 5: An unintentional employee retention system is created.

Theme 6: Considering the life condition of employees can support employee retention.

4.2.2 Findings

Theme 1: People management practices in social enterprises depend not only on the philosophy of being a social enterprise but also on the organisational goals.

Social enterprise is commonly recognised as an organisational entity that functions as a hybrid, integrating the operational characteristics of both for-profit and non-profit organisations. While the definitive term for such an organisation is still being established, its fundamental operation is rooted in a social objective while simultaneously ensuring its sustainability through a profit-oriented business strategy. Therefore, the operational nature of this entity serves a specific purpose in addressing a social issue through the utilisation of a profit-driven business model to ensure its accessibility. Within the context of this study setting, this operational fabric of a social enterprise thrives at the intersection of its social mission and financial viability referred to as the philosophy of being a social enterprise. This philosophical perspective permeates the organisational routes, guiding the complex interplay between the enterprises' altruistic objectives and their pragmatic financial objectives. Under this theme, each subtheme elucidates the manner in which people management practices are developed and formulated for utilisation in diverse social enterprises.

Subtheme1: Financial mission and market mechanism shaping people management practice.

Under the influence of market mechanisms and financial missions, people management practices in social enterprises are shaped by an inherent drive to ensure their viability. Given the diverse range of industries that social enterprises engage in, these dynamics significantly impact the implementation of people management practices within such entities. For instance, from data, social enterprises functioning in the information technology or high-tech sector may be required to conform to the market requirements of the IT labour market. This entails providing competitive salaries and benefits, as well as emphasising specific skill sets during the process of employee recruitment and selection. On the other hand, a social enterprise operating

in the service and tourist industry can give greater importance to the recruitment of persons who possess exceptional interpersonal abilities, thereby adjusting their selection criteria accordingly.

“We work in IT, and even though we are a small or medium-sized business (SME), we can’t pay our workers the way most SMEs do. Since they work in IT and want to build their careers in it, our pay must be on par with or better than what other companies in our industry offer. Even though it’s hard for us to pay such rates, it is what we must do, and I am willing to do so [P39]”.

“You know, we did community-based tourism, their interpersonal skills are also important, and if they care and know about social and community, that would be great [P49]”.

“...skills set is a criterion like other companies, but for us, we are in the service and tourism industry, for those who will come and work with us, we need to consider their interpersonal skills as it is really important for us [P19]”.

Even though social enterprises categorised as work-integrated social enterprises (WISE) normally aim to recruit people to provide training so that they can create jobs or return to the labour market, the business industry that the social enterprises are in also impacts the employee selection practice.

“Although we are a WISE, we are an AI developer company, so we need a specialist in this area. We cannot accept those who just have passion in our social mission but have no skills for a specific function... yes, it is good if they have passion on our social objective, but we also need their skills for our business purpose [P37]”.

However, it is not only the business industry that shapes the formation of people management practices used in social enterprises; **business models** and **sizes** also

affect it. Some social enterprises have business models that can be flexibly adjusted; they probably restructure the management level easily, so they can provide further career paths to employees, while some others may find it limited in providing career paths for their employees.

“We have prepared the career path for all of them, I planned it since the beginning as I know that small company like us may not be able to provide further career paths for them, so I developed a business model in a way that can be further developed into other related business area [P19]”.

“For those who work in the marketing line, such as content creators, graphic designers, or other marketing professionals, we haven’t had such specialists occupying these roles in our company since our business focuses on the education industry. So, employees in these roles may join us, but it is too bad that we cannot provide them a clear career path [P25]”.

Likewise, **small social enterprises** will normally have limitations in providing career paths to their employees.

“We don’t have any plans right now to set up a career path for our employees (because we are very small). But I can’t tell what will happen. If I eventually decide to expand our business model into the agriculture sector, I may indeed develop a career path for our employees [P28]”.

Indeed, financial objectives and the intention to ensure venture viability can influence the creation of practices in the organisation. The evidence outlined previously demonstrates that factors like the industry of the business, the size of the organisation, and the flexibility of the business model—all of which fall under the market mechanism aspect—have a direct relationship with the financial mission of social enterprises. These factors seem to influence the people management practices that social enterprises adopt.

Subtheme 2: Social mission shaping people management practice.

In the realm of social enterprise operations, there is another perspective apart from the previously specified financial objective. This antithesis pertains to the domain of social purposes, which also significantly influences the trajectory of people management practice development. For instance, consider the significance placed on social work skills and knowledge as essential criteria during the candidate selection phase for social enterprises. Considering the following:

“For our organisation, we need people who have social work skills and knowledge about social issues. It is very important to find people with these skills because they help us discover social problems that are related to our core goal. Without this kind of knowledge, we might not be able to get to the bottom of these problems and find real answers [P47].”

“We do need people who are skilled and knowledgeable about social work. Even though I agree that social work skills can be taught and trained, it’s not easy to teach a deep understanding and sensitivity to social work. This combination of skill and knowledge is very important to our company, especially for certain projects or job roles [P20].”

Therefore, the degree to which the focus on generating a social impact aligns with these social enterprises’ social mission influences the practices employed in selecting employees. However, the notion of generating a social impact, as promoted by social enterprises, surpasses the limitations of their core social objective. For example, consider the following excerpts.

“For the selection process, I am open to everyone. What I consider is that the background of study and expertise in the field are not necessary. I often choose employees who have fewer skills than other candidates because I know that those experts have more opportunities to live a better life, and the ones most in need are the less expert ones. Once they were with us, they will have more skills and ability to live a better life [P18].”

“Our staff and the community are very close to each other. I always accept local people when they come to apply for a job here. Although they don’t have any experience or knowledge about the job, I can train them. You know many local people want to return home once they graduate but have no job available in their hometown...when they have a job, live good quality in their hometown and have enough money to take care of their family, then we already support them to make a good impact for society [P23].”

“Mainly... I want to know what they want to do and why they want to do... why they want to work with us. Basically, you know... we select candidates according to their skills... I mean both hard and soft skills. But, in the end, I think it is about the purpose of their work. I believe that we are not taking them to be our employees. Think about this: we will become part of their lives when they become our employees. For example, if they can live 80 years, then by the time they ever be with us, we can, at least, do something that makes their lives better...not only physically but mentally. I don’t see the recruiting employees process as the way to select the expert one to work for me. They must receive something they value in return as well, not only money but something that contributes to a better life. Hence, they will make a further impact on our community [P20].”

From the excerpts, the concept of creating social impact within the realm of a social enterprise transcends the boundaries of its primary social mission. Referring to the provided excerpts and their respective business backgrounds, Participant P23’s social enterprise is dedicated to supporting agricultural development in communities, while P18’s focus lies in community development and aiding minority groups. On the other hand, Participant P20’s mission revolves around addressing hidden urban issues and fostering self-guided learning among the youth. It is crucial to recognise that, according to the provided excerpts, the notion of social impact encompasses a broader spectrum beyond these specific focal points within the core social mission of these organisations. For instance, P23 doesn’t confine the definition of social impact to just the primary agricultural work their organisation aims to do for the community. Similarly, P18 doesn’t restrict the notion of social impact only to their community but to society at large. P20, on the other hand, doesn’t solely select the best-qualified employees to work towards the organisation’s main social mission. The concept of social impact making involves the act of embracing employees, fostering their

development through learning and training, and enabling employees to blossom into potent contributors. In this perspective, crafting and cultivating potential citizens for society becomes a cornerstone of generating social impact. It's a departure from merely recruiting individuals who directly contribute to the venture's immediate social mission. Instead, it involves a broader ethos that encapsulates the impact garnered through every single action undertaken.

Furthermore, the social mission of an organisation plays a crucial role in shaping its overall business model, particularly in specific circumstances. For instance, when a social enterprise is dedicated to addressing certain societal issues in line with its social mission, an intricate and fascinating dynamic emerges when new social concerns intersect with the enterprise's existing focus. In such scenarios, these organisations have the potential to adapt their business models or operational strategies to include these emerging concerns within their broader social problem-solving framework. This adaptation can significantly influence the management strategies employed within these enterprises. The following narrative highlights how an organisation's commitment to its social mission can lead to modifications in its business model, which in turn shapes its employee management practices.

“...So, I started learning about social problems and social issues, which are complicated, ...we know that one problem is connected to another. We can't solve just one problem and then it is all solved, but it is complicated; it has to be solved gradually; no matter which issue is more important or less important, each issue is always connected to the other... It has been a while since we have adjusted our social missions. When we're doing social work, we will always find new issues that we want to solve or even the deep root of the problem we are solving,..., once we find them, we adjust this and that, like... adding some teams, reducing people in some teams, somewhat get new people for some teams, changing duty of some team's members, or else adjust some skill requirements for our people, we do this all the time [P20].”

Subtheme 3: Organisational goals Shaping people Management practice.

Indeed, the arrangement of people management practice in social enterprises is not solely determined by the philosophy of being a social enterprise, as discussed earlier. They are equally influenced by the organisation's overarching goals. Consider, for instance, when a novel social issue comes to light, a social enterprise may choose to not only make adjustments to its operational structure and activities, but also to realign its organisational goals. The shift in organisational objectives consequently initiates a reconfiguration in the management of their workforce comprehensively. For instance, consider the following narrative.

“After finding another social problem we wanted to solve, we changed our organisation's goal again. At first, we focused on stopping child abuse and human trafficking with the intention of aiding the underprivileged. But when we discovered there wasn't enough health care for the elderly in our province, we changed directions. This change affected our whole business plan and goal of social enterprise. We didn't just focus on child abuse or human trafficking. Instead, we broadened our focus to include both...So, our social enterprise started doing two things: giving scholarships to kids from low-income families so they could learn to be nurses and carers and escape from the circle of child abuse or human trafficking. This project is meant to compensate for the lack of health care services for older people. Our goal is to help these kids get an education so they can have a better future and to help those who can't afford expensive hospital care get the health care they need [P47].”

This phenomenon drives the resonance inside social enterprises and amplifies the identification of interconnected social challenges within the community realm. This initiates a process of enhancing and shifting organisational goals and business architectures, thereby deeply influencing the fundamental aspects of business operations and functions. Consequently, the practice of personnel and employee management undergoes a process of reorganisation and realignment once again.

Building upon this theme, it becomes evident that the organisation's underlying philosophy inherently shapes people management practices in social enterprises. For example, the financial mission encompasses elements vital to the venture's sustainability—such as the business industry, business models, and organisational size. Also, the social mission itself drives changes in the organisation. In fact, the choice to change the organisational goal has significant implications that permeate across the entire organisation, ultimately impacting the approaches used to manage personnel inside it.

As the analysis progresses into subsequent themes, several instances will emerge illustrating the intricate interplay between people management in social enterprises and the profound influence of their underlying philosophy and evolving organisational goals.

Theme 2: People management practice is tailored depending on the group of the workforce.

The initial theme revealed by the data suggests that people management in social enterprises is influenced by the underlying philosophy of being a social enterprise and evolving organisational goals. Under this theme, notably, the dynamics within the employee workforce of social enterprises are an important component that influences the modification and refinement of people management to meet the distinct needs of each employee group.

Upon further analysis of the data, it becomes apparent that the processes involved in evaluating and selecting candidates are contingent upon a confluence of talents, abilities, knowledge, and alignment with the core values of the organisation. It is certainly prevalent within numerous social enterprises since it aligns with their fundamental philosophical framework demonstrated by the specific cases emphasised in Theme 1. However, delving deeper reveals that this practice is justified due to the alignment between the characteristics of social enterprises and the

varied employee cohorts they interact with. For instance, consider the case of the social enterprise affiliated with Participant P47. This organisation addresses the dual facets of underprivileged children by imparting caregiving skills and education. Also, supporting elderly individuals through healthcare services. Examining the data, it becomes evident that the core team comprises professionals, including individuals who possess professional qualifications in nursing or medicine, social work expertise, and administrative personnel, alongside young caregivers and those catering to the elderly. Each subgroup necessitates distinct support mechanisms and operational strategies. Similarly, Participant P37 sheds light on the selection criteria predicated on skills and abilities. However, a more profound analysis of P37's social enterprise reveals the presence of multiple distinct workforce segments, as evidenced in the following excerpts.

“Our core team consists of 20 full-time employees, 19 without disabilities and 2 with disabilities. We hire these two individuals at full employment rates. Typically, people with disabilities are paid according to government-set standards, which are usually lower than the full-employment rates. However, our two team members with disabilities receive the same full employment rates as those without disabilities. Additionally, we have a group of 600 people with disabilities who work together, taking on group leadership roles through our company platform. They're essentially connected to our company but are employed under contracts with our partner companies. You know, there's a law requiring companies to hire people with disabilities³. These commercial companies usually want to follow this law but often struggle to offer suitable jobs, preventing them from hiring individuals with disabilities. This is where our social enterprise steps in. We act as a bridge, providing jobs tailored to their abilities, such as data creation for AI. Even though the employment technically belongs to our partners as they are the payer according to the employment contract, we're the ones assigning tasks and jobs and take care of them, offering support, training, and additional rewards [P37].”

³ Persons With Disabilities Empowerment Act B.E.2550, Section 35: In the event that any State Agency does not wish to employ Persons with Disabilities for work under section 33 or any employer or owner of the establishment does not employ Persons with Disabilities for work under section 33 and does not wish to send money to the Fund under section 34, the said State Agency, employer or owner of the establishment may grant concessions, arrange places for distributing products or services, hire subcontract employees or hire employment services by special means, provide apprenticeship or equipment or facilities and sign language interpreter or other assistance to Persons with Disabilities or caregiver of Persons with Disabilities based on the criteria, procedures and conditions as prescribed by the Committee in the Rules.

From excerpts, the data reveals that the social enterprise employs distinct workforce groups, including individuals with expertise in AI development and the hi-technology industry, those responsible for managing the background systems of the business, as well as individuals with disabilities who participate as both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. While employees were chosen based on specific criteria and qualifications for particular positions, this selection process does not apply uniformly to all workforce groups. Certain groups, such as individuals with disabilities seeking to join the AI data creator team, have different selection criteria. In this case, the selection criteria are open to all individuals with disabilities. However, there are specific selection criteria for those aspiring to join the core team according to the job function. Hence, the practice of selecting employees may also diversify depending on the workforce groups. Additionally, the social enterprise in which P20 affiliates apply different practices in the employee selection process for different workforce groups, even though their initial intention is to accept everyone who is passionate about their social mission.

“...what we do is deal with many social issues. It isn’t like a company with a clear structure about what to produce, what to buy, and how to sell. We have a very broad mission involved in developing people holistically. We have got multiple units for each development aim, so it’s complicated. Therefore, when we select those who will be our employees for each function, it’s not really easy. Let me explain in this example: some of them who are applying for our job are skilful, but they understand nothing about social issues and social work, and that is a hard thing to teach since true understanding will come with passion. Now, those who truly understand will reflect and contribute to work worthwhile. Some people are fascinated and truly understand a particular social issue, but they are not skilful in the particular function and position we have. So, training them is another hard thing to do as well since some skills need time to develop. We... need to find a way to balance in what we want for our organisation [P20].”

From the data, it is evident that social enterprises tailor their objectives and standards for specific positions to align with their organisational goals and the unique characteristics of their workforce groups. One instance worth highlighting is drawn from the insights shared by Participant P20. Their social enterprise engages in a

variety of social projects alongside hostel operations. While P20 discussed an employee selection practice in Theme 1 that appears open to all individuals aspiring to join the organisation, with emphasis on understanding their motivations before making a hiring decision, it's important to note that this practice is applicable to certain workforce segments and is contingent upon contextual factors like available space and timing. For instance, when dealing with specific social projects that necessitate distinct skills and abilities, the selection criteria should naturally align with these project requirements. On the other hand, in cases where positions within the hostel operation are available, and training can be provided prior to commencing work, the social enterprise might opt to follow a practice of accepting individuals based on their motivations, irrespective of whether they possess pre-existing skills.

Indeed, the data contains numerous instances that highlight the differences in practices employed by social enterprises among various workforce segments. These practices cover a variety of aspects, including support systems, training initiatives, rewards schemes, and retirement programmes. Additional interview excerpts, which provide insights into how social enterprises tailor their people management practices to meet the unique needs of different workforce groups, are provided in Appendix E.

Based on the findings, the data clearly indicates that the composition of their workforce influences people management strategies in social enterprises. For instance, social enterprises that employ older or near-retirement individuals have developed support programmes specifically tailored to meet the unique needs of this demographic. In contrast, enterprises with a younger or middle-aged workforce tend to adopt support strategies that cater to these specific age groups, with a focus on elements like motivation, experiences, and career advancement opportunities. This differentiation is also reflected in the reward systems and performance assessment methods. Each social enterprise employs evaluation techniques that are customised for particular roles, functions, and workforce segments.

Additionally, specialised assistance, such as educational support and mentoring programmes, have been implemented to support and enhance self-esteem and skills for specific employee groups. A significant observation is that social enterprises working with vulnerable individuals often rely on flexible and informal assessment methods. For instance, organisations employing individuals with psychiatric or mental health conditions have their own unique set of assessment criteria.

These findings underscore that while the overarching philosophy of an organisation and the organisational goals shape its approach to people management, the diverse makeup of the workforce necessitates specific adaptations in management practices within these social enterprises.

Theme 3: Founders' views and leaders' values shape people management implementation.

Based on the results presented in the first and second themes, the data showcases the wide array of practices adopted within social enterprises. These practices are intricately linked with the enterprise's philosophical foundation, organisational goal, and the diverse groups of their workforces. In this theme, the viewpoints of founders and leaders were explored, delving into their values that influence the trajectory of the venture's operations and the people management practices. Throughout this section, a more profound comprehension of these values will emerge through their perspectives, shedding light on the rationale and implication behind the distinctive practices embraced by social enterprises. Additionally, the potential challenges that may arise when translating these practices into action will be uncovered, enhancing the understanding of the intricate dynamics within such ventures. Hence, this theme will present findings in two subthemes: The founder's and leaders' views and The dilemma in practice implication.

Subtheme1: Founders and leaders' views

Within this subtheme, an array of compelling information arises from the dataset, revealing fascinating insights that align with the viewpoints of founders and leaders. All of these observations covertly influence the diverse array of people management practices implemented within social enterprises. Under this subtheme, founders' and leaders' views, four phrases were developed to present and convey the concepts in the founder's/leaders' views that potentially impact people management in social enterprises.

1. *The intention of founders to pay high salaries and the hidden meaning of salary under employees' view.*
2. *Employees are akin to family members.*
3. *It's not about productivity; it's about creating a social impact.*
4. *Social enterprises are platforms where employees and society develop collectively.*

“The intention of founders to pay high salary and the hidden meaning of salary under employees' view.”

This thematic statement reveals that founders/leaders' view links to the prevailing notion that social enterprise employees typically receive lower compensation compared to other sectors. The belief is that those in the social realm prioritise their passion over higher pay, opting to contribute to societal goals and foster positive change. All participants in the study acknowledged this perception and expressed a strong desire to dispel it from the nonprofit sector. In an effort to disprove this perception, many social enterprise leaders, particularly from the younger generation, have taken proactive measures. They ensure that their pay rates are comparable to those of for-profit businesses, as evidenced by the excerpts provided below. This underscores how leaders' values and beliefs significantly impact their organisations' salary structures. Below are examples of some excerpts from the participants.

“For those people who come to do the job with a purpose, to help others, they should have a good life and receive good things back. So that we never take our social enterprises as an excuse to press our people’s salary [P37].”

“It is true that many employees are willing to trade off a high salary for work that they find more meaningful. I understand this because I was one of them when I left my job and established this social enterprise. However, it is important to ensure that this trade-off allows them to maintain a decent standard of living... As the owner of the company, you must be able to provide a good salary and take care of your people. We should ensure that our employees do not feel like they have to sacrifice their salaries for the sake of working for society [P39].”

“We need to challenge this perception... If employees receive a salary that doesn’t cover their monthly expenses while working towards solving social problems, how can they effectively focus on helping others when they... themselves are struggling to meet their basic needs? Therefore, if we do have an aim to work for our society, doing it for our organisation... in this sector, we should pay more attention to the salary system as well as consider the well-being of our employees [P20].”

Unsurprisingly, the data from the employees’ perspective sheds light on a noteworthy trend: many employees attest that social enterprises offer salaries comparable to those provided by commercial organisations as many opinions, such as “I received it at a good rate [P30],” or “I am satisfied with my salary [P32].” This is shown in many participants’ interviews. In this regard, some employees received salaries higher than the market rates as they noted “...comparing to my friends who work like me in other companies, I have got more than them [P4].” or “I am happy with my salary... I never expected that they would treat me as I am a non-disabled employee [P45],” I receive bonuses, welfare, and holidays—higher than what some other companies offer, [P33]” or I received higher than the manager position in some companies I’ve worked in the past [P15].”

Indeed, a significant factor that emerged, possibly influencing founders' intentions to offer competitive salaries, is their profound understanding of the complex issues associated with compensation. It becomes apparent that pay involves more than its just economic value, as it becomes intertwined with ideals of social standing and personal dignity. Consider the following excerpts.

“...I believe salary rate is one of the factors making employees proud of their work, and doing social enterprise is not an excuse to give low salary to our people [P25].”

“...Salary has meaning for employees more than its utilities. Salary rates refer to the feeling of being honoured, especially for young adults who usually compare their salaries with those of others in their social circle... They did something good for society, they worked hard, so they deserve appropriate income and dignity. Why do we make them trade their value for a low payment salary [P19]?”

Undoubtedly, salary rates are indeed influenced by market dynamics and the income generated by the venture. However, insights from the data hint at a potentially transformative trajectory shaped by the values and beliefs of founders and leaders. This trajectory indicates that social enterprises could be moving towards offering competitive salaries rather than relying on the notion that employees should exchange them for a sense of societal contribution. This shift challenges the conventional practice in this sector, where some view it as the duty of leaders and founders to prioritise social impact. While not all social enterprises may implement this due to income-generation constraints, this insight unveils a burgeoning trend and a glimpse of potential future shifts within the industry. It reflects how the values of founders and leaders possess the power to potentially reshape not only the practices within their ventures but also societal norms at large.

“Employees are akin to family members.”

This thematic statement refers to the perception of founders/leaders toward their employees. The data reveals a mutual familial perception between founders and employees. For instance, many participants who are founders express sentiments like, “My employees are not just employees; we see them as our family members [P18],” or “We take care of our employees like family members [P23].” Similarly, employees expressed sentiments such as, “It’s like he (founder) is not treating us as subordinates; he’s giving us his heart [P15],” or “They (founders) are like my parents [P13].” In fact, treating others like they are your parents or family members refers to the way people should treat others well. In Thai culture, the family holds a place of utmost importance and is deeply integrated into the social fabric. The concept of family in Thailand extends beyond the immediate nuclear family and often includes extended family members. Respect for elders and filial piety are core values, and family members are expected to be loyal and supportive of one another. Therefore, this value is deeply rooted and resonates not only in the founder-employee relationship but also among colleagues. Participants often express sentiments like, “He (colleagues) is like my brother... I am happy that we work together [P1],” or “They (community villagers) are like my elder relatives, and I want to work for this project to support them [P6].”

As gleaned from participant excerpts, founders and leaders who view their employees as family members or companions on a shared journey engender a treatment characterised by empathy and kindness. Consider the excerpts below.

“If you see them as your employees, you may only feel the connection and relationship of employee-employer, but when we see them as social workers, as part of our team working towards the same goal, we treat them as friends and relatives who share our mission. [P28]”

“I don’t want to call them employees; they are my friends, my team, like family. Our relationships go beyond boss-subordinate or employer-employee; we are a community of people working together towards a shared goal. They are part of our community, and we are here to care for them and our community. [P20]”

Furthermore, the view that *‘employees are akin to family members’* and the value that founders or leaders place on their employees encourages leaders to take a keen interest in their people’s well-being. As a result, they establish various practices to support and care for their team.

“... sometimes, our employees are superficially looking good; they look normal, but if you notice, they have dull faces. We cannot just feel normal when we know that something wrong is happening to our members. You know, we live like a big family; when we find our brothers or sisters don’t feel well, how can we just ignore it... Our employees might look fine on the outside, but many have problems with debt. I’ve noticed that this affects their mental well-being because they constantly worry about their creditors. Even though they like working here, such worries can be overwhelming. So, we started a training programme to help them manage their debt. Also, we have this kind of practice: if we find out someone is in debt to informal lenders, we step in, pay off the debt, and let the employee pay us back in manageable amounts from their salary. We’ve even set up our own banking system to assist them [P23].”

“When you view them as your family members, you will avoid actions that could harm them, and your goodwill towards them will be reflected in how you treat them. This perspective guides our approach to taking care of our employees [P18].”

The approach adopted by founders or leaders in viewing their team members or subordinates with empathy, akin to family members, has led to the development of specific people management practices and systems that are notably supportive. In fact, this value-driven leadership style has given rise to a variety of supportive people management practices tailored to the needs of employees in social enterprises. These unique practices are exemplified in Theme 2, Thematic Group 1, and additional

excerpts in Appendix E, showcasing how values and empathy in leadership directly influence the way employees are managed and cared for in social enterprises.

“It’s not about productivity; it’s about creating a social impact.”

The idea that *‘It’s not about productivity; it’s about creating a social impact’* relates to the perception of how social enterprises operate. As expressed in this thematic statement, this concept reflects the values that founders and leaders uphold, prioritising commitment to a social mission over merely achieving organisational productivity. Consequently, many practices and training programmes in social enterprises have been developed to enhance employee capabilities. For example, there is an employee exchange programme mentioned by Participant P20 in Theme 2. Additionally, here is an excerpt from the participant:

“Giving them the chance to discover and learn about things that interest them might come with some costs. For example, we allow them to choose roles in areas they find interesting. Although it comes with many errors from their operations, we think those costs are worth trading for the ways we can support their learning and personal development, because we want to build those people too, not just our work and productivity [P20]”.

Similarly, as a founder, Participant P18 discovered that their employee wished to participate in barista contests. Consequently, they created a support programme that provided employees with all the necessary equipment and materials to hone their coffee-making skills in preparation for the competition.

“We support them with all our resources if we find that it can fulfil their dream or help them develop their skills and abilities. We don’t worry about the cost of helping them because we focus on making a positive impact. It’s not just about company productivity or wondering if it’s worth it. In the end, they become valuable members of the community. By investing in them, we’re helping build a better society [P18].”

Furthermore, when the founders' or leaders' perspective of *'It's not about productivity; it's about creating a social impact'* is combined with the belief that *'employees are akin to family members,'* it leads to greater tolerance and patience in the development of employee capabilities and organisational growth. Recognising that their efforts are primarily geared towards social impact rather than just organisational productivity. Besides, viewing employees as family members allows for the occasional adjustment of practices and rules to accommodate individual needs. Consider the following excerpt.

“I always keep a place in my thoughts for allowing mistakes and learning time. Our focus is on their self-development as well, and that takes time. So, we're patient and observe their progress as they work with us. It's not just about getting the job done perfectly for the organisation or pushing it for productivity. Our goal is to nurture their growth as well [P27]”.

In fact, these values and perceptions play a significant role in employee retention practices within social enterprises. Many founders and leaders express that they are comfortable with employees leaving. For those who strongly adhere to this value, employee retention might not be a priority in their social enterprise. This perspective will be further explored in the next theme.

“Social enterprises are platforms where employees and society develop collectively.”

As envisioned by their founders and leaders, social enterprises serve as platforms where employees and the broader society can develop and grow together. Leaders within organisations see their ventures not merely as businesses but as spaces where individuals can enhance and nurture their skills, discovering and developing their professionally and personally.

This view is deeply rooted in the belief that social enterprises can be powerful drivers of social impact. The views align with organisational missions dedicated to

social good while also providing environments where employees can undergo personal and professional transformation. The values and attitudes of these founders and leaders significantly influence the development of support structures and practices aimed at promoting employee well-being.

“I envision our company as a space where individuals can join, work, and grow in unique ways that are meaningful to them [P25].”

“People can secure employment here, work joyfully, and earn a living wage. We want this place to be welcoming for those who share our beliefs. Here, they can work happily, find value and meaning in life, and help contribute to our social mission for both the organisation and society [P35].”

“We invest in the Strengthfinder programme for everyone. Through the tests, we can understand each person’s weaknesses and strengths, helping us know our employees better while they also learn about themselves. Even though I spent a lot on this fundamental system, I didn’t mind. I am willing to do it so that my employees can learn and find ways to develop themselves. We are a place where everyone can come to work together. Here, employees can develop themselves, the organisation benefits from their work, and together, we contribute positively to society [P19].”

As a result, various training and support programmes in social enterprises have been meticulously designed to promote employee well-being and personal development. Leaders within these organisations understand and acknowledge the importance of supporting their employees’ personal motivations, aspirations, and life challenges. This understanding is crucial as it shapes how they assist and support their teams, reflecting the broader perception of social enterprises as platforms for individual and collective growth and development. This may explain why many leaders do not prioritise employee retention; they believe individuals can contribute to the organisation, develop themselves, and then move on to create a social impact elsewhere. When leaders see themselves and their enterprises as significant contributors to social impact—with a focus on improving their employees’ lives

while also ensuring organisational success, unique support, training programmes, and performance assessment systems emerge. In this regard, the topic of employee retention mentioned earlier will be further explored in the next theme.

Subtheme2: Dilemma in Practice Implication

The primary focus of this subtheme is to emphasise the potential challenges that may arise when attempting to apply people management practice in practical situations. It's noteworthy that people management practices within social enterprises are shaped not only by the organisational philosophy and goals but also by the perspectives and values held by founders and leaders, as elucidated in the earlier subtheme. In this particular setting, specific examples of the practice implications are selected to serve as illustrative references. These examples not only highlight how dilemmas can arise but also elucidate the influence of founders' and leaders' values on these scenarios.

Based on the data, some social enterprises faced dilemmas in the selection process, and some found difficulty in rule and regulation enforcement. For example, Participant P20 encountered difficulties in deciding between candidates who had the requisite qualifications but lacked insight or experience in social work and those who were passionate about a specific social issue but may lack the necessary job abilities. Similarly, P18 was torn between candidates who possessed all of the required talents and those who possessed none but showed a desire to work at the social enterprise for a limited time before founding a similar business in their hometown. Although P18 ultimately chose the candidate with no skills based on the founder's belief in making a social impact, the decision-making process itself was far from simple due to the opposing variables involved.

In fact, dilemmas can arise within the people management process, especially when it comes to enforcing regulations and practices. An illuminating example from the participant's narrative illustrates how dilemmas can arise when adhering to rules and maintaining practices is necessary, especially in organisations that predominantly serve the underprivileged or disabled.

“We can't ignore the fact that some people with disabilities may think that because the government helps them, they don't have to work. When they join our organisation, they might think they don't need to work and can stay at home. For us, it becomes necessary to shift their mindset and provide them with new skills to perform well on the job. While we try our best to support them, if they choose not to adhere to our guidelines, it means they can't work with us anymore. When this happens, we have no choice but to ask them to leave. Think about this: if they get paid without doing their work, it's not fair to their coworkers who are actually working, and it goes against the idea that everyone should be treated the same. Ensuring equality does not mean giving people with disabilities special treatment. When we first ran into this problem, it was hard for our team to figure out how to fix it. Still, we are committed to the rules we have set up. I'm aware that our way of implementing organisational rules may seem harsh, but true quality and fairness are at the heart of what we do. Even though this is a sensitive issue, we will always stick to our values [P37].”

In this context, it becomes evident that the values upheld by leaders and founders are ultimately pivotal. Their steadfast commitment to these values is reflected in the way they implement people management strategies and practices.

In summary, people management practices within social enterprises are shaped by their ever-evolving philosophy and goals. However, the values held by founders and leaders wield substantial influence, ultimately guiding and solidifying the practices adopted within the organisation. It is worth emphasising that dilemmas can surface when it comes to implementing and enforcing practices and regulations. Within this context, the role of the founder and leader in social enterprises is of paramount importance. Founders and leaders are crucial not only in developing people

management practices and directing the direction of its procedures and activities but also in deciding the most appropriate methods and scope of execution to accomplish the organisation's overarching goals and dual missions. It is essential to highlight that dilemmas can arise even in employee retention implementation. However, this issue will be discussed in more depth in the forthcoming theme.

Theme 4: Diverse employee retention needs in social enterprises:

Unconventional reasons beyond traditional businesses.

Within this theme, two distinct subthemes are developed as the data reveals the diverse spectrum of opinions concerning the necessity of employee retention in social enterprises. Some voices advocate for its essentiality, while others contend that it lacks significance. These subthemes can be labelled as follows:

Subtheme 1: Employee retention is important but may not be necessary for social enterprise;

Subtheme 2: Employee retention is important and needs to be done.

However, this section will not completely segregate these subthemes. Instead, the results will be presented using a comparative approach. This presentation will begin by addressing the outcomes of these two subthemes within social enterprises categorised as WISE and then extend to non-WISE social enterprises.

This approach is adopted for several reasons. Firstly, it enables readers to compare both WISE and non-WISE social enterprises. Data highlights that five WISEs implement employee retention differently, even though the primary focus for most WISEs is the upskilling and reintegration of individuals into the labour market. Therefore, employee retention might not be considered essential for them. However, not all WISEs share this perspective. Secondly, since the context of how a social enterprise's philosophy, organisational goals, and the values upheld by its founders or

leaders shape people management has been established in previous themes (Themes 1-3), this approach allows researchers to accentuate these factors within the explanations of both subthemes for WISE and non-WISE social enterprises. This highlights the diverse employee retention needs across different types of social enterprises, and the impetus driving employee retention practices within social enterprises that are significantly distinct from those in traditional commercial organisations will be unveiled.

The Two Directions of Employee Retention Implementation Under Five WISEs.

According to the data, five WISEs perceive the necessity of employee retention in their organisations in two different ways. The first subtheme states that implementing employee retention is not necessary, whereas the second subtheme indicates that it needs to be done. Table 4.2 summarises the details regarding the organisation size, industry, organisational goal, and subthemes for these five WISEs.

Table 4.2 Employee Retention Perspectives on Five WISEs

WISEs	Size (approx.)	Industry	Business model	Organisational goal	Theme
WISE1	100 employees	Environmental service	This social enterprise recycles waste and sells all kinds of waste materials. The organisation runs activities/businesses to promote the professions of disadvantaged people in society, help the environment, and create jobs for underprivileged people by adopting the waste sorting process.	Aim to solve environmental problems by using waste management and create jobs for underprivileged people.	Employee retention is important and needs to be done (Subtheme2)
WISE2	100-300 employees	Healthcare service (for people who get body stress)	This social enterprise provides an innovative technique called HMS - Human Maintenance Service (HMS mix yoga postures with chiropractic knowledge to relieve body stress). The social enterprise recruits women from vulnerable situations, including former inmates, and provides training to them to be able to provide this service.	Aim to reduce workplace stress for public people by offering the services provided by former female inmates.	Employee retention is important but may not be necessary for social enterprise (Subtheme1)

WISEs	Size (approx.)	Industry	Business model	Organisational goal	Theme
WISE3	600 employees	IT, AI data services	This social enterprise is a software developer company that sells data and technology products driven by people with disabilities.	Aim to help people with disabilities by creating jobs for them and become the medium (hub) connecting disabled people, the Thai government, and the for-profit organisations that normally want to hire disabled people (according to Thai law section 33 and section 35)	Employee retention is important and needs to be done (Subtheme2)
WISE4	50 employees	Healthcare service (for older adults)	This social enterprise provides elderly care services to old people, integrates volunteer projects to take care of the elderly people at home, recruits people who lack educational opportunities (tribal children or a hill tribe minority), gives free loan scholarships and offers education in nursing courses. Then, after graduation, they can work as a caregiver or move for a higher education.	Aim to reduce inequality in society, provide education to minorities, support community development in rural areas, and offer elderly care services to old people in need.	Employee retention is important but not necessary for social enterprise (Subtheme1)
WISE5	18 employees	Mental health service	This social enterprise is determined to support psychiatric patients. It provides sustainable well-being services and enables them to participate in all aspects of work at every stage.	Aim to support the recovery of holistic psychiatric patients and provide jobs for people with mental illness.	Employee retention is important but not necessary for social enterprise (Subtheme1)

The data shows that WISE1 employs predominantly disadvantaged individuals, including urban slum dwellers, former inmates, and people with low education and joblessness. The founder believes that employee retention is crucial to ensure job security, opportunities, and improved life quality for these employees, thus affirming the necessity of retention efforts.

In contrast, WISE2, which primarily employs formerly incarcerated women, does not view employee retention as a priority; instead, it focuses on reintegrating them into the labour market post-employment or after they regain self-esteem. Likewise, WISE5's founder does not prioritise retention, which aligns with their mission of aiding patients' return to normal life.

WISE3 and WISE4 have diverse workforces, with WISE3 focusing on creating jobs for disabled individuals and WISE4 aiming to rescue disadvantaged children by offering education and scholarships for future caregiver roles. Both WISEs recognise the importance of employee retention due to training costs. While WISE3 is actively implementing a retention programme, the founder of WISE4 indicated that their social enterprise has fulfilled the social mission of rescuing children from adverse conditions. Hence, there is no need to enforce contract agreements for newly graduated caregivers. However, although there is a need to retain those graduates to work as caregivers in social enterprises, considering the cost of training and organisational operation systems, the founder decided to recruit a new group of adults to be trained and work as caregivers instead. Table 4.3 in the following section provides excerpts from participants regarding employee retention programmes in these social enterprises.

Table 4.3 The Participants' Excerpts Regarding Employee Retention in WISEs

Subtheme 1: Employee retention is important but not necessary for social enterprise. Subtheme 2: Employee retention is important and needs to be done		
Excerpt	Themes	Factor
WISE1 "It (employee retention) is very important... I want them to work with the organisation for a long time because we can provide opportunities to support and promote them as valuable people. They will also have a good career here. No one looks down on them; they can earn money and live their lives. I don't know... if they cannot get jobs from us, will they get any jobs from somewhere else... Commercial organisations will not allow them to work due to their qualifications. So, employee retention for my enterprise is essential, and I want them to work with me for long, not because it helps the organisation operate effectively like commercial organisations do... They usually have less chance to work in other organisations. They are less educated, some of them are former inmates, and some have mental problems and cannot work long hours. Some may return to a vicious circle of drugs and crimes if they cannot have jobs and life here [P27]."	Subtheme 2	Founders/leaders' value is a main influence.
WISE2 "It (employee retention) is important but not that much; I mean...the thing is not because we want them to stay with us for long; our objective is to send them back into society as smoothly as possible. We offer a place for them to develop themselves and be ready to live in their society in the way that they are truly accepted. Society accepts them as members of society, not as villains. We are just the place to give them the opportunity, provide them with training, and let them become a new person. It takes time to make people at their home or surrounding them trust them... that they have already become a good person. It really takes time...[P28]."	Subtheme 1	The organisational goal is a main influence.
WISE3 "...from my view, I would say we want everyone to stay with us for a long time, both core team and data creator groups (mainly disabled employees). We do as many things as possible to make them stay. I mean, just not quit after they got training, because you know...the training cost is very high, and once they leave, we lose that one and must train the new one. There are many switching costs here, and finding a way to retain them is a thing we can do for our business because we are not a charity [P37]."	Subtheme 2	The cost of training and operation is a primary influence.

Subtheme 1: Employee retention is important but not necessary for social enterprise. Subtheme 2: Employee retention is important and needs to be done		
Excerpt	Themes	Factor
WISE4 “It’s hard to say whether it (employee retention) is necessary or unnecessary. But let me explain this. For example, we will be in trouble if there is a high turnover rate. We are currently facing this problem. However, it’s understandable that these kinds of jobs (caregivers) are stressful because employees have to deal with hospitality jobs, caring for sick people and all older adults. Another condition is those caregivers; they are young adults who are thinking and planning about their lives. This year, they think of one plan; next year, they have another plan. Therefore, their career plans are always changed, and they can easily leave the organisation, and that leaving will affect our costs. I didn’t mean only the training cost but the sweat and tears of my core team; they will burn out, too. So, if they decided to work with us after graduating for 1-2 years, it would be great. However, we will not put employee retention as a KPI for our work because it does not fit our aims. Therefore, we recruit adult groups instead and remain programmes that help those kids. That’s what we’re doing. We’re not going to think about turnover rates anymore because we see our work accomplished since pulling children out of the risk of human trafficking, drug smuggling, drug production circle, and prostitution [P47].”	Subtheme 1	The cost of training and operations influences the necessity of implementing employee retention. Still, the founders’/leaders’ values drive the decision-making process regarding whether or not to implement it.
WISE5 “We don’t have employee retention here, and I don’t think we need to have it. I know it is good for the organisation, but we are happy if they recover and can return to society; that is our goal. I don’t know if we will change our minds in the future, but right now, our practice is like this [P42].”	Subtheme 1	Founders/leaders’ value is a main influence.

Analysing these insightful data, WISE2 and WISE5 perceive employee retention as unnecessary because they aim to reintegrate people into the labour market due to their organisational goals. In contrast, the employee retention plan of WISE1 was driven by the founders/leaders’ values, as they believed it was a way to support underprivileged people. Turning to WISE3 and WISE4, the implementation of employee retention programmes may be driven by considerations of training and

operational costs. However, while WISE3 decided to implement employee retention with the view of “we are business...not charity,” WISE4 agreed to recruit a new group of potential employees instead because they believe they have completed their mission to rescue underprivileged children and support them for a better life. The main factor driving both actions is the value the organisational founders/leaders uphold.

Furthermore, even though organisational goals currently deter employee retention implementation in WISE2 and WISE5, this stance may change in the future with shifts in leadership perspective, organisational expansion, or business model modifications. As articulated by WISE2’s founder, “I am uncertain about future employee retention plans. If our enterprise grows larger or expands into agriculture projects, the need for employee retention might arise.” While organisational size might influence the perceived necessity for employee retention, with larger entities seemingly requiring it, based on the available data, the primary driver for its implementation remains the values held by the organisational founders/leaders and their perception of the organisation.

In the next part, the exploration of two subthemes also reveals the diversity in perspectives on employee retention within non-WISE organisations.

The Two Directions of Employee Retention Implementation Under Non-WISE Social Enterprises.

Under the context of non-WISE social enterprises, employee retention is similarly perceived as being split between the two subthemes.

Based on subtheme 1, ‘Employee retention is important but not necessary for social enterprise’, most of the participants gave the reason supporting this notion as they perceive social enterprise as a platform for developing employee lives, and the primary purpose hence relates to the welfare of employees and the social mission of the organisation. Therefore, despite recognising its importance, they seem not to

prioritise implementing retention programmes in social enterprises. Indeed, the founders' and leaders' values play an important role if employee retention is implemented in social enterprises. Below are examples of the participants' excerpts.

“...I never think of having them with me for long. I never expected to have them with me for the entire of their lives. I... myself...don't even know I will be with my social enterprise till the end of my life...how dare I expect them to do so? I didn't mean that I would not care about employee retention...it is important and can foster our business...but the turnover rate means nothing to me. I care more about how this enterprise could help and fulfil their hopes and life plans. We are not building the enterprise...we have the enterprise as a place for building them to build our community [P20].

“...if they are working for us, they contribute everything for us already during their working time, and we still do something to hold them here... just for our productivity... this is not what we initially want to have when we decide to establish our social enterprise. I don't think that freezing them here is the best way to look after my employees. I don't like the notion of please stay with us and work best for us. This is a selfish notion. Doing something tricky to make them stuck here is a sin... If they leave to create a similar business, we won't see it as our business enemy...they are helping us... helping others to have a better life” [P18].”

“...So, the main thing is probably the concept and value they have. If it matches us and the organisation, then they will stay with us longer. If not, they will be with us for a short time. That's fine, I think; it's like a natural selection process for social enterprise. Let it flow; there is no need to find a solution to tie them up with us [P24].”

“Retaining them is good for our organisation. However, I think they understand well why they are here, and with their trajectory of working lives, all things can happen. They stay if they have an aim in work; there is no need to put complicated mechanisms in place to make them stay. Leaving is fine, though (smile)[P35].”

In contrast, under subtheme 2, social enterprises that perceive employee retention as important and need to be done have provided interesting reasons. Similar to the earlier account concerning WISE4, the founders/leaders in these cases perceive their organisation as a workplace for individuals facing life's challenges. For them, retaining employees translates to providing an enduring pathway to enhanced livelihoods. In this context, the non-WISE social enterprises conceived an employee retention programme in the form of an employee support system. However, it is not motivated by profit but rather by community service and the welfare of its employees.

For example, there's a social enterprise whose inception is linked to the closure of a nearby factory, which left many local residents unemployed. The founder, who was also a former employee of the factory, recognised the need of their ex-colleagues and established the enterprise to provide job opportunities for them. Gradually, this enterprise evolved into a community hub as a social enterprise. Consequently, its primary focus has been on offering employment and creating a secure and supportive work environment for the local community. The founder has emphasised the importance of employee retention and has implemented support programmes within the enterprise to support people and the community. Below is the participant's excerpt.

“it's important (employee retention). I am saying this does not mean that it is important to my organisation; however, technically, yes, it is...if we consider it based on a business worldview... but my intention is not about profit-making. I want to take care of them; we know each other, and we used to work in the same place. After the factory closed, I could find another job, but they could not... So, for me, looking after them well is the core thing for this business. We have this enterprise to support people who live in this community. Before, I had no idea if we should have employee retention, but I later created the after-retirement programme to support us, and that became a programme to help retain our employees. However, if they want to leave, it is fine anyway [P22].”

Even though this concept appears to align well with social enterprises serving disadvantaged populations, it is essential to note that such a notion extends beyond these boundaries. Some social enterprises that do not exclusively serve underprivileged individuals also espouse this concept.

“Employee retention is important, and my organisation need it. However, I did it for my organisation this way...I never lay off them (employees) for reasons they cannot work well. I always use job rotation to find a good position for them...the position they are happy to work in and can do well. They will have jobs and money to support their family. I do it in a way to find ways to support them to work at my organisation, not for productivity. It’s true that having them in the long run can increase productivity for the organisation, but it is not my intention. What I want is... stay with me long enough to be able to take care of themselves..., to have an attuned positive attitude, not be in debt easily or at least know how to manage their monetary plan or how to get rid of debt, and then if they leave, that would be fine for me (smile) [P23].”

According to the themes’ discovery regarding employee retention in social enterprises, many factors mentioned in Themes 1-3 also influence the implementation of employee retention practices. For instance, while large-size enterprises typically appear to value employee retention more than small-size firms since it relates to organisational operation cost, the large-size social enterprise does not always view employee retention as a matter to be done.

Comparing social enterprise sizes provided in Tables 3.4 and 3.5 in Chapter 3, those categorised in Subtheme 1: ‘Employee retention is important but not necessary for social enterprise’, vary from very small to large enterprises. Examples include social enterprises associated with Participants P35 (5-10 employees), P24 (10 employees), P18 (18-35 employees), and P20 (86 employees). Similarly, those categorised in Subtheme 2: ‘Employee retention is important and needs to be done’, also vary in size, such as social enterprises associated with Participants P19 (20 employees), P22 (50-60 employees), and P23 (160-200 employees). It is intriguing to note that

employee retention is emphasised in both themes and is implemented differently, seemingly independent of enterprise size.

Furthermore, although the fundamental aim of WISEs' operations is to upskill or reskill disadvantaged people and send them back to the labour market, not all WISEs do the same. Based on the current data, employee retention depends heavily on what founders believe and how they perceive their ventures. In fact, employee retention in the context of social enterprise seems to be going beyond the organisational border. Many social enterprise founders agreed that employee retention is a vital factor. Losing their employees means losing qualified people. However, if the act of leaving can enhance their employees – in terms of creating a good societal impact, although no longer with them, they are willing to let them go and ready to help and support for the further step of their leaving. Even though, under the subtheme 'Employee retention is important and needs to be done', the reason for implementing this practice focuses more on the employees' well-being than productivity and profitability. From the founders' perspective, employee retention goes beyond organisational sustainability and moves toward societal sustainability.

Theme 5: An unintentional employee retention system is created.

This theme further explores insights from previous themes, revealing that practices, systems, and programmes developed for managing the workforce in social enterprises have inadvertently become practical tools for enhancing employee retention. For example, Participant P22 shared how their post-retirement employee support programme, initially designed to assist their employees, unexpectedly evolved into an efficient retention system. Similarly, the data indicates that comparable support programmes have organically emerged in several other social enterprises, significantly contributing to stronger employee attachment. These findings illustrate the serendipitous development of retention strategies within these organisations.

Within the context of this study, it has become clear that employee attachment can be fostered via two primary dimensions: the “organisational relationship tie,” which relates to social capital, and the “motivation tie,” which relates to human capital. Therefore, under this theme, the specific practices that contribute to the enhancement of these two fundamental ties will be presented under two distinct subthemes.

Subtheme 1: Systems and practices that enhance the development of the “organisational relationship tie.”

Under this subtheme, ‘space of talks’ is one of the practices found in many social enterprises. In the context of this research, the concept of ‘space of talks’ refers to the environment and practices created by social enterprises to promote open communication among their employees. This space allows individuals to freely express their thoughts, opinions, and emotions, including any concerns they may have towards colleagues or the organisation’s leaders, in both official and unofficial manners. It is frequently referred to by different names as some organisations refer to these events as reflection sessions or sharing sessions, while others call them family days, house day sessions, or town halls.

“Family day is the day that all of us will meet and talk about anything that happens in life, our feelings, and our working life [P18]”.

“It is a space where everyone can come and talk, share experiences, tell their stories. We will know what happened about whom from this unofficial space...at all the time [P20]”.

These designated sessions provide employees with dedicated time and space to engage in substantive conversations and discussions. Primarily, the ‘space of talks’ is developed with the founders’/leaders’ intention to support their employees’ well-being as its basis. This is because the founders/leaders are aware that employees in

social enterprises are distinct, and their well-being varies in terms of both physical and non-physical aspects. Hence, this kind of session is developed. Later, it apparently showed that it can become a good practice that allows employees to feel at ease seeking assistance, discussing work-related challenges, sharing personal aspirations and ambitions, and addressing any difficulties they may be experiencing in their personal lives. Considering the following excerpts.

“In our session, it happened in this way, sometime...like when we see somebody looks weird or look different from what they usually are... then, we’re starting to know, uh, this person might have some problems. Now, we can call him up and ask what happened to him [P20].”

“...We take care of their mental and physical health, personal issues, their family problems, we take care of their debt too... We have a free talk. I did this and had it as our organisational practice because ...think about this... when people come to work. If they are suffering, if they feel like life is suffering, we can feel it, and it’s not difficult to know and feel if we notice them. Do you think those people who are feeling suffering in life...still have energy and feel good during the time they are working... [P23].”

“We use these sessions to make sure that everyone on our team is healthy and happy. It is important to check on their physical and mental health... Sometimes, we know from these talks (‘space of talks’) that my employees’ parents were not in good condition, and they had to stay at the hospital at all times. That was the reason why the employee needed to leave the job early. Having this space is the way to make people connected not just for their work but their minds [P25].”

Over time, these practices have matured into effective listening tools for founders and leaders. They serve as a means to gain insights into their employees’ work experiences and personal lives. This process fosters the development of positive emotions and relationships within the organisation, strengthening the bond between employees and leadership. Furthermore, taking into account the subsequent excerpts:

“This method of communication allows us to express our thoughts and desires freely. Often, we resolve issues quietly, and it’s comforting to share those experiences or inform someone about them. It brings a sense of relief and satisfaction... Misunderstandings can arise at work due to the actions or behaviours of bosses or coworkers, which might be misconstrued. These meetings provide a platform to discuss and clarify any such misunderstandings, aligning everyone’s understanding and bridging gaps in knowledge. Sometimes, we realise that situations aren’t as we perceived, due to misinterpreting others’ intentions (smile) [P5]”.

“...During that time, I felt like I didn’t want to work. I feel tired and uncomfortable at work, but it’s also nice that we have that informal meeting every Monday. It is a meeting where we can exchange feelings about what it’s like to be here. Telling about what we feel helps me feel better. It cannot help me solve all my problems or difficulties, but at least it makes me feel better [P40].”

“We ask each other like a check-in feeling every day. We do it like a culture here. Tell your friends how it’s going today. Or is there anything you’d like to ask for help, or is there anything you want to tell anyone? Those conversations are allowed here, giving a good vibe at work and among our team [P30].”

This kind of practice facilitates positive relationships. When people sense that they are supported and cared for by others, feelings of gratitude often arise. This gratitude can lead to a reciprocal process and the formation of a psychological contract, fostering positive relationships. Such relationships have the potential to evolve into strong employee attachments as individuals feel more connected and valued within the organisation.

Indeed, besides the ‘space of talks,’ other forms of support and practices contribute to enhancing not only the relationships between employees and employers but also among employees themselves. The data reveals that some social enterprises have implemented practices to assist employees with essential arrangements and expenses

in the unfortunate event of a parent's passing. This practice stems from the belief among founders that the loss of a loved one can deeply affect someone's emotional well-being and may even disrupt their ability to lead an everyday life or continue working for a while. As one participant mentioned, "It is a delicate matter; we address it through our practices; everyone supports the affected individual until they recover from their grief. [P22]" The similar forms of support were also identified in the data:

"We have a system that helps us keep track of workers' informal debts. Many people who work here get help from these programmes; with this help, we can live better lives. The system wants us to be brave enough to talk about money problems and say so. I love how people here work and live with compassion [P17]."

"Our founder initiated a volunteer group to support colleagues and their families during tough times. Anyone can join, and I'm part of this group too. We assist with practical needs, like repairing homes damaged by storms. For instance, when a storm damaged some coworkers' homes, our leaders informed the founder, and then we together organised assistance. The company covered material costs while we voluntarily handled the repairs. Additionally, we help coworkers with elderly parents too. One colleague, who usually cares for their parents during lunch breaks, couldn't make it for a few days. When informed, their leader promptly arranged for someone to assist them. Personally, I enjoy volunteering for these tasks, and it has allowed me to meet more of my coworkers. Hearing a simple 'thank you' from my coworkers makes me appreciate these experiences [P13]."

Notably, it can be observed that these practices and support systems have emerged as a result of a genuine commitment to ensuring the well-being of employees' living conditions. This may potentially explain their contribution to the development of interpersonal connections within organisations. When individuals perceive a sense of comfort and witness positive changes in their circumstances while employed in a certain setting, they commonly cultivate a heightened sense of attachment to their colleagues and their physical surroundings. The sentiment above of affiliation then arises, resulting in a type of employee attachment.

Subtheme 2: Systems and practices that enhance the development of the “motivation tie.”

The results of Subtheme 1 demonstrate that ‘space of talks’ is a valuable tool for social enterprises to listen to and assess the well-being of their employees, and it can build positive relationships among employees and between employees and employers. However, it goes beyond that function. The data illustrates the transformative effect of the space of talks on individuals within the social enterprise. Data from several participants revealed that conversing with their counterparts enhanced their understanding of social work and sparked a renewed sense of motivation.

“We found that it (space of talks) becomes a place we are connected to. Some of us chillingly discuss social issues related to our work, like having a beer and talking about things we are interested in. Some discover a new dream, and some say they found the meaning of what they did (smile) [P20].”

As mentioned by many social enterprises, the ‘space of talks’ and other similar practices have evolved into spaces for learning and sharing. In these environments, people exchange knowledge and motivation about life and social issues that interest them, fostering a culture of continuous learning and engagement with societal concerns. For example, consider the following excerpts:

“Organisational knowledge is generated from this space too... listening to the team members sharing an opinion or even problems bring bonding to the team too...The family-day practice helped me to know what my team is currently interested in [P18].”

“Having these sessions helps us understand each other more deeply. I must say, such sessions are not commonly found in other companies. Why would they need to listen to other people’s feelings or personal issues? In some sessions, the conversations and discussions about social issues or the social projects my friend handles have been incredibly inspiring for me [P5].”

In some cases, founders or leaders use the ‘space of talks’ to help team members regain their motivation.

“I consider this session to be one of our regular activities in the office. The main goal of this meeting is to ensure everyone’s well-being at that particular time. You see, each of us here works incredibly hard, driven by our passions. But when their (employees) expectation isn’t met, especially in some social projects that they were so into, their feelings and motivation to work go down. Those are the times when they need help the most. If you don’t know what they’re going through, it means you don’t care about your team members’ well-being...[P19].

In fact, the ‘space of talks’ has been used as the foundation to create additional programmes and systems to support their employees. These initiatives are the outcome of insights gained about the lives and motivations of the employees during the ‘space of talks’ session. For example, after identifying that their young employees were interested in getting international work experience, Participant P20 established an employee exchange programme, as indicated in Theme 1. Similarly, in Theme 1, Participants P27 and P13 launched educational support programmes for their employees’ children after identifying that their people need them. Furthermore, the remarkable participant accounts below highlight how the ‘space of talks’ and other support systems have significantly impacted employees’ motivation.

“We continue providing this kind of talk to understand what our employees think and feel, whether they still have the same dream, what else we can support each other, whether their life’s aim remains or what they are looking for while working with us. Once, we found out that some of our employees wanted to compete in barista contests. So, we support them with all of the required equipment and materials to practice and perfect their coffee-making skills in preparation for the competition. Later, we set up a regular practice, like a family day talk, to learn about our employees’ lives and their motivations... thus, we know how to support them [P18].”

Following participation in the ‘space of talks’ sessions, employees have the opportunity to voice their preferences, allowing founders and leaders to gain deeper insights into their motivations. This understanding has led to the development of other practices and support programmes, which have been instrumental in boosting employee motivation and fostering positive personal relationships between employees and management. The ensuing narrative provides further insight into this dynamic.

“You know, our founder helps us a lot. Talk to him honestly if you want to learn something, and he will likely provide support. In my previous jobs, no founder cared about our dreams or personal growth. Here, some employees even asked to learn how to drive a car, and the founders supported them through driving courses until they got their license. As for me, I wanted to practice making coffee, and I was allowed to do it for free using all the equipment and materials. The only condition is that all the coffee I make during practice, I must drink it and not waste it... And, of course, our practices should never interfere with our duties and serving customers. So, we mostly did it after the shop closed; we were allowed to be here for practice even after the shop closed. I’m happy that I have more chances to learn and develop myself while working here [P15].”

Due to the founder’s profound commitment to employees’ personal goals and life concerns, as highlighted in Theme 3, the creation of the ‘space of talks’ evolved into a listening tool with the sincere intention of fostering employee self-growth and individual aspirations. Consequently, the founder devised support programmes, as exemplified in excerpts from Participants P18 and P15. Interestingly, although these programmes may not appear directly linked to the emergence of employee attachment, they have the potential to enhance the employees’ “motivation tie.” In this regard, below is a narrative illustrating how founders came to realise that their support systems and practices in the social enterprise, initially intended to assist their employees, had unintentionally become powerful tools for employee retention.

“I didn’t focus much on keeping employees when we started our social enterprise. I cared more about how my employees were doing in life, their work, and the issues they faced working with us. I set up various support programmes to assist them, like helping them with debts, providing educational support, and offering personal help. We even started an after-retirement programme. With time, these efforts spread through word of mouth, and our employees began recommending our organisation to others. I’m not sure if they’re still working here because of these programmes. However, all the support we created came from our genuine desire to make our community better and help our employees. Some have said they’re happy with our environment and support and want to stay with us. I think this kind of employee retention has occurred as a byproduct, not our main goal [P23].”

“I have realised that our post-retirement programme, which includes housebuilding and agriculture, significantly boosts employee motivation. Through these programmes, employees who previously lacked life plans begin envisioning a better future for themselves as they approach retirement. Initially, I had not considered this aspect, but providing a backup plan could benefit those unsure of their next steps or how to manage their lives. I have discovered that these initiatives I have started genuinely enhancing our employees’ well-being and positivity about their future. They feel more motivated at work and start setting life goals, and many have expressed a desire to stay and work with us after their retirement and will be together until they cannot work anymore. I am pleased with this as we foster a sense of community here. We are not just individuals; we are a community, and I believe these programs do not impose additional burdens or responsibilities on us... [27]”.

Theme 6: Considering the life condition of employees can support employee retention.

While many individuals are drawn to work in social enterprises due to their values and commitment to social causes, the reality underscores an important truth. Working for a social passion can indeed give their lives a sense of purpose, but without sufficient means to sustain themselves, they may find it challenging to continue the work they believe in. This encompasses not only the monetary aspects like the salary they earn but also the stability of their living conditions, which must be adequate to support their lives beyond just their professional endeavours. This is a realisation that many founders of social enterprises have come to understand.

“We must first understand our passion and values in social work. I once heard one of my employees say that they can lead this life because of their passion for social work. I told them, in reality, you must be able to sustain your own life first and obtain the necessities in life, so you can not only survive but also have the energy to think about helping others [P39].”

“We have had some employees who joined us but eventually had to leave, even though they didn’t want to depart. We have learned from their experiences that the cost of commuting and accommodation rent were among the main factors making it financially challenging for them to work here. Consequently, we have provided nearby accommodation for those who may require it. This is one way we can help sustain their passion for their work. It starts with addressing the basic needs of individuals, and the rest depends on their choices [P24].”

People do have various responsibilities and incur various expenses. According to the data, some people are responsible for supporting their parents, whereas others may use all their earnings for personal purposes. Reflecting on this excerpt from Participant P2, “If I have to take care of my parents with all aspects, I don’t think I can continue working here,” it underscores a crucial factor in determining one’s ability to commit to or step away from an organisation. Furthermore, it’s essential to

emphasise that this consideration extends beyond mere financial aspects, although there is a connection. It encompasses those facing life difficulties or limitations, such as individuals dealing with illnesses that restrict their capacity to work long hours, those bearing societal stigmas or grappling with financial debt, and those with physical disabilities. All of these life conditions significantly impact their decision on career choices.

Because people's life conditions vary, so do their basic needs. When evaluating the practices and support programmes devised to manage individuals in social enterprises, it's apparent that these initiatives, including the 'space of talks,' educational support, housing repairs, accommodation assistance, support for employees' parents, differentiated assessments for those with work-related limitations, and the establishment of banking systems to address informal employee debts, were all created with deep consideration for individuals' life conditions. Although these practices and systems were initially designed with the intent to help and support employees, they later evolved into mechanisms that seemingly aid social enterprises in retaining their employees. Thus, it becomes evident that the driving force behind individuals continuing to work for a social enterprise isn't solely the organisation's social value or mission; their life conditions play a pivotal role. The manner in which founders and leaders comprehend the life conditions of their employees and subsequently develop systems and people management practices to support and align with their employees' life circumstances (designing practices that embrace employees' life conditions) is key to upholding their organisational social mission while retaining their valued employees.

4.3 Group 2: Employee motivations within social enterprises.

4.3.1 Introduction

Under this thematic group, the findings related to the motivations of employees working in Thai social enterprises are presented. In this regard, the analysis delves into the reasons employees provide for joining, staying, leaving for another enterprise, or declining other job offers, as conveyed through their personal narratives. These insights help to conceptualise the shifting motivations of individuals who work for social enterprises. Notably, in this context, “leaving” encompasses not only moving from a social enterprise to an organisation in a different sector but also transitioning between various social enterprises. Given the context of this research, such actions have implications for the operation and sustainability of the affected organisations, alluding to the manner in which a social enterprise may lose its employees. By addressing the second research objective, this thematic group sheds light on the various factors that shape employees’ motivation and discourage them throughout their professional journeys and offers a comprehensive understanding of the dynamic interplay between employees’ motivations and the possibility of their motivations becoming an employee attachment.

The analysis in this section has identified four overarching themes, highlighting the unique aspects of employees’ motivation within the social enterprise context. These four themes are:

Theme 1: Employees’ initial motivation.

Theme 2: Demotivation, continuing motivation, and factors leading to departure.

Theme 3: The interactive and contagious motivation (motivation momentum).

Theme 4: Evolution of employee motivation in social enterprises.

4.3.2 Findings

Theme 1: Employees' initial motivation.

This theme focuses on understanding the motivations of individuals working in social enterprises. It delves into the initial factors that attract employees to these organisations, particularly their interest in and passion for social contributions. The exploration aims to uncover the driving forces behind employees' decisions to work in the social enterprise sector.

The data indicates that employees often choose to work in social enterprises because their personal values align with those of the organisation. A typical example is individuals who are passionate about environmental conservation and find fulfilment in working in roles related to saving nature. This alignment of personal and organisational values is a key factor in their decision to join and contribute to a social enterprise. The following excerpt further illustrates this point.

“Since I was young, I have loved nature and the outdoors. Growing up in the countryside allows me to see lots of beautiful places. I watched these places change as I got older and wanted to keep them safe for other kids to see and learn about them. This made me care about the environment and decide to study and work to protect it [P1].”

Many participants indicated that their desire to contribute socially stems from personal experiences related to specific social issues. This awareness often leads them to seek work in social enterprises. Their deep empathy, usually born from direct personal connections to these challenges, not only fuels their interest but also drives their career choices in this sector. For example, individuals who have personally experienced or closely relate to the social issues addressed by these organisations often find a natural alignment of values and motivation. Their engagement with social problems becomes a driving force for pursuing careers in social enterprises, where they can address societal challenges that resonate with their personal experiences and values. This alignment enables them to make meaningful

contributions to social issues while finding fulfilment in their roles. Consider the following excerpts.

“I also faced this problem. Now, I think about those children and want to use my experience to help them. That’s why I’m interested in working here [P32].”

“You know, people living in nearby areas might not experience the same social environment. Near my home, there’s a community filled with danger, like crime and drugs. When I pass by, I think about how..., even though we live close by, the students there probably will not have the same opportunities as me to learn or improve their lives. Seeing this difference makes me think about our society. I always wonder if the government or anyone else is caring for them. That was the first thing that got me interested in social work and made me think that I could be someone who helps [P24].”

Conversely, there are individuals who develop a passion for social contributions through direct experiences with social problems, often starting as beneficiaries in social projects. These experiences ignite their interest in social causes and motivate them to engage more actively. For instance, as illustrated in the following excerpts, their firsthand experiences as recipients of social aid can profoundly influence their career paths, leading them to roles where they can contribute to the welfare of others in similar situations.

“You see, before working at the social enterprise, I had cognitive disabilities. I came here to recover. Once I recovered, I felt a strong urge to work in this field. I considered going back to my old job but realised I could really help here since there might be others like me who need help. Even though I’m not a psychiatrist, I can use my experience to help others in my old situation. After recovering, I decided to focus on helping others. It feels great not just doing something for myself but also positively impacting others [P29].”

“I first got help from the social project, and then I noticed all the good things they did for disabled people. It’s nice to work here. I started as a beneficiary and volunteered at first. However, I work here full time now [P45].”

Based on the data collected, it was observed that individuals who neither have personal experiences with nor are beneficiaries of social projects also develop awareness and concern through participation in social events and voluntary work coordinated by many universities. Many participants shared that their initial involvement and heightened awareness about societal challenges stemmed from engaging in university-organised activities. These include voluntary initiatives aimed at rural development, workshops related to social issues and social enterprises, and events hosted by various organisations such as NGOs, government agencies supporting social projects, and other third-sector entities. These experiences not only sparked their interest in contributing positively to society but also kindled a desire to work with social enterprises.

“I’m a student who enjoys participating in university events, especially those focused on social services and volunteering in rural areas. During these activities, I learned about social enterprises, which caught my interest while I was taking an entrepreneurship course. Attending a significant camp named ‘Make a Difference’ and participating in various events and workshops, especially those by the School of ChangeMaker, broadened my perspective and deepened my interest in social enterprises. This led me to choose an internship in a social enterprise during my studies. After graduation, I continued working in this sector to make a positive impact through my work [P40].”

“I stumbled upon a Social and Community Development course during my studies. This class, along with university events, introduced me to diverse people. These experiences made me want to help communities improve their lives. After college, I thought hard about a career that matched my interests and values. Growing up in the upcountry, not a city, made me notice and care deeply about social issues. My studies and upbringing helped me understand the challenges various groups face. I realised many communities needed help, which strengthened my resolve to make a difference through my work. My college classes and activities truly shaped my view of society and led me to work in social enterprises after graduation [P4].”

The data reveals that university activities are crucial in increasing students' awareness and understanding of social and environmental issues. These activities, often organised by universities, act as a pivotal influence, highlighting social challenges and fostering a sense of responsibility among participants. This exposure not only encourages a commitment to solving societal problems but also motivates individuals to pursue leadership roles in social betterment. For instance, one participant's narrative demonstrates how engagement in university-led social activities shifted their perspective and career aspirations towards making a societal contribution despite their study field not being directly related to social issues.

“In university, I studied Architecture but felt disconnected from traditional classes. My perspective shifted when I participated in university-arranged activities, helping build facilities for a rural village. This experience opened my eyes to the importance of considering people's needs in design. Consequently, I explored community and environmental architecture, even though it was unconventional and not lucrative in Thailand. Despite challenges, I pursued my passion and caught the attention of a social enterprise co-founder during a competition near graduation. Ultimately, I became part of their nascent organisation, which now successfully focuses on community architecture [P11].”

Beyond Participant P11, various participants, despite their diverse academic backgrounds, have shifted their careers toward social contributions. For example, P20 from engineering and P24 from applied statistics found their calling in social work through university-led initiatives.

“Since my college days, I have been passionate about volunteering and became aware of social problems. Though I studied engineering, I chose not to pursue it. Instead, I shifted my career to focus on contributing to social causes [P20].”

“I studied applied statistics but have always felt drawn to social work. After finishing my studies, I continued with the social project I started when I was a student. I eventually founded my own social enterprise. To better equip

myself for this work, I decided to further my education with a master's degree in public administration and public policy. This seemed the right choice to enhance my skills for both my social enterprise and broader social contributions [P24].”

Additionally, Participants P39 and P47 transitioned from software engineering to social enterprise, driven by real-world experiences like P47's project with a multinational company and P39's involvement in a friend's social project. These narratives demonstrate that career inspiration in social contributions comes from both academic and professional experiences, highlighting a wide array of motivations and paths leading to careers in social betterment. This trend underlines the diversity in initial motivations for working in social enterprises. Consider the below narratives.

“I volunteered for about six months as a system administrator on my friend's social project, helping with planning and development. Using our knowledge as enthusiastic young people to help others was fun and challenging. This experience left me feeling more meaningful than my current job at a private company... at that time. Working on the social project..., I realised that it (social work) could be my career. Eventually, I left my corporate job to start my own social enterprise [P39].”

“My journey began with a CSR project at the company where I worked. It was the project that my boss assigned to me. I felt fulfilled by the work, and I proposed to my boss the idea of spinning off our social project into a production house to manage the company's CSR initiatives. However, in the commercial sector, CSR is often not a priority, and my boss said it wouldn't be feasible. Realising the limitations within the corporate structure and my passion for social work I had been engaged, I resigned and shifted my focus to social contributions, eventually becoming a co-founder of this social enterprise [P47].”

Nevertheless, it was discovered that some individuals began their careers at social enterprises without initially sharing the values of these organisations. The data reveals that a significant number of people were drawn to social enterprises primarily

because they were intrigued by the nature of the job and the unique working environment these organisations offered. Over time, however, many of these employees not only adopted but also internalised the values of their respective organisations. This newfound appreciation and understanding of the organisational values consequently served as a powerful motivator, inspiring them to continue their employment with the social enterprises, fully aligned with the mission and objectives of their workplace.

“I didn’t start working here because I was interested in social issues or wanted to help solve social problems like others. I was drawn to the job because I’m a nurse who enjoys working with elderly patients in hospital wards, and there was an open position that caught my interest at the time. However, as time passed, I began to appreciate the work for different reasons than when I started. The heartfelt thanks I receive from patients and the students I mentor (who are learning to be caregivers) have become my main motivation for continuing to work here [P48].”

“I applied for a job here because I was interested in the open position and curious about the company’s business model. Now that I work here, I feel surrounded by many good people who are dedicated to helping society and contributing to communities. Honestly, I had never thought about this before, but working with them has led me to appreciate my work more. Although I am not doing things that directly help them, knowing that what I do supports and helps our society brings a sense of meaningfulness to my career [P49].”

“I began working here because my friend invited me to join her. Prior to this, I was unfamiliar with social enterprises. Now, I understand that our work is closely related to many communities, and we collaborate to assist people within these communities. Working here has not only expanded my knowledge but also brought me joy in knowing that we are making a positive impact on people’s lives [P50].”

Theme 2: Demotivation, continuing motivation, and factors leading to departure.

This theme offers a holistic grasp of the factors intertwined with motivation, demotivation, and the eventual decision of employees to leave. By examining these elements in unison, a layered comprehension of each facet is achieved.

Subtheme 1: Factors influencing employee demotivation.

Data reveals that a significant cause of employee demotivation in social enterprises is the gnawing feeling of not achieving a tangible impact. This sentiment becomes evident when employees perceive projects, originally conceived to aid beneficiaries, as falling short or not delivering as anticipated. For instance, some participants conveyed their feelings of disenchantment through statements like, “When it was realised that the project didn’t succeed as hoped and beneficiaries remained unaffected, it was disheartening [P3].” Another shared, “There are moments when regaining motivation becomes challenging, especially upon discovering that the chosen approach isn’t genuinely addressing the social issues it aimed to tackle [P1].”

While feelings of disillusionment and demotivation might be universal across various sectors and organisations, the data suggests that the stakes appear higher in the realm of social enterprises. The inherent nature of these organisations, which pairs business strategies with social mission goals, means that the impact of perceived failure resonates deeply. Especially for value-driven employees, any perceived shortcomings related to the core social mission can potentially blow their motivation.

Perceived undervaluation is another significant demotivating factor. This feeling arises when individuals believe their works or contributions are not as highly valued by others as they are by themselves. When individuals sense that their efforts lack adequate acknowledgement and value from others, it can lead to frustration and

demotivation, stemming from the belief that their work is not receiving the recognition it deserves.

“There was a time when I felt like I didn’t want to work on this project anymore. I realised that our partners were only interested in doing a CSR project for their business and didn’t genuinely want to help society or the people we aimed to assist. I was discouraged because, while we deeply cared about the social impact and the beneficiaries, our partners, who should have been even more concerned, didn’t seem to share the same level of commitment or concern. They hired us for this project but didn’t seem to care about whether the people would actually be helped or whether the project would achieve its intended social impact. They never listened to our concerns voiced on behalf of the beneficiaries. This situation led me to question: Why am I working here? Experiences like this often demotivate me in my work [P10].”

Employee demotivation in social enterprises is frequently caused not just by perceived undervaluation by uninterested project partners but also by a lack of recognition from beneficiaries. Partners may underestimate the project’s impact on society, upsetting dedicated employees. Furthermore, beneficiaries’ scepticism and reluctance to collaborate, which is typically related to distrust in collaborating corporations or the government, exacerbate workers’ emotions of defeat and insignificance.

“I worked on the project for a partner whose goal was to help the people in the neighbourhood. My job was to help and guide the people with farming and making local goods better. There were times when the government hired us and times when businesses hired us for their CSR projects. But there were times when the locals didn’t want to get help or work with us, even though they knew we were there to help. They didn’t want to work with us because they didn’t trust the government or the companies that hired us. Even though our goal was to help, the locals were wary of our efforts because they had bad experiences with similar projects in the past. This idea made me feel down and defeated, which made me think twice about continuing with the work. It was especially disappointing when the people didn’t want our help because they didn’t trust the partners we worked with, not because of what our team did. During these hard times, I felt lost and started to wonder what

my role was in that place. I wasn't sure if my work was really making a difference in the world and helping communities as I had hoped [P6].”

Like those in other sectors, employees in social enterprises might experience feelings of low contribution toward their organisations, which is a significant demotivating factor. However, this sentiment is particularly detrimental for individuals driven by values and dedicated to making a positive social impact. When these individuals perceive their contributions to organisational tasks and duties as insufficient or falling short of expectations, it leads to a sense of not making a meaningful impact. For example, if employees feel they aren't fully contributing to their jobs, duties, or tasks as envisioned, the ripple effect is a perception of not fostering the expected social change. This dynamic is disheartening, particularly for those who see themselves as valuable contributors to the organisation's mission. When employees sense they are not contributing as anticipated, it not only diminishes their perceived value to the organisation but also erodes their self-worth and motivation. The ensuing cycle of reduced perceived contribution and limited impact leads to continual demotivation and low self-esteem among these employees. Consider the following excerpts.

“I was moved to a different project that needed skills I wasn't good at. This made me feel sad because I couldn't do the job as well as I wanted to. Because I didn't have the right skills, I couldn't help the people and beneficiaries we were working for as much as I hoped. This made me think about leaving my job. I thought... maybe I could find a job that fits my skills better, or I could learn the skills I was missing. That way, I could do well in my work and really help people. That's when I thought about quitting my old job [P40].”

“When the organisation changed its structure, I was moved to a different project. The work was new to me, and I quickly realised I wasn't very good at it. I felt discouraged because I couldn't use my skills and knowledge fully in this new role. Plus, I felt I was missing some skills needed for this new role. I know that while working in the new position, I can continue to help others and make a positive impact. However, you know, it's painful to feel that you're not contributing as much as you yourself expected to, especially

when you know you have skills and abilities that could be useful, but you're not in a position to use them. I couldn't convince myself that I was making an impact because I knew I wasn't performing as well as I had in the past. So, I decided to leave the job and study more about social work to improve my skills [P38].”

Furthermore, considering the subsequent excerpt.

“I left my job at a commercial company to join a social enterprise because I wanted to contribute to society. Working there was enjoyable, and it felt meaningful to make a difference. However, I eventually decided to leave the social enterprise and return to the commercial sector, where I could use my skills and experiences better. I felt more valuable in a role where I could fully utilise my expertise. Still, I am passionate about making a social impact. So, I started my own social enterprise while continuing to work at the commercial company [P36].”

The data reveals that for employees in social enterprises, **motivation is influenced not only by the potential social impact of their work but also by their perceived value on the contribution to their affiliated companies**. Driven by values and a strong desire to impact society positively, these employees often feel demotivated by feelings of undervaluation and perceived low contribution toward both the social projects they handled and organisations they affiliated with. This perception often prompts them to consider leaving their jobs. Therefore, recognising and affirming the contributions of employees in social enterprises is vital, enabling them to feel confident about their impact. Their sense of contribution is of significant importance to them.

Subtheme 2: Factors relating to the decision to depart.

Similar to their counterparts in other sectors, employees in social enterprises can also become discouraged and contemplate departure due to poor management systems. Based on data, this often manifests as unbalanced workloads and a sense of unfairness within the organisational structure. Besides, career development issues, prevalent in many social enterprises offering limited advancement opportunities compared to commercial organisations, significantly influence their decision to exit as well. Furthermore, personal considerations like family obligations and the dream of launching their own ventures play a role in this decision. Interestingly, rather than serving as a motivator, promotion within social enterprises has been found to contribute to employee discouragement, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

“I used to work on the front line and really enjoyed it. For a few years, I was actively involved with people and kids, helping in schools and organising activities. It was exciting and fulfilling to see our goals being reached and making a difference in people’s lives. Then, I got promoted. My new role was different, focusing more on planning. I missed being on the front line, working directly with people and celebrating our team’s successes. The joy and satisfaction I used to feel were gone. The change was obvious and undeniable; I couldn’t pretend not to feel it. I spent less time with my team and the people we were helping, making me feel less joyful and demotivated. I often questioned whether my work still mattered [P32].”

“After my promotion, I started working more with the external relations team, which meant I couldn’t talk and work with my old teammates and subordinates as much. This change naturally pulled us apart. We used to work together closely, sharing the highs and lows of our projects. I also gradually stopped participating with students and teachers in the villages as well. This shift made me wonder if I was still positively impacting the students and teachers in rural areas because the projects and tasks that I later handled didn’t seem closely related to the social goals I aimed for when I first started working here [P8].”

According to the data, there are instances where individuals feel demotivated at work following a promotion, primarily because they either cannot perceive the impact of

their work or lose interaction with beneficiaries and teammates, diminishing the sense of meaning in their tasks. In these situations, some choose to leave their organisations, while others decide to stay. Those who stay often undergo a transition period where they gradually find meaning and regain confidence in their new roles, becoming aware that they continue to make an impact. This transition process will be explored further in subsequent themes.

Subtheme 3: What Enhances Employees' Motivation in Social Enterprises

The data derived from this subtheme, combined with the analysis from the first and second subthemes, aid in conceptualising the ways in which employee motivation within social enterprises is fostered and enhanced. Three predominant directions emerged from the results.

Firstly, there is a prominent feeling of **appreciation regarding skill and ability** development. Employees who notice a progression in their own skills and abilities tend to feel valued and acknowledged, which naturally boosts their motivation. This sense of appreciation not only instils a sense of personal achievement and growth but also creates an encouraging work environment where employees are eager to contribute more effectively.

“Since starting my job here, I have seen myself grow in skills, abilities, and mental strength. I feel that I have matured a lot. Now, I can handle tougher jobs and deal with challenging situations better than before. Working in this place has brought out a new version of me, which I truly appreciate. I can feel myself becoming more mature and more capable, ready to take on difficult tasks with confidence. This growth motivates me in my work. I believe it’s also a driving force that has kept me here for so long [P2].”

When individuals perceive progress in their skills and abilities, recognising their own development and growing expertise, it enhances their motivation in the workplace. Employees commonly exhibit a keen interest in mapping out their career paths within an organisation, and this inclination remains consistent even in the context of

social enterprises. The advancement of one's career not only cultivates a stronger inclination to remain within these organisations but also plays a crucial role in shaping employees' choices regarding their retention or departure. Although individuals are committed to fulfilling social missions, it remains a fundamental human desire to seek personal and professional advancement.

“I aim to become an expert in a specific field area, but I'm unsure if staying in my current job will help me achieve that goal. While I enjoy working for our beneficiaries, I also aspire to grow and become a specialist in my field. I'm uncertain if continuing to work here will support my professional development and help me become an expert [P10].”

“I'm not sure if this is typical for a social enterprise because, at times, it seems like I'm doing the same thing repeatedly. However, as employees, we genuinely need to understand the direction of our career paths, don't we? Where can we progress to next, and how can we develop from our current roles [P8].”

However, the advancement that employees mean is not limited to career advancement in terms of promotion. Consider the following excerpt.

“If I'm here for another five years doing the same thing, I think I will decide to leave. It's not just about wanting a promotion. I also want to keep learning and gaining new experiences along my work [P45].”

Indeed, career advancement encompasses the acquisition of new experiences and the continuous growth of one's abilities and personal skills. According to the data, participants who have chosen to remain with the organisation or express a desire to do so often cite this aspect. Even if their job titles haven't changed, they recognise that they have gained valuable experience during their tenure, and their knowledge and skills in their roles have progressed. Consequently, they don't necessarily require

higher positions to feel a sense of appreciation in their work life; the journey itself is rewarding.

“I understand that moving to a larger company may offer more benefits, but I have declined those offers. I find greater fulfilment in my work at a social enterprise, where I have more fun. If I were to move to a larger company, I would likely be limited to working on only one type of environmental project. This means I would not have the opportunity to explore and learn about different approaches to carbon calculation. So, even though there is no way to get a higher position here, I am fine with it and love to be here [P44].”

“I have turned down other job offers because I can work on various social projects here. This is one of the reasons. But it’s not just about the different kinds of projects; it’s also about having new challenges and looking at things in a different way. Some of my friends told me I should quit my job and try to get a higher position in a corporate setting. But in that kind of job, I would probably only be able to work on a few types of projects [P7].”

Secondly, the data underscores the significance of **feeling self-significant within the affiliated organisation**. This point, aligning with the first subtheme of this theme, suggests that motivation is driven not just by the potential social impact of the work but also by the employees’ perceived value and contribution to their affiliated companies. When individuals feel their roles are crucial and their contributions significantly aid the organisation’s work, it instils a sense of purpose and responsibility. This feeling, in turn, strengthens their commitment and dedication to their roles, thereby enhancing their motivation to impact the organisation positively.

“I understand that by working here, I can significantly contribute to my organisation. Being a person with a disability... myself, I know how to interact with and support others with disabilities, ensuring there are no misunderstandings. Besides my regular duties, I assist in workshops and educate non-disabled individuals about living with disabilities. Working at this social enterprise not only helps me achieve my personal social goals but also allows me to engage in additional roles that I find rewarding. I feel that I am important to my organisation as I did this important job (smile) [P45].”

Self-recognition of significance to the organisation is another crucial factor that positively influences and impacts employee motivation. This factor may particularly be impactful for employees who are underprivileged or have disabilities. For instance, once social enterprises supported them, these individuals often desired to contribute meaningfully back to the organisation. These kinds of feelings potentially enhance their motivation. However, the importance of self-recognition is not limited to these groups; it also matters significantly to other employee groups. It is evident in Subtheme 2, where Participants P40, P38, and P36 shared stories that ultimately led to their decision to leave the organisation because they had low self-recognition of significance toward the affiliated organisations. These narratives further highlight the pivotal role of self-recognition in influencing employee motivation and retention in social enterprises.

Lastly, **self-recognition, which contributes significantly towards impact-making**, also emerged as a vital factor. When employees recognise and acknowledge their own importance and contribution to achieving the organisation's social impact goals, it reinforces their sense of worth and achievement. This self-awareness and acknowledgement of their contribution play a pivotal role in sustaining and enhancing their motivation levels, driving them to engage more deeply and effectively with their tasks and responsibilities.

Thus, enhancing employee motivation is not dependent solely on conventional career advancement, such as promotions or higher positions. Rather, it depends on cultivating an appreciation for self-knowledge and skill enhancement. Undoubtedly, the commitment to social missions and cherished social values is a driving force that keeps individuals engaged within social enterprises. While the prospect of meaningful work and financial gain is undeniably attractive, the continuous development of skills and knowledge remains a vital aspect of their motivation and commitment.

Theme 3: The interactive and contagious motivation of people who work for social enterprises (motivation momentum)

When delving into the driving factors for individuals in social enterprises, it's evident that a significant portion of their motivation stems from personal altruism. However, beyond this inherent drive, other motivational and demotivational elements have been highlighted in previous themes. Notably, this theme reveals that within the context of social enterprises, employee motivation can be profoundly influenced by the dynamic interactions both within the team and with the broader community. The data underscores that individuals often derive and rejuvenate their passion for social work from interactions with those around them.

Building on this theme, distinct patterns were developed to demonstrate how interactions with peers and the surrounding work environment significantly influence an employee's motivation within social enterprises. The data unveils a captivating aspect: motivation's contagious quality. Similar to the ripple effect seen in water, zeal and enthusiasm have the ability to cascade from one person to another. This transmission of motivation manifests in different ways – through colleague interactions, drawing inspiration from the vision of founders, or being influenced by external parties like beneficiaries. This reciprocal transfer of motivation and inspiration, rooted in collaborative endeavours and shared journeys, acts as a potent catalyst, amplifying the innate drive in individuals. Consider the following personal accounts from participants:

“When I set out to start this company, my initial discovery was our ability to produce organic milk. As time progressed, I came to realise the potential for other agricultural products to adopt this approach. This led me to reach out to local farmers, sharing my insights and extending support. I firmly believed that my sole knowledge wasn't enough for our community to flourish; this understanding had to be collective... Seeing their challenges made me want to help them even more [P23].”

The above narrative highlights the participant's personal altruism and willingness to help others. Consider the following excerpt.

"I really understand their problems because I have been in their shoes before. These personal experiences have given me a stronger sense of purpose, which drives me to help them deal with their problems. My motivation comes from seeing their growth and victories, no matter how small. It makes me happy to think about how I can make their lives better [P32]."

It is evident that motivation can be re-energised by accomplishments in helping others, especially those in situations similar to ones the individual has experienced. Furthermore, consider the subsequent excerpt.

"Watching the villagers work hard to make their lives better and earn money really moves me. I want to help them even more. When we help them succeed, it's not just for one family but for the whole community. When our community does well, our whole area benefits. So, by helping them, we're making a better future for everyone here. So, if I can help them successfully, I want to help others more [P4]."

To better visualise this motivational ripple effect, picture it as a pattern of interaction. Referring to the diagram below, let's label the two main entities in this exchange as 'A' and 'B'. 'A' represents individuals who are profoundly impacted by societal challenges and feel a strong compulsion to address them. This drive is especially evident in those who align themselves with mission-driven organisations. These individuals not only empathise with the problems at hand but also actively seek out solutions and avenues to make a positive impact. Their dedication stems from a deep-rooted desire to effect change and better the conditions of those affected by these challenges. Meanwhile, 'B' symbolises individuals who are directly grappling with specific societal challenges. These are the people on the front lines of these issues, experiencing the struggles firsthand. They are often the targets of the societal

solutions that ‘A’ aims to provide. For instance, in P23’s narrative, the participant is ‘A’, and the farmer is ‘B’. In P32’s story, the participant stands as ‘A’, and the beneficiaries as ‘B’. And in P4’s account, the participant is ‘A’, with the villagers being ‘B’.

Building on the framework presented, ‘B’ inherently possesses the motivation to overcome its challenges. However, the data reveals a significant nuance: when ‘B’ perceives or directly receives assistance from ‘A’, they not only recognise ‘A’s’ commitment and intention but also experience a heightened drive towards success. Essentially, witnessing or understanding the dedication and motivation of ‘A’ acts as a catalyst, further energising ‘B’ to be more proactive and determined. Additional insights from participants support this observation, as presented below:

“They gave me this chance, and I’m ready to take it and do my best to succeed. You know, sometimes, when we work really hard, things don’t turn out as we hoped... and it can be discouraging. But when people who aren’t even our family or relatives see us struggling and offer help, it makes me want to try even harder. I don’t want to waste what they have given me, whether it’s an opportunity or their support [P46].”

Additionally, consider the story from Participant P43, where the participants represent ‘A’ and the farmer they help represent ‘B.’

“I heard from nearby villagers that they were tricked and lost everything they invested in their farm. At the same time, one of their family members got sick. When I first approached them about my project, which could help them, they seemed very sad and tired. But I kept visiting them and started to help. I shared my knowledge and taught them how to bounce back from their problems. I told them they could sell products to us instead of middlemen if they followed what I taught. This gave them hope, and I could see the change in their eyes and actions. They once asked me why I was helping them. I explained that it’s not just about help; we’re supporting each other in a fair way. Now, we’re working together, and they’re doing much better. A little support can make a big difference to someone who’s feeling

down. We can't overlook that. I even feel more motivated to help them when I see they gradually become better [P43]."

Based on the narrative, 'B' is an individual who possesses a strong desire to enhance their quality of life yet encounters many challenges that impede their progress. Upon seeing someone like 'A' who exhibits a willingness and eagerness to provide assistance, the individual's sense of optimism and motivation is further intensified. Observing someone sincerely expressing support might serve as a catalyst for augmenting one's motivation to persist in their endeavours. Conversely, 'A' also experiences an increase in motivation. When 'A' observes 'B' diligently engaging in tasks, seeking assistance, and demonstrating advancement, it motivates 'A' to continue providing support. The phenomenon can be described as a cyclical pattern of motivation. With each successive advancement facilitated by 'A', 'B' experiences a heightened sense of commitment as both parties observe the favourable transformations. Particularly when 'B' has not yet fully achieved the goal, 'A' experiences a heightened motivation to assist them in achieving their goals. Consider the narrative below. The participant represents 'A', and the villagers represent 'B.'

"While undertaking a specific project, I went to a village with farming problems. I saw they had water and greenhouse issues. Fixing it could cost a lot, and I wasn't sure if they had the money. I wanted to find a cheaper solution for them, so I returned to my company to look for answers... I wondered if they would trust my advice because I'm younger and they have been farming for a long time. Sometimes, people don't trust you even if you want to help. But, on my next visit, I was shocked. They had done everything I suggested, even if it meant owing money. Knowing they believed in me that much, I told myself I would never let them down. I will stick with them and help until things are better. No matter how tough it gets, I'm with them until the end [P4]."

Additionally, consider the narrative below from another participant.

“I was deeply grateful when they told me how much they appreciated my help with their products and my participation in their neighbourhood project. They think I have already made a big change, but I think we can do so much more. They really do deserve better results and a more stable way to make a living. I’m going to work on finding more places to sell their goods so that they can reach a wider audience. Besides that, I’m constantly working to improve the quality and appeal of these products. Most importantly, I want to make sure they have a steady income. If this project doesn’t succeed, I will not give up. I will stick with it...even more [P6].”

When ‘B’ successfully attains their objective, partly due to the support provided by ‘A’, both individuals have a collective feeling of accomplishment. This achievement serves as an additional source of motivation for both parties involved. For example, ‘A’ experiences a heightened sense of vitality due to the influence they have exerted and actively seeks out other opportunities to assist others, attaching significance to the meaningfulness of their endeavours. In the present circumstances, ‘B’ experiences a heightened sense of gratitude as they find themselves in a more favourable state of existence. The data indicates that individuals in position ‘B’ often feel compelled to assist others who find themselves in circumstances similar to those that they have previously encountered. For example, consider the following excerpt.

“After our social enterprise helps them, they often feel grateful. In return, when they see others in trouble, they want to help as well... I understand it because I experienced those feelings too. Working here, I got help and support from our founder. Now, whenever I see someone in need, I want to help them too. I think, ‘I was lucky to get help from our founder. Why not help others so they can also improve, just like I did’ [P13].”

This mutual reinforcement generates a powerful synergy that drives significant progress within the social enterprise sector. The diagram below (Figure 4.2) illustrates the dynamic interplay of motivation between two key actors: ‘A’ and ‘B’. In this model, ‘A’ encompasses any individual actively engaged in addressing social

issues—ranging from the founders of social enterprises to employees, social entrepreneurs overseeing projects, or anyone with a deep commitment to societal challenges or driven by altruism. Conversely, ‘B’ represents the beneficiaries, such as underprivileged individuals, vulnerable groups, villagers, or even non-beneficiary employees within the social enterprise. Notably, in the participants’ stories, such as where ‘A’ is the founder, and ‘B’ is a typical employee. In this context, ‘B’s’ motivation stems from the positive treatment and meaningful interactions with ‘A’. Such exchanges can significantly boost ‘B’s’ engagement and enthusiasm as they reap the benefits of the supportive and empowering atmosphere created by ‘A’.

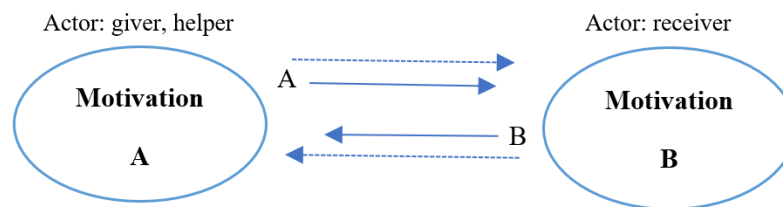


Figure 4.2 The Interactive and Contagious Motivation of ‘A’ and ‘B’

Based on the available evidence, it is apparent that in addition to the motivational interaction between Actors ‘A’ and ‘B,’ there exists a third entity referred to as Actor ‘C’. The entity denoted as ‘C’ does not actively participate in the interactions between entities ‘A’ and ‘B’ but rather draws motivation from the sheer observation of their dynamics. The inspiration for ‘C’ stems from the profound dedication and enthusiasm that ‘A’ invests in a given project or social matter, as well as the proactive responses exhibited by ‘B’ and the intricate dynamics that unfold between them. This implies that the impact of motivation spreads beyond the main individuals involved, affecting even those who are on the outskirts. The following excerpts provide insights into how ‘C’ becomes motivated and rejuvenates their enthusiasm for their work.

“I have always been amazed at how dedicated our founder is to our social projects. Sometimes, all of my work seems too difficult, and I wonder if I can keep going. Still, looking at them and seeing how determined and passionate they are in the face of hardship makes me feel something deep inside. It’s like their drive sends a word of hope without speaking. Watching them deal with problems head-on and never give up gives me new energy and a sense of purpose. Their strength makes me more determined and makes me think, ‘If they can do it, so can I.’ ‘Let’s try it again’ [P6].”

Additionally, consider the below excerpt from another participant.

“Seeing them (founder) work so hard to help our workers and other farmers made me think about what else I can do. They go above and beyond for everyone, including me. At first, I didn’t understand how they could do so much without whining, especially since it wasn’t even their responsibility. I used to think that just focusing on our business was enough... no need to help others. But seeing how hard they worked, how willing they were to share their information for free, and how much they really wanted to help changed my mind. After seeing what they did, I learned that you don’t have to be rich to make a change. I now know that everyone can help in their own way... Remembering their hard work often inspires me to do my own [P17].”

Drawing from the excerpts, it appears that this specific type of motivation, derived from observing and admiring someone, often emerges between employees and their leaders, especially when employees hold their leaders in high regard. However, this form of motivation is not exclusive to leader-employee dynamics. It can also manifest among colleagues when they recognise and appreciate the dedication and enthusiasm their peers bring to their work. Consider the excerpt below.

“Hearing about the projects my friends are working on and the social issues they have discovered really inspires me. When I see their passion and enjoyment in their work, it helps me overcome challenges in my own tasks. Even though they face difficulties, watching them persevere motivates me to push through my own obstacles. Sharing opinions and discussing our projects often leads us to find solutions together, even though we’re working on different things [P5].”

This finding led to the inclusion of an interaction in the diagram, where motivation is seen as being enhanced by observing others passionately engaged in social work. The diagram represents this concept as ‘C’, illustrating its role in boosting motivation. The addition acknowledges witnessing dedicated social work’s significant impact on an individual’s motivation. The diagram below (Figure 4.3) shows a more comprehensive representation of the interactions between the parties of ‘A’, ‘B’, and ‘C’.

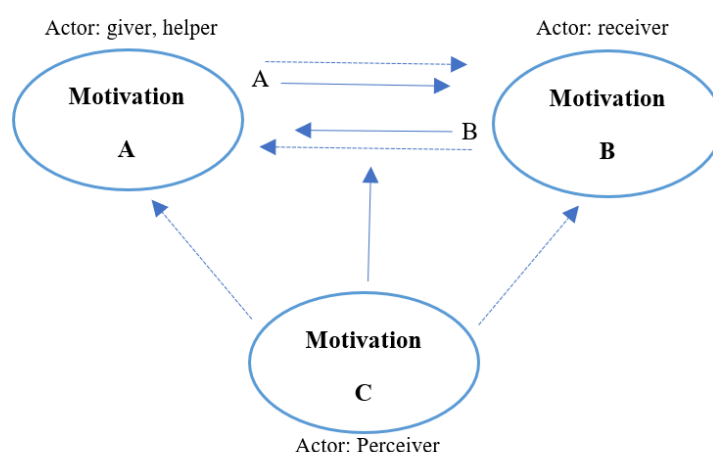


Figure 4.3 The Interactive and Contagious Motivation of ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’

In considering this ripple effect of motivation, it’s essential to note that shared or similar values between parties play a pivotal role. The motivation stemming from interactions might not be as potent if there isn’t a mutual appreciation of values, especially regarding Actor ‘C’. For instance, if Participants P6, P17, and P5 had not admired or seen value in the actions of their founders or colleagues, the motivational surge may not have materialised. In simpler terms, if they didn’t deem the efforts to make a social impact as valuable, their motivation might not have been bolstered. Thus, the shared values that underpin these motivational interactions are crucial. Exploring how these individuals came to adopt or resonate with these values is another fascinating avenue worth delving into.

Theme 4: Evolution of employee motivation in social enterprises

This theme developed from data highlighting the motivational differences between individuals who are new to social enterprises and those who have been there for an extended period. The data suggests a journey through which an employee's motivation evolves, eventually fostering a deeper commitment to the enterprise. This evolution can be broadly categorised into two phases, namely, the “Visible Impact Motivation” phase, which marks the beginning, and the subsequent “Inwardly Driven Motivation” phase.

In the initial “**Visible Impact Motivation**” phase, employees are primarily driven by the tangible outcomes of their actions in relation to their anticipated social impact. They draw motivation from seeing the direct results of their work and measuring how their efforts align with their expectations of creating positive change. Observing these concrete changes acts as a motivational boost for them.

“We have seen young adults from our programme return to share how it helped them. Their stories show us the positive difference we made. It feels good to know we have helped them grow in a direction they're passionate about. Their progress motivates us to keep going and reminds us of the value of our work [P32].”

“When we see the positive results of our work, it motivates us to do even better. These successes make me want to keep working with this organisation. It's not just a job for me; it's a passion that grows with each achievement. I can see and truly feel this through all the disabled people who work with us. I really mean it since I am one of them [P45].”

Additionally, consider the excerpt below.

“When we visit the elderly, especially those less fortunate, we see they often lack access to health care. Their joy when we come shows just how much they need help. We are there for them even if they can’t afford a hospital. Their grateful eyes tell us everything. It’s clear that they rely on us, and that pushes us to keep doing more for them [P48].”

From the data, it is evident that the visible benefits and improvements seen within the community play a significant role in bolstering employee motivation at this stage. Experiencing the positive aftermath of their actions firsthand bestows upon them a profound sense of purpose and satisfaction. However, during this phase, the validation of one’s efforts is strongly linked to tangible outcomes. The more directly these employees can identify the fruits of their labour, the higher their motivation soars. Conversely, when the benefits of their actions take longer to become evident or seem less pronounced, their enthusiasm may falter. This dynamic is notably reflected in the experiences of Participants P32 and P8 from Theme 2, Subtheme 2. After ascending to higher positions, they grappled with feelings of doubt and uncertainty regarding the real impact of their work, attributed largely to their decreased direct interactions with the beneficiaries. Participant P2 articulates a similar sentiment:

“I was unsure about my work when I had fewer chances to connect with the villagers in our projects. This change made me question if what I was doing was still helping them since I couldn’t see or hear their real-life experiences. Working away from the field can make you lose touch with reality... I often wonder, am I really helping the villagers or just serving companies doing their CSR? [P2].”

Based on the data, recognising another form of motivation leads to conceptualisation in the subsequent phase, termed “**Inwardly Driven Motivation**”. It illustrates the maturation of employees’ motivation. Here, even if the outcomes of their work are not always immediately visible, their dedication remains unshaken. This deep-rooted commitment is especially evident in the accounts of employees who have been a part

of social enterprises for at least five years. Data suggests that employees with such tenure are particularly adept at recognising the evolution of their motivation. The narratives not only highlight their unwavering commitment but also provide insight into the development and intensity of their drive, emphasising their resolute choice to stay committed to the organisation. Reflect upon the following narrative from Participant P2, who experienced a transformation in motivation after a promotion:

“Things look different to me now. I don’t interact with the villagers as much, so I miss their direct feedback. However, my role has shifted. I’m now more involved in negotiations and project planning with partners who are keen on our social missions. My aim is to maximise benefits for our beneficiaries. I also educate these partners about genuine social impact projects and stress the importance of sustainability. I encourage them to genuinely listen to the beneficiaries and prioritise real impact over the image they gain from their CSR efforts. This new focus has become my passion, even though I might not witness the direct benefits to the beneficiaries as frequently [P2].”

A distinct difference emerges when comparing Participant P10’s account (mentioned in Theme 2, Subtheme 1) of feeling disheartened by their project partners’ indifference to the social impact of their CSR project to Participant P2’s experience. While P10 felt demotivated due to the lack of genuine interest in the project’s social benefits from the partner company, P2 managed to overcome these challenges. P2 shifted their focus to educating partners about their work’s true value and potential impact. This proactive approach not only helped P2 maintain their motivation but also aimed to instil a deeper understanding of social impact in their partners, demonstrating a more resilient and committed approach to their work.

Moreover, reflect upon the following account from Participant P48 as they describe the transformation of their motivation:

“When I began, I was driven by the success I brought to our organisation. At that time, I wasn’t really thinking about the bigger impact. But as I spent time with the elderly and saw their gratitude, I realised our work truly mattered. They felt hope because of what we did. Some felt their conditions improved because of us. I would not claim complete credit, but such

responses definitely fuel my drive. Later, mentoring young caregivers became another inspiration. Watching them skill up and mature brought immense satisfaction. The fulfilment from mentoring differs from the one I feel with the elderly. With the youth, it's more about the potential future impact. I might not see it now, but I sense the waves they will make. Looking ahead, when my working days end, it's comforting to know successors will be there, understanding and valuing our mission. This realisation has been a significant part of my ongoing commitment here [P48].”

Additionally, moving on to another insightful account, the participant shared that.

“In the past, I loved planning and creating community architecture with my team. I believe our achievements meant even more to us because we were close to the villagers. This closeness made it easy to give and get comments. Our relationship was built on trusting each other. I stayed motivated by good results and responses. However, in some projects, problems came up over time. For example, after 7 or 8 years, projects that looked perfect had flaws. It was very important for confidence to deal with these challenges and learn from them. We were all in agreement on our decisions back then: partners, locals, and our crew. I believe it's a common issue when working in the third sector. We're on a communal learning journey, supporting one another to improve our communities. Persistence and emotional balance are critical... Another source of motivation is those new people joining our team and company. They remind me of how I felt when I started. The best part is teaching them, sharing our stories, and seeing them do even better than us. Helping and supporting them is like making a long-lasting mark. We're not only assisting today but also moulding tomorrow [P11].”

As per Participants P11 and P48, it's evident that the motivations of those in social enterprises evolve over time. Initially, visible impacts and direct interactions with beneficiaries fuelled their drive. However, as roles change and perspectives broaden with time, motivations adapt. It's not just about immediate action for beneficiary welfare but also nurturing future changemakers. This intriguing transformation underscores the importance of leadership and the ability to continually find purpose and value in one's work.

4.4 Group 3: The evolution of “motivation tie” and “organisational relationship tie.”

4.4.1 Introduction

This thematic group explores the evolution of human and social capital within social enterprises, symbolised by “motivation tie” and “organisational relationship tie” respectively. These capitals are pivotal for nurturing employee attachment in social enterprises. A thorough analysis has revealed five key themes, shedding light on the complex interplay between “motivation tie” and “organisational relationship tie.” These themes provide a deeper understanding of how these ties contribute to employee engagement and commitment, highlighting their vital role in shaping a supportive and collaborative work environment. This exploration offers valuable insights into the mechanisms that drive employee loyalty and dedication in the unique setting of social enterprises. Following are the five key themes identified:

Theme 1: Potential elements that can develop and become the “motivation tie.”

Theme 2: Development of positive relationships into the “organisational relationship tie.”

Theme 3: Thai social norms drive the development of employee attachment.

Theme 4: Meaningful work and meaning in life; enhancing employee attachment.

Theme 5: Life conditions are a key factor in maintaining employee attachment.

4.4.2 Findings

Theme 1: Potential elements that can develop and become the “motivation tie.”

According to the research context, the “motivation tie” pertains to all aspects of motivation that contribute to employee attachment, characterised by the employees’ genuine desire to stay and contribute to the organisation. Under this theme, potential elements such as employees’ impressions and trust toward founders/leaders, gratitude, passion, hope, and the dignity seen in work have been identified in the data as factors that can develop into a “motivation tie.” The data shows that **employees’ impression and trust toward their founders/leaders** can evolve into employee attachment. Consider the following excerpts:

“The founder gave me opportunities to learn how to be an active learner. Because of this, I have more experience than my friends, who have never worked with them (founders/leaders) or been a part of this social enterprise. I admire how committed they are to learning new things and starting projects that will help people and communities. They (the founder) never discourage my initiatives, even when things don’t go as planned; they don’t point fingers but suggest that we can find new methods to succeed. Since I began working with them, I have been learning new things all the time... Now, I never think of leaving here...because I know that my knowledge has expanded by working here, and I feel empowered to contribute even more to my work and to society. You know, working with intelligent and good people like them makes me an even better person [P17].”

“Everyone, not just me, is treated with kindness and generosity by the founder. There are times when things happen, and they offer help although it is out of their responsibility. For example, if an employee’s parents or other family members get sick or need help, they show worry and offer to help. From what I have seen in the past, I don’t think many other businesses would do the same. I’m happy to work with them and have never thought about moving [P13].”

“I appreciate their worldview and kindness. They don’t mind us using company resources to improve our skills, even without benefiting them. They overlook potential training losses, which enhances my personal skills. I once questioned the possible wastage from our free practice, like learning coffee-making. But their response was touching. They said supporting us is good for the community and doesn’t really cost the organisation. This attitude makes me proud and content to work here. [P15].”

According to the collected data, the admiration employees feel towards their owners or leaders can evolve into a strong motivational bond. Delving deeper into the data reveals that gratitude is a profound emotion rather than a surface-level one. It usually appears after people have experienced compassion and a reciprocal sense of understanding and gratitude has been developed between the parties concerned. For instance, when individuals are treated with kindness and respect, as illustrated in the excerpts, they often develop a deep-seated appreciation for the benefactor. Such positive experiences cultivate feelings of gratitude, which can subsequently foster a sense of attachment to the organisation or leader. The intricacies of how this sentiment develops and how gratitude can be a foundation for employee loyalty and attachment will be explored in more detail in the subsequent themes.

When examining the elements that contribute to employee attachment, it becomes apparent that both a strong sense of passion for one’s profession and a genuine concern for certain societal concerns typically serve as catalysts for fostering the “motivation tie.” This connection often stems from an individual’s intrinsic drive and willpower. However, considering the following excerpts:

“I have turned down other job offers more than once. (Working here), the journey can be tiring, especially when success seems elusive. But reflecting on my projects, I was driven by my commitment to the beneficiaries. This sense of responsibility helped me push past disappointments. Even when I considered leaving, I stayed. It is driven by the desire to see the projects succeed. My resolve may not be eternal, but it’s strong enough to keep me focused on witnessing the fruits of my efforts [P8].”

“I was chosen by the government to start and work for this social enterprise. In the programme, we had to join the camp with other candidates. The camp taught us many things to help us lead a social enterprise in our hometown. I started my job with much passion for work. Over time, I became the leader of the enterprise and began to look into problems in my community. I talked to the villagers to find out what they needed and how I could help. When we started our projects, I saw that things weren’t always easy. Sometimes, even if we tried our best, things didn’t work out. There were times I felt my passion couldn’t help. Imagine failing many times. But when I thought of the villagers who believed in our plans, I felt I couldn’t give up. They were waiting for my help, and I didn’t want to disappoint them just because I felt sad about some failures [P4].”

“I understand that my work might not succeed immediately, but I still hope and believe it will... one day... It might take time. There was a point when our project and company were struggling because people didn’t see the importance of caring for the environment. But... now, I notice more businesses and government groups are focusing on environmental projects. Sometimes I feel down, but when I remember how important this issue is and see the growing interest, it motivates me to keep going [P44].”

From the provided excerpt, it is evident that a commitment derived from a passion for their work and a desire to help beneficiaries can be a motivating factor. However, this commitment might not always result in long-term employee loyalty. A deeper analysis of the excerpts suggests that it is not just about passion for the job or the social issues they tackle. The data suggests that elements like **hope and anticipation of future success are pivotal in amplifying this motivation**, especially in the context of social enterprises. Passion can diminish when met with challenges, which potentially hinders the development of a strong motivation tie. For instance, Participant P8 remained optimistic about the success of projects, even if they hadn’t succeeded yet, which influenced their decision to stay and decline other job offers. Similarly, Participant P4 was re-motivated by recognising that people were depending on them for their help. For Participant P44, recognising a growing awareness and potential engagement in environmental initiatives was a boost, even if the desired outcomes had not been realised yet. These examples highlight that it is not just passion but also hope and perceived potential success that contributes to

sustaining motivation. In fact, this seems to be their willpower, which is driven from their insides.

When exploring the role of passion in work, particularly in addressing social issues, it's essential to understand the impact of hope and the perception of potential success. These elements are key in nurturing and sustaining an employee's motivation, which in turn can strengthen their "motivation tie". Leaders in social enterprises can play a crucial role by presenting a vision of future success to their teams. The data suggests that individuals in these organisations often have a profound passion for their work, with their motivation deeply intertwined with their hopes and expectations of achieving success.

Moreover, based on the data, a primary factor that can develop into the "motivation tie" is related to **dignity**. The perception that one's current job upholds one's dignity can greatly enhance one's motivation to remain committed. In other words, viewing work as a means to uphold dignity leads to the formation of a strong motivation tie. Consider the following excerpts.

"I work and earn a wage equivalent to people without disabilities. People (here) appreciate me for my abilities, not because they are sorry for my impairment. They recognise my contributions, and I'm glad to work here not only for my personal development but also to aid those with impairments. I don't see any reason to quit right now. I'm happy where I am and want to stay for as long as possible. However, the future is unpredictable, so what I can say is I don't expect to leave...not in the next five years [P45]."

"You know, when disabled people join us, they want to do their best. I visited some of our disabled employees, like one in Prachinburi province. I was so impressed by them. They told me that in their old jobs, they were paid without working. For example, the law, section 35, says they should get 9520 THB. But their old company would take 4000 THB and let them stay home. They used to be happy getting 4000 THB without working. But now,

with us, they work and get full pay and feel good about themselves. They said it's about their dignity as disabled people. They told me that there's a difference between being happy and being proud. Now, they're proud to work here and happy to stay [P37].”

For employees with limited access to societal work opportunities, finding a good workplace symbolises dignity and kindness. In this context, work not only provides income and a better life but also restores a sense of self-worth. For many individuals in social enterprises, **the dignity** gained from working is a powerful motivator. This sense of self-respect is integral to developing the “motivation tie,” reinforcing the value and importance of their roles within these organisations.

Theme 2: The development of positive relationships into the “organisational relationship tie.”

According to the research context, the “organisational relationship tie” refers to all aspects of positive relationships that contribute to employee attachment, attaching one to the social enterprise. In other words, the organisational relationship tie refers to the emotional and psychological bond that develops between employees and their workplace. Under this theme, how the relationships can be developed into the organisational relationship tie will be depicted under two subthemes. The first delves into the evolution of relationships into the “organisational relationship tie,” while the second identifies the key elements that enforce the tie’s formation.

It’s important to note that in this theme, the data explores participants’ narratives from the interviews, focusing on their specific relationships with teammates, colleagues, or leaders that influenced their decision to stay with the organisation. Participants were prompted to identify up to five close relationships or bonds that deepened their attachment to the organisation and to share stories of how these relationships evolved.

Subtheme 1: The relationships develop to be a tie through the organisational atmosphere and the positive relationships among employees, teammates/colleagues, and founders.

Consider the following excerpts:

“I have been here for five years, and the work environment here isn’t as competitive as other places. In many for-profit companies, colleagues often compete against each other. That’s not the case here. I don’t think I would find another place where I would enjoy the work as much and get such a friendly atmosphere [P2].”

“People here are kind and always ready to help. I have had many jobs before, but this place is the nicest. In other places, no one is really willing to listen to or try to understand others’ problems, whether work-related or personal. I don’t think I will find another workplace as peaceful as this one [P12].”

The provided excerpts show that the organisation’s inclusive atmosphere and cooperative ethos cultivate a profound sense of connection and attachment to the workplace and its people. Furthermore, taking into account the subsequent excerpts:

“My boss treats me well, and it’s not just me; they are kind to everyone. I’ve learned to be a better person from them. They love seeing harmony in the organisation. We, as employees, support and care for each other, not just in work but in life, too. Many of us have been here for over fifteen years. I don’t have any reason to leave, and I believe my colleagues feel the same way [P13].”

“The founder knew I had issues with colleagues after my role was changed, but they stepped in to help. You know, sometimes there can be misunderstandings among people who work together. If they hadn’t helped us understand each other instead of letting us sort it out alone, I don’t think I could have worked here peacefully. I’ve grown to love this place. Initially, before I joined the company, I planned to work here for just a few years and then leave. However, I changed my mind. I don’t see any reason to leave now... Good friends surround me, have a supportive boss, enjoy my work, and receive a good salary (smile) [P14].”

“I don’t plan to leave. I have a really good boss, and I like my friends here. Um...I think one thing that may make me decide to leave is... for further studies. But if that happens, I would want to come back after graduating. I believe my new knowledge would help this organisation and my boss even more [P3].”

Based on data, the decision of employees to stay with an organisation can be shaped by **their perception of leadership responsiveness and understanding**. Indeed, fostering positive relationships is pivotal to organisational cohesion. This sentiment is echoed when employees like P13 notice their leaders are attuned to both their professional and personal challenges. Similarly, P14’s decision to extend their tenure or P3’s inclination to return to post-academic pursuits underscores the importance of cultivating robust leader-employee relationships and camaraderie among peers. Such connections are instrumental in strengthening the fabric of organisational relationship ties. Further evidence can be gleaned from the following excerpts:

“I like working with everyone here. We help and support each other. Our work depends on each other. Even when tasks or projects are tough, tackling them together is more fun. I have never thought about leaving... I don’t know, but I don’t think that I can find this kind of environment in this organisation elsewhere. For now, I’m sure that I would not leave in the next four or five years [P40].”

“I really enjoy working with my friends here. I can’t imagine leaving. Even when we face challenges, I have great teammates to rely on. If I ever had to leave, I would miss being a part of this successful team. That’s my dream; I don’t want to miss it [P33].”

The data shows that the **relationships among teammates** can also become the organisational relationship tie. Building on that, the ensuing excerpts also highlight:

“Once, I had a family issue, and my colleagues noticed. They saw that I wasn’t in a good mental state and understood that I was struggling with my work. My team provided great support. Having friends to talk to about life or work challenges is like having a safe place for my mind [P7].”

“I believe it’s because everyone here works with their heart, and the best part is that we encourage each other. When someone faces a problem or feels down, we support them. We often talk and share our experiences and feelings. Another positive aspect is our team culture; we’ve established it as a safe space for conversation. When working with values, having this kind of supportive environment is essential. It’s as if we’re each other’s oasis [P8].”

“You know, when we’re disappointed with our work, whether the project fails or we don’t achieve the social impact we aimed for, having good friends and colleagues around us helps lift our spirits. I would say that my positive relationships with my friends and colleagues are one of the reasons I’ve decided to stay with the organisation [P11].

Additionally, consider the following excerpts:

“Friends in the team and my work are the things that make me happy to work here. I don’t like the system of this organisation...and the way my boss works, but frankly, I don’t want to leave because of my colleagues. I think I cannot find any place that can provide me with good teammates like here ever. I don’t know...there may have..., but a good team takes time to develop. I believe I cannot find the team I have now elsewhere. There is no guarantee of having a good teammate if I move to an organisation that is willing to pay me more. I don’t know if I can have this kind of colleagues in other organisations [P1].”

The excerpts show that strong relationships among colleagues can foster the “organisational relationship tie,” even if employees aren’t satisfied with the organisational system or lack a strong bond with leaders. Based on data from P40, P33, and P1, relationships among teammates directly relate to employees’

motivation. Meanwhile, literature suggests that relationships and motivation both act as ties binding people to an organisation. Intriguingly, while relationships and motivation are perceived from different perspectives in the research framework, it's clear that strong interpersonal relationships can, at times, transition into a motivating factor for employees. Nevertheless, the data indicates that positive relationships among teammates can serve as a driving motivation for employees to remain with the organisation.

Conversely, consider the following excerpt:

“Working here, the environment is more like a big family rather than just colleagues. We assist each other instead of working against each other. When there is competition, it's against challenges from outside the organisation. We are encouraged to seek advice or suggestions freely across different departments, and I could easily reach out to the design, landscape, or community studio departments. Even though we have people of different ages, there's no strict hierarchy here. Everyone was always ready to assist or find someone who could offer guidance. I love working in this kind of environment... After moving to other organisations, what I miss the most are the moments I experienced there. During my tenure there, many times... I decided not to leave because of the feelings and environments associated with the organisation [P10].”

The excerpts reveal that positive relationships with teammates and a supportive organisational atmosphere can contribute to forming the “organisational relationship tie.” However, these ties don't always guarantee long-term attachment to the organisation. For instance, Participant P10, despite having a strong “organisational relationship tie”, eventually left. This suggests that while such ties are significant, they are not always sufficient to retain employees. The next section, Subtheme 2, will delve deeper into this topic, providing more evidence and details on how these ties are formed and their sustainability.

Subtheme 2: The elements and conditions in the development of the “organisational relationship tie”

This Subtheme seeks to pinpoint the conditions and elements that give rise to organisational relationship ties and delves into the factors that bolster their creation. The data suggests that **shared beliefs or values among individuals often lead to more profound and enduring relationships.**

“Before, we weren’t close like we are now. But when we started working together, we had more chances to talk. We began to discuss work and life more openly. I realised they like and value the same things I do. We all love nature and camping and admire culture. We often plan short trips to places we’re interested in. I believe we became close because we like the same things [P1].”

“We have similar interests, so we have much to share and exchange. We began discussing work before delving into other topics. I believe that’s how I became close to them. I also think we have similar past experiences in both work and life. When we’ve had similar experiences, we tend to see things in the same way and share common values [P32].”

The data show that shared interests and parallel experiences often lead to the development of common values. When individuals find similarities in their passions and past experiences, this naturally cultivates a mutual understanding and value system.

Furthermore, the **shared experiences of joy and hardship** during their collaborative effort strengthen the relationships between individuals. Once these personal ties are established within a workspace, they naturally translate into a deeper connection to the workplace itself. An additional excerpt from Participant P1 in Subtheme 1, which highlights the participant’s reluctance to leave the organisation due to strong relationships with teammates, emphasises the importance of enduring both positive and challenging situations together in fostering attachment and loyalty.

“We’ve been through a lot together, both good times and tough ones, which has made us understand each other better. It’s like we’re on the same journey. We’ve faced challenges and have often seen things in a similar way, even if it’s different from the company’s perspective. We listen to each other, especially when we feel the company might not fully understand our concerns. Over time, we’ve grown to be more than just colleagues. We’re close friends. It feels like I’m working alongside friends rather than just co-workers [P1].”

Certainly, a supportive work environment plays a pivotal role in nurturing sentimental connections, which in turn can foster strong psychological bonds among individuals, anchoring them to their workplace. Based on the data, it becomes evident that the strength of these **relationship ties is not solely dependent on the duration of time individuals have known each other or their tenure within the organisation**. While time can play a role, it’s the shared experiences or events – the moments that colleagues go through together – that hold more weight. For instance, teams that face and overcome challenges together often form stronger bonds than those who work alongside each other for years without meaningful shared experiences.

“We first met while working on a big project. I had spent years with my old team, but my bond with this new group was different and stronger. When we were up against a huge problem and had our backs against the wall, we helped each other out. We became closer because we were both in the same sinking boat and trying to escape. Since then, we’ve gotten closer. They went beyond being coworkers and became like family. I want to stay and work with this team and organisation forever. I know in my heart that with them by my side, we can face any problem and get over it successfully [P11].”

Additionally, consider the following excerpts:

“If it weren’t for our work bringing us together, I’m not sure I would’ve ever discovered that we share similar likes and interests. I’m an introverted person, so I struggle with initiating conversations. I can’t even imagine how I would have gotten to know them if it weren’t for that project. Actually, we crossed paths in the hallway at our company or nodded and smiled at each other as our customary greeting. We knew which departments we belonged to and the general areas of our work. But it was when we were assigned to work on that project together that I really got to know them, thanks to the demands of our job, and we became close friends [P10].”

Interestingly, when considering the data together with what Participant P10 mentioned in Subtheme 1 about the company’s friendly atmosphere, the data highlights an organisation’s pivotal role in facilitating the development of individuals’ interpersonal relationships. While it’s undeniable that individuals themselves initiate these relationships, as growth in relationships begins within oneself, the presence of a conducive environment and a collaborative culture is indispensable for fostering **trust and meaningful interactions among individuals**. Furthermore, taking into account the subsequent excerpts, it is evident that organisation plays a big role. Building on that, the ensuing excerpt also highlights:

“Indeed, the events and activities we organise here are a big help, especially for introverted people. They encourage everyone to get to know each other better and work together smoothly. Being introverted doesn’t mean not wanting to talk or meet others; it’s just that sometimes... they might not know how to start. I can tell from my experience that there are many of them in our organisation [P12].”

When examining these results alongside Subtheme 1, what’s particularly interesting is that positive relationships with teammates and a cooperative organisational atmosphere can indeed foster organisational relationship ties. However, comparing the relationships between employees and the relationships between employees and

leaders, the data suggests that positive interactions between employees and leaders tend to create stronger and more enduring connections. In other words, a positive relationship between an employee and a leader can make people feel more attached to the organisation than positive relationships among employees.

Consider the following excerpt:

“I eventually left the organisation. I had great friends there and honestly wanted to work with them. There were good projects too... at that organisation... the projects I felt like true social endeavours. However, I couldn’t tolerate the system any longer and decided to leave. Although I regret not working with my teammates, our friendships continue outside the organisation. Maybe one day, my friend and I will start our own social enterprise and work together again [P9].”

Under this theme, comparing this subtheme with Subtheme 1 highlights that positive relationships and a cooperative atmosphere are crucial in fostering the “organisational relationship tie.” Interestingly, the data suggests that bonds between employees and leaders are often stronger and more lasting than those among employees. Narratives from Participants P13, P14, P15, and P17 demonstrate strong ties and resultant employee attachment in leader-employee relationships, implying that employer-employee interactions could lead to deeper, more reciprocal connections. These insights set the stage for the next theme, which will explore the influence of social norms on employee attachment. However, it’s important to note that the “organisational relationship tie” is not always permanent and can diminish, as evidenced by various participants’ experiences, especially narratives shared by Participants P9 and P10. This theme also connects to Theme 4 under this thematic group, Group 3, indicating that long-term organisational commitment often correlates with employees finding personal and professional meaning, thereby adding these relationships’ complexity into an employee attachment.

Theme 3: Thai social norms drive the development of employee attachment.

In order to understand how Thai social norms influence the formation of the “organisational relationship tie” and the “motivation tie,” this theme combines patterns observed in the formation of these ties. Within this theme, two prominent Thai social norms were identified, namely *“Bun Khun”* and *“Kreng Jai.”* These norms shed light on how individuals within the organisation navigate their relationships and find motivation, offering valuable insights into the dynamics at play. The meanings of these two social norms are provided below:

“Kreng jai” or some other academic papers use terms such as “Krengchai” or “Krang jai,” which can simply refer to being considerate of others. It is primarily considered a social norm deeply rooted in Thai culture. It reflects the values and behaviours that are widely expected and practised within Thai society (Siengthai & Vadhanasindhu, 1991). It functions as a social norm that guides how individuals interact with one another, emphasising politeness, respect, and consideration for others’ feelings to maintain harmony and avoid causing discomfort or embarrassment (Atmiyanandana & Lawler, 2003).

“Bunkhun” refers to the cultural practice of reciprocity within social relationships. This phenomenon might be interpreted as a contributing element that sustains the structure of the social hierarchy. It is not solely a situation where subordinates are required to exhibit deference and obedience towards their superiors. Additionally, it is imperative that supervisors exhibit benevolence, leadership, and encouragement towards their employees. The exchange relationship is characterised by the provision of protection and support from superiors to subordinates, who reciprocate by engaging in desirable acts and behaviours as a gesture of gratitude, and the reciprocal exchange of favours occurs in both directions (Atmiyanandana & Lawler, 2003).

Subtheme 1: *Bunkhun* drives the development of the “organisational relationship tie.”

Bunkhun refers to indebted goodness as the psychological link between someone who helps another person out of kindness and sincerity and the person who receives the help, who remembers the good deed and is always ready to pay back or reciprocate the kindness (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995). The tie in this context emerges from this social norm when employees or beneficiaries working in a social enterprise feel indebted to the organisation and have a strong desire to work and contribute to repaying the founders of the organisation.

Based on the data, when employees receive good treatment, support, or help from the founders/leaders or even the organisation, which is perceived as a workplace that supports their lives, their feelings are driven by *Bunkhun* to stay and work in order to repay the goodness of the founders/leaders and the social enterprise. For instance, consider the below excerpt:

“I felt like I owed them a favour and wanted to give back to them. Whether it’s for them or for this organisation, I’m willing to do whatever it takes. I can honestly say that I’m fully committed here. You know, my boss helped me a lot with my personal issues. I was sick, and the doctors couldn’t diagnose what was wrong with me. My boss assisted me by researching doctors and covering the expenses for my medicine. It turned out later that I had SLE (Systemic Lupus Erythematosus). During the time when I was too sick and felt ashamed that I couldn’t work to my full potential, still relying on their support for my treatment, I considered leaving the company because I felt like I was becoming a financial burden to them. But they told me to stay with them until I got better. They said, ‘If you find a better opportunity, you can go, but while you’re sick, focus on your treatment and take care of yourself until you’re well enough to manage your life’... You know, they never kept track of the favours they did, not only to me but to all employees. After several years, my body began to manage the SLE. I feel that if I didn’t have such a supportive boss, I might not have made it, and I wouldn’t have been able to take care of my parents and family [P13].”

In fact, the concept of *Bunkhun* has two distinct aspects. The first is known as “*katanyoo rookhun*,” which encompasses the notions of “gratitude and indebtedness.” The second is referred to as “*mettaa karuna*,” representing the qualities of being merciful and kind (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995, p.31).

In the context of this subtheme, the aspect of “*katanyoo rookhun*” plays a significant role in influencing the actions taken by employees. Consequently, the dynamics of interaction among the involved parties can be illustrated in the diagram below (**Figure 4.4**). The feeling of gratitude and indebtedness forms the basis of the relationship between the parties. In this regard, employees then take action to reciprocate the support they have received by choosing to remain with and work for the providers, resulting in the emergence of the “organisational relationship tie.”

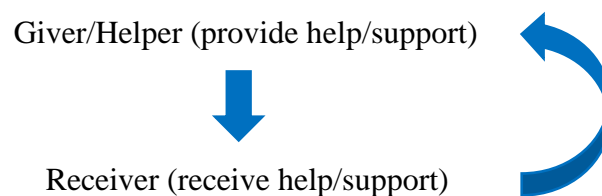


Figure 4.4 The Reciprocate Action Resulting from *Bunkhun*

Additionally, consider the following excerpts:

“They have given me many opportunities to learn and work. I have never worked with leaders who let me start projects like they do here. Even if a project doesn’t succeed, they never blame anyone; instead, they come and help us find solutions. I have learned a lot by working here. I feel like they are my parents because of the way they take care of us. I can sense their sincerity in everything they do for all employees, not just me. They never ask for anything in return for their kindness. Their goodwill is genuine, and you can feel it; it’s not fake. I don’t think about leaving here, even though my hometown is not here. I owe them as *Bunkhun*. They are very good to us, and I have become a smarter and better person because of their support. I don’t think I will ever leave here; I will work here as long as possible. Leaving here would feel like...how could I leave my parents to work alone, and I can’t do that [P17].”

From the provided excerpt, it is evident that the participant feels a deep sense of ***Bunkhun***, seeing their founders as akin to parents. In traditional Thai culture, the term ‘parents’ carries profound meaning, emphasising the idea that children owe their lives and have a responsibility to care for their parents as they age. This value aligns with the concept of ***Bunkhun***, particularly within the aspect of “*katanyoo rookhun*.”

Bunkhun relates to the societal expectations of altruistic behaviour. In the context of parent-child relationships, it manifests when parents give birth and raise their children, leading to a sense of ***Bunkhun*** from children towards their parents (Podhisita, 1985). Under this social norm, children are expected to care for their parents in old age. However, it is important to note that acts of kindness and consideration from parents or givers in this context should not be accompanied by an expectation of reciprocation, even though societal norms expect children to take care of them (Atmiyanandana & Lawler, 2003). In other words, parents should not expect that their children are obligated to care for them in return. Parents with such expectations are often viewed as acting immorally and are generally unacceptable in society. Similarly, children who neglect the care of their parents are considered irresponsible and are also generally not accepted in society.

Therefore, when the participant perceives their founders as akin to parents and chooses not to leave them to work alone within the organisation, it signifies that they believe staying and working with the founders is a way of expressing “*katanyoo rookhun*” and helping them through their work is another form of taking care of them.

Subtheme 2: *Bunkhun* drives the development of the “motivation tie.”

In the context of this subtheme, the concept of “*mettaa karuna*” plays a pivotal role in influencing employees’ actions. “**Mettaa karuna**” refers to the qualities of being merciful and kind, signifying the trait of kindness and forgiveness. This characteristic holds particular significance when individuals of varying statuses interact with each

other. Those who are stronger and more powerful are expected to demonstrate kindness toward those who are weaker and less powerful in accordance with this social norm (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995). Consequently, the motivation inspired by *“mettaa karuna”* manifests as a commitment to kindness and assisting others, especially those who may find themselves facing challenges akin to what they once experienced. Consider the following excerpts.

“I’ve actually had a similar experience to those patients, and I’ve been dealing with schizophrenia since 1996. I received good care and have improved a lot. Now, I can assist others who have psychosocial disabilities. It’s a way of repaying a debt. You see, I owe it to this organisation and to those who used to take care of me. Now that I’m better and can help those in need, it’s my turn to give back by helping others in the same situation I used to be in [P31].”

“You know, they gave me an opportunity. All the good things I received helped me become who I am today. Now, it’s my turn to provide opportunities for other students to discover and improve themselves. I just have a feeling that there might be students like the old me... waiting and looking for a chance to improve and develop themselves. I’m proud of who I am and want them to feel proud of themselves as better versions of who they are. The feeling of becoming a better person is amazing. It motivates me to keep improving. I want to inspire and help other students to reach the point where I am now. It’s a way to give back to those who gave me opportunities too, as what I aim to do, like helping others, will create a positive impact on what they pursue [P40].”

When individuals have witnessed personal improvements brought about by someone else’s assistance, and they recognise others facing similar difficulties, they feel compelled by this social norm to extend help to those in need. As a result of these dynamics, illustrated in the diagram below (**Figure 4.5**), employees are motivated to take action by opting to stay for work to aid others. This gives rise to the emergence of the “motivation tie.”

Giver/Helper (provide help/support)



Receiver (receive help/support)



Others who are in difficulties

Figure 4.5 The Expand Action Resulting from *Bunkhun*

Furthermore, to illustrate how “*katanyoo rookhun*” and “*mettaa karuna*” influence the formation of these distinct ties – organisational relationship ties and motivation ties, consider delving into the experiences of Participant P27. Their story offers a vivid example of how these concepts, integral to the *Bunkhun* social norm, play out in a real-world context.

“Back then, I decided to leave my job at the radio broadcast and return to help the organisation where I grew up. I’m an orphan, and they gave me opportunities to learn and grow. The foundation supported me through school, which helped me start my own life. Then, one day, they asked for assistance, so I decided to help. Actually, they only requested some help, but I chose to leave my job and join the foundation. After working there for a while, I realised that many underprivileged people, not just kids, struggle in life. I felt like I understood their struggles because I had been through them. I know that I can assist them, and I wanted to help not only the kids in the foundation but also other underprivileged individuals. So, I began to establish this social enterprise, develop the business model, and eventually, we started operating the social enterprise to support those facing difficulties in life [P27].”

From Participant P27’s story, if the participant were driven by “*katana rookhun*,” that means they would get back to work for the organisation as it is a way to pay back to the organisation. However, the decision to set up a social enterprise along the collaboration with the foundation for helping people who are in difficulty, it is the

way that the action was driven by the “*mettaa karuna*” since the participant wants to help other who are in need and want to support them get a better life as they have become.

Based on Participant P27’s story, it becomes clear that the participant’s intention to return to work for the foundation is primarily driven by “*katanyoo rookhun.*” This means that they see working for the foundation as a way to repay the kindness they have received. The “organisational relationship tie” has emerged here. However, the decision to establish a social enterprise in collaboration with the foundation to help people in need reflects the influence of “*mettaa karuna.*” In this case, the participant’s actions are motivated by their desire to assist others who are facing difficulties and support them in achieving a better life, just as they themselves have experienced. At this stage, the “motivation tie” emerged.

Subtheme 3: *Kreng jai* drives the development of the “organisational relationship tie.”

In simple terms, *Kreng jai* can be described as an attitude in which an individual consciously suppresses their own desires or interests in situations where there is the potential for discomfort or conflict. This is done to maintain a pleasant and cooperative relationship (Nimanandh & Andrews, 2009). Nimanandh and Andrews (2009) have outlined various manifestations of *Kreng jai*, including compliance with others’ requests even in challenging circumstances, a reluctance to inconvenience or disrupt others, refraining from displaying displeasure or anger to avoid causing discomfort, avoiding the assertion of one’s own opinions or needs, and hesitancy in giving instructions or orders to superiors or more experienced peers.

In the context of this research, the aspect of *Kreng jai* that appears particularly relevant to tie development is related to the reluctance to disturb or interrupt others. Essentially, ties within this subtheme emerge when employees receive favourable treatment, such as forgiveness from founders/leaders or receiving good treatment and strong support from colleagues or subordinates. In such cases, employees feel a sense

of obligation to be valuable team members and avoid causing any problems that could trouble their teammates, subordinates, or founders/leaders. Leaving the team or organisation is seen as potentially disruptive to those who rely on them. Thus, ties develop as a result of these dynamics. Consider the excerpts below:

“When I think about the friends I have made here, it’s probably my friend from the first day who made me decide not to leave. It feels like we’ve been fighting for our goals together right from the start, and we’ve been together for a long time. I don’t want to leave them to work alone. If I were to leave, it would be tough for them. It would be like they’re facing a big challenge alone. If that day ever comes when I decide to leave, I think I should find someone who can take over my work well before I go. I will never leave them in trouble; instead, if the day comes, we may leave together as a team [P1].”

“I had received a job offer but chose to decline it. Even though I was interested in trying out the new job, I couldn’t help but think about the projects I was working on at that time and my teammates. I just felt that if I left, it would be challenging for my teammates to manage everything. It’s not that I didn’t trust them, but I felt like leaving during that period would be like leaving my friends with a problem. We have been together for a long time, helping and supporting each other. If my departure could cause my teammates problems, I decided not to do it [P8].”

From the excerpts, it becomes evident that, in reality, there is nothing inherently wrong with the employee leaving. However, the participant’s decision not to leave was influenced by *Kreng jai*. This is because, according to *Kreng jai*, people should avoid doing anything that may appear negative or cause trouble for others, especially to those who have been kind and supportive. The influence of *Kreng jai* on the development of the “organisational relationship tie” can also occur in the relationships between employees and their subordinates, as can be considered from the following excerpt.

“There were two times when I thought about leaving during my time working here. The first time was when I was very new to the organisation, and the work seemed tough. The second time was when... well, I wasn’t so young anymore. However, I decided not to leave because of my subordinates. At that time, I had almost a hundred subordinates working for me. We worked together and took care of each other. Many of them were dedicated to their work because they wanted to support me. I saw them as my family members, so how could I leave them? Leaving might have been easy for me, and I could survive, but what about them? It doesn’t mean they couldn’t survive in this organisation without me, but considering how hard they had worked for me... I felt I should be good to them. I knew that leaving would create problems for many of my subordinates, so I decided not to leave at that time [P17].”

Furthermore, taking into account the subsequent excerpts:

“Whenever I made a mistake, my boss never blamed me and always gave me helpful advice. They never made me feel useless, even though I sometimes doubted myself. Over time, I gained more skills and knowledge in my work, and I started feeling like I was an essential part of my boss’s team and this organisation. I’ve been here for eight years and don’t plan to leave. However, if the day ever comes when I have to leave, for whatever reason, I’ll make sure to prepare everything thoroughly. They’ve been good to me, and if my departure would cause any difficulties for my boss or this organisation, I would not leave... and even if I do leave, it will not be forever; I’ll come back to visit and do volunteer work for them [P30].”

From the provided excerpts, it is clear that the organisational relationship ties driven by ***Kreng jai*** can be observed in various relationships within the organisation. These relationships include those between employees (P1, P8), employees and their subordinates (P17), and even between employees and founders/leaders (P30). While the organisational relationship ties influenced by ***Kreng jai*** may not be as robust as those influenced by ***Bunkhun***, they still play a significant role in maintaining employees’ attachment to the organisation, even if it could be only for a short period

since they may later come across decide to leave. However, over time, as employees continue their work, their perceptions of their roles and the organisation can evolve. They may develop a stronger commitment to remain with the organisation long-term. This transformation is exemplified in the story of P17, one of the participants who discovered meaningful work after overcoming two critical moments when they had considered leaving but ultimately chose to stay. This topic will be explored further in the next theme.

Subtheme 4: *Kreng Jai* drives the development of the “motivation tie.”

Not only *Bunghun* but *Kreng jai* can also contribute to the development of the “motivation tie” of employees. The importance of *Kreng jai* in facilitating the advancement of the motivation tie becomes apparent when individuals experience acts of benevolence or forgiveness from their founders or leaders. In such instances, *Kreng jai* can significantly influence the cultivation of a profound inclination to avoid committing errors in the workplace that may cause difficulty or distress to their superiors or those in positions of authority. Over time, this motivation has the potential to evolve into a significant connection with the organisation. Consider the participant’s narrative below:

“I used to have trouble with my communication skills, and I was afraid that if I worked at other places, they might consider it a big issue that could harm their work and lead to me getting fired. But here, my boss didn’t do that. Instead, they gave me honest advice and support. I could tell they genuinely wanted to help me improve my skills and abilities. They taught me many things and even trusted me and assigned me to take care of a full project. Their forgiveness and their intention to help me develop myself made me feel guilty if I made a mistake. This made me want to develop myself further to be good enough to assist and support them. Because they are too good, I am *Kreng jai*, so I paid close attention to my duties and made sure not to create any problems for them. This was in the early days when I started here... However, as time passed, I began to love working with them because I felt surrounded by good people, and I learned how to become a better person myself. Nevertheless, my feelings changed again, but in a good way, when I realised that I started enjoying my work here and want to stay here

for a long since working here helped me grow as an individual, acquire more knowledge, and become more capable [P32].”

What distinguishes this from the third subtheme is that in Subtheme 3, *Kreng jai*, supporting the development of the “organisational relationship tie,” was initiated by the sense of belonging and the perception that leaving could inconvenience their close ones, thus leading them to stay. In contrast, *Kreng jai* here encourages growth in forming the “motivation tie.” When employees get kindness or forgiveness from their founders or leaders, they get motivation to improve their work because they do not want to cause any problems to their leaders. This experience drives them to improve their talents and contribute more efficiently toward their boss’s or the founder’s assistance. Furthermore, taking into account the subsequent excerpt:

“They never scolded me or blamed me for any mistakes that occurred during our work, unlike my previous experiences with other organisations where they would deduct my salary for making mistakes. Here, they gave honest, helpful advice and constant support. Their acts made me want to keep learning and getting better. You see, when you make a mistake, and someone doesn’t point fingers at you, you will naturally feel a sense of responsibility not to repeat it (*Kren jai occurs*). I wanted to be a good worker for them, so I can proudly say that I am one of the people whom they love and support... Just be good enough to be their people. However, I later found joy in observing my personal growth and my contributions to the company and to them. I truly appreciate these feelings, and they are a big part of why I want to stay [P15].”

From the provided excerpts, it is evident that the initial motivation stems from *Kreng jai*, where employees avoid making mistakes at work that could cause problems for their founders or leaders. Later on, this motivation can be further enhanced by the perception that their leaders are good people, which makes employees want to work with them in the long term (P32) or is strengthened by the intention to become capable and smart enough to contribute their abilities to their founders/leaders and the organisation (P15). However, the ties developed at this point may initially not be

strong enough to constitute a deep attachment for the employee. Nevertheless, they have the potential to grow into a stronger bond over time. For instance, when they discover more sources of motivation in their work.

Theme 4: Meaningful work and meaning in life; enhancing employee attachment.

Regarding how motivation can be fostered and become an employee attachment, Theme 1 (of this thematic group) has already identified the key factors that shape this connection. Further examination reveals that the process of imbuing an employee's work life with meaning is pivotal in fostering such motivation and attachment (previously mentioned in Theme 2 of Thematic Group 2). This theme showcases findings from the data, highlighting what individuals in Thai social enterprises consider a meaningful life in relation to their work as a source of the "motivation tie." This perspective will be elaborated upon in the first subtheme. Meanwhile, the second subtheme explores the journey of how individuals cultivate and align their work with their meaningful lives.

Subtheme1: Meaningful life of employees in social enterprises

This subtheme combines the perceptions of individuals working in social enterprises, highlighting what brings meaning to their lives in relation to their work.

The data show that the fulfilment and passion associated with addressing social issues through their roles in the organisation bring purpose to their lives.

"It's a job I love. I truly enjoy what I'm doing. Not only can I do it well, but I also believe it's impactful. I can support myself, and I have enough money to raise kids. I don't want to go to another job. I think I will die with this job [P39]."

“It’s more than just inspiration or motivation. It’s about building the society I want to see in the future. Working here feels like I am continuing to fulfil my life’s mission [P47].”

“I had this problem when I was young. Working here helps students who might have the same problem I had. It’s my way of helping someone like the younger me [P32].”

However, a job that fulfils one’s passion may not be equivalent to holistic meaningfulness since a meaningful life is composed of more than this aspect. Consider the following excerpt:

“I met someone and had a chance to talk with them. They said they found a job that is meaningful to them, but it doesn’t provide them with enough money to spend. In reality, if you don’t earn enough, how can you sustain yourself, let alone help others? You know, having a job that feels meaningful isn’t enough to give your life a sense of fulfilment if it doesn’t provide sufficient income. Even if you manage it for a while, it can’t last long. Having a meaningful job is great because it can enhance your appreciation for life, your feelings, and your values. However, if you don’t earn enough to take care of your family, do you still believe that you are doing something meaningful with your life? I’m not saying you should be selfish; I mean...just be realistic [P39].”

From the excerpts, while a meaningful job and a meaningful life might be interconnected, they are distinct concepts. Although a meaningful job can augment one’s sense of purpose and enrich one’s life, it is not the only factor that defines a meaningful existence.

Within this theme, beyond the recognised idea that passion in work addressing social issues can bring fulfilment and meaning to life, the data reveals that a job which respects and upholds an individual’s dignity plays a crucial role in fostering a meaningful life. Notably, aspects tied to employee dignity have been previously

mentioned in Theme 3 of Thematic Group 1 and Theme 1 of Thematic Group 3. In those themes, dignity relates to the significance of a salary that offers both a sense of societal status and a source of personal pride for employees, and it is embedded in the employee's motivation tie. This subtheme reveals another aspect of how feelings of meaningfulness are intertwined with personal dignity and career choices, particularly from a family's perspective. The data indicates that a family's view of an individual's career choice is often seen as a reflection of their dignity. This sheds light on how people perceive the significance of their work and its connection to their self-worth and familial expectations. Essentially, how an individual's career is viewed by their family can influence how they find meaning and value in their job.

In the Thai context, the nature of one's employment and involvement in work holds considerable importance regarding **dignity and status** for both the individual and their family. The organisation they are affiliated with, their position within it, and the salary they earn are reflections of their personal dignity. When family members acknowledge and esteem an individual's profession, it enhances their sense of pride and self-worth in relation to their work, profoundly shaping their sense of purpose. Conversely, data indicates that if family members fail to value an individual's profession, this can disrupt the process of deriving meaning, potentially weakening the connection or motivation to stay committed to the job. Consider the excerpt below.

"The benefit I got may be the one I decided to quit. But the real reason is that I can't explain my work to my family in a way that they can understand. I feel stress when they ask about my work [P12]."

Additionally, consider the following excerpt:

"My parents initially wanted me to work close to them and had a specific job in mind for me, but I didn't like that job. I've been working here for a long time now. You know, the good thing is, this social enterprise is well-known, and my mom also approves of it.

When people ask which company I work for, she can proudly mention it. I believe that when your family supports your career choice, you won't doubt whether what you're doing is meaningful or not; at least, there is no question on their view [P15].”

From the excerpts, it is evident that, in the Thai context, a family's perception of one work is related to one's dignity and influences what is seen as meaningful. The data suggests that even if someone inherently finds their job meaningful, there can be moments when they begin to feel discontent with certain aspects of it. If no one in their family understands this, it can shape how they perceive their role. Ultimately, meaningful work should align with both an individual's viewpoint and the perspectives of their loved ones.

Furthermore, an individual's religious beliefs can influence their worldview and determine what they find meaningful in life. The data revealed that some participants link their work with their religious convictions. For instance, one Christian participant said, “I am doing this as it is a calling from God” (P42). A Buddhist mentioned, “I believe in Karma; working here lets me accumulate merits” (P29). An Islamic respondent noted, “I am working based on my belief in God” (P16). When people believe their work aligns with the compassionate teachings of their religion, it naturally adds meaning to their professional lives.

According to perceptions of a meaningful life drawn from the data, it's evident that the concept of a “peaceful life” in relation to their work is closely tied to an individual's perception of a meaningful life. Many believe that achieving peace throughout their working years is a key to discovering true meaning. While the definition of “meaningful life” may vary based on individual contexts, for employees in social enterprises, a “peaceful life” can refer to the manner in which they enjoy their work, are able to work for what they believe in, and have good relationships with boss and colleagues. Building on this, consider the following three insightful excerpts.

“In my opinion, when I can earn money based on my own skills and abilities, and the way I make that money aligns with my personal values, it feels just right for me. You see, I believe that some individuals, including myself, aren’t always looking for more or for extravagance. Sometimes, it’s simply about having just enough to pursue what we genuinely believe and value in. For me, it’s about finding that balance where I can do what brings me joy without negatively affecting myself or others [P3].”

“At first, I thought I would work here just to gain experience and then leave to start my own business. But I’ve been here for five years now and realised that maybe my idea of wanting my own business was following a popular trend. Now, I feel happy working here. I’ve got really good friends, I enjoy my job and learn new things every day, and I have supportive bosses, which not many of my university friends have. Plus, I earn a good salary. I don’t see a need to start my own business because I have everything that makes me happy here, enough money to support myself and my family. On top of that, helping others and giving back to the community is a bonus I get from this job. It truly makes me happy to know that my work benefits society and the community. If you ask where I see myself in the next five years, I think I’ll still be here, enjoying my peaceful life [P14]

“You know, some people can work, earn money, and take care of themselves. But there are times when others can’t look after their parents or handle family debts they didn’t cause. This happens to people here. Such situations can deeply impact people’s lives. The good thing is that our company understands and assists employees in dealing with these challenges. When a company supports people this way, it helps us find peace in our work. I believe, even if you love your job, it’s hard to feel at ease when you’re constantly burdened by personal problems [P13].”

According to the excerpts, for individuals employed in social enterprises, the term “peaceful life” can refer to an existence where people are able to live their lives and work without experiencing disturbances or undue stress. It appears that for individuals working in social enterprises, the concept of a meaningful life might be simple and not necessarily tied to creating a social impact or achieving a social mission. Take, for instance, Participant P14: While they acknowledge the enhancement to their work perception due to the social impact they generate, they also believe that a simple, peaceful life is central to their feeling of life’s

meaningfulness. Similarly, Participant P13 points out that people have varying circumstances and constraints. For those facing significant constraints, merely having an honest livelihood and the means to lead a peaceful life is sufficient to infuse their lives with meaning.

An overarching insight from the data suggests that a tranquil working life is often equated with a meaningful existence for many. To further illuminate this, the subsequent excerpt from Participant P44 illustrates how perceptions of a meaningful life can evolve over one's career, offering a deeper understanding of what constitutes a meaningful life for people in this field.

“Definitely, when our job aligns with our beliefs, it gives us joy and purpose. I remember my time working in a factory where I earned a lot, but I felt empty, just following orders like a machine. Later, I moved to an NGO, and now I'm with this social enterprise. When you work in line with your beliefs, you can truly see your values in action... I have been here for five years, and my first role and current role are different. Honestly, I've aged, and my health has changed during these five years. I'm thankful that my role at this social enterprise has shifted, too. I can't imagine doing the same tasks I did when I first joined, especially with my current health condition. But I'm filled with fond memories when I think of the old days. I was deeply connected with the people we helped and saw the direct results of my work. Those experiences brought so much meaning to my life... Even though my role has changed with less chance to be on the frontlines, I know I still support our core mission. My current position suits me in every way. It matches my preferences, my age, and my desired work lifestyle. I can use my skills fully, even with my health issues, in a job I deeply value. But I might not feel the same if I had started in this role from the beginning. Similarly, if my current role was the one that I had when I started, I might not see its value [P44].”

Participant P44's narrative suggests that perceptions of meaningfulness are intertwined with life's circumstances, which change over time. In youth, energy and capability allow for more vigorous work, but health and other limitations may arise with age. Meaningfulness in life, therefore, is not solely about passion for social contributions but also about a perfect match to life's various stages and challenges.

Based on the findings explored under this subtheme, it can be asserted that there's a connection between a meaningful life and meaningful work. A meaningful life revolves around the quest for purpose and significance in one's existence, a personal journey marked by self-discovery and growth. On the other hand, meaningful work captures the emotional engagement and awareness one brings to one's job, role, or calling, endowing it with a sense of personal importance. When the quest for a meaningful life aligns with the pursuit of meaningful work, a deep connection is forged. This harmony amplifies the workplace environment, cultivating a strong employee attachment. This bond signifies a profound link between the individual, their work, and the broader organisational setting. However, what this subtheme underscores is that perceptions of a meaningful life vary based on individual contexts. Factors like life experiences, beliefs, religion, age, life circumstances, and one's life rhythm play a role. How one views a meaningful life can evolve based on one's changing perspective of the world. Notably, different life stages can drive diverse perceptions.

Subtheme 2: The transition process of meaning-making.

This subtheme developed on how individuals successfully integrate a meaningful life with meaningful work. The analysis in this part focuses on those who have successfully navigated the process of finding meaning in their workplace, resulting in strong employee attachment.

In some instances, individuals employed by social enterprises may find the process of discovering meaningful work to be straightforward, particularly those who have faced life challenges or are beneficiaries of the organisation. They often join the enterprise with the expectation that it will improve their lives. However, it has been observed that their appreciation for life deepens when they realise that their work not only benefits them but also aids others facing difficulties. Consider the excerpt below.

“By involving them in this project, we’re showing them that their work benefits society and also helps them in their careers. For those who don’t have a retirement plan, we offer a project to build a place where they can live after retirement. This has given them hope and has been really helpful. They enjoy this work because they understand its purpose and its future impact. Also, they realise that their main job in waste management is already making a positive difference in society. Many have transformed in a very positive way. They’re grateful for what they’ve accomplished, value themselves more, and want to stick with us for the long run. Some even say, ‘I never knew I could do good for others and still have a future for myself’ [P27].”

It is worth noting that not all employees begin their careers in social enterprises with the goal of contributing to a social mission. This is supported by the experiences of participants like P13, P17, and P48, who did not initially join the organisation with social aims in mind. However, it is also important to recognise that for such employees, the process of finding meaningfulness in their work may be different compared to those who joined with a social mission as their primary focus. For example, in the cases of Participants P13, P17, and P48, even though they did not initially align with the organisation’s social values, they eventually absorbed these values and came to appreciate work that benefits not just themselves but also others. This appreciation has, in turn, played a part in contributing to their sense of a meaningful life and has strengthened their attachment to the organisation.

For individuals who initially join a social enterprise driven by their passion for social values and the organisation’s mission, the joy and satisfaction derived from their work and its social impact often serve as motivating factors. However, it is worth noting that this motivation is not static; it can fluctuate, intensify or wane over the course of their employment. Remarkably, the process by which they derive meaning from their work amid these changing levels of motivation serves to sustain their commitment to the organisation. Below is the account of how Participant P11 navigated this dynamic process.

“I’ve been working here for 15 years, and my motivation has definitely changed over time. At first, I loved seeing how my projects helped people directly. I also enjoyed the friendships and the team atmosphere. But as I got older and moved into leadership roles, I wasn’t as directly involved with the people we were helping. That made me question if I was still making the impact I wanted to make. I also noticed I wasn’t as close to my friends and colleagues as before, and some had even left the organisation. Despite these changes, I kept going because I knew that my work still made a difference for people in need [P11].”

Although the first subtheme shows that the process of finding meaning in one’s work and life varies from person to person, Participant P11’s story provides an important insight. The initial connection as the “organisational relationship tie” that contributes to employee attachment may not sustain that attachment in the long run. This is because relationships can fluctuate over time, depending on the frequency and quality of interactions between parties, such as between employees and their colleagues, as seen in P11’s case. To further illustrate, consider P11’s narrative below.

“There was a time when I felt lonely and thought my work wasn’t as enjoyable as before. It also seemed harder to see the social impact I was making. But I realised it was because I had grown up and my job had changed. Seeing the young people on the second floor enjoying their work and being passionate about making a social impact reminded me of how I felt in the past. My focus hasn’t completely shifted to them; it’s now shared between supporting them and my own work. I also find new motivation in seeing them enjoy their work and make a difference in their own way [P11].”

In this case, the key to sustaining employee attachment seems to be an evolving sense of purpose in one’s work. At the start, P11 was motivated by seeing the immediate social impact of their projects and by having strong relationships with colleagues. However, as they progressed into leadership roles, their motivational landscape changed. They began to derive new meaning from guiding and mentoring younger employees, helping them experience the joy of making a positive social

impact. Essentially, their broader job scope not only diversified their day-to-day tasks but also provided fresh avenues to find motivation and a sense of purpose.

According to the data, sustaining this “motivation tie” relies on how individuals perceive meaningfulness in their work. As has been mentioned, this motivation is not static; it experiences cycles or fluctuations at different stages of an individual’s career. During these phases, individuals engage in self-reflection, which serves as a vital tool for navigating these transitional periods and for maintaining a consistent sense of purpose and attachment to their work.

This observation is also evident in the case of P17, who chose to remain with the organisation. While the social norm of *Bunkhun* influenced the decision, it was ultimately tied to a deeper motivation connected to a sense of meaningful life that Participant P17 has come to realise.

“I really love working here, and I’ve been part of this for 19 years now. Honestly, when I first started, I thought about leaving. In the beginning, it felt tiring, and I didn’t understand why we had to take care of and teach the local farmers. It seemed like extra work to me. But then something changed...I began to follow my boss, the founder, on visits to these farmers. Over time, I realised that I enjoyed it. I was gaining more knowledge, and I could help others at the same time. When our projects with the farmers succeeded, I felt a deep sense of appreciation in my heart. It was clear that I could make a difference, and I wanted to see that happen more often. Thinking about all the actions we took and how we brought such positive results for others, as well as enhancing my own knowledge and skills, made me reconsider leaving. Today, I can’t even imagine leaving this place. I feel good about the day I decided to continue my work here. There’s so much meaningful work for me here, and I genuinely enjoy it [P17].”

An interesting takeaway from this case is that organisational values and how individuals internalise these values and find meaning in their work can serve as a driving force in facilitating this transition process. Another example that illustrates

this comes from Participant P48, who provides insights into how they find meaning in their work and view it as a pathway to achieving a meaningful life.

“When I first started working here, I couldn’t help but wonder if we needed to be so deeply concerned about things outside of our duties. We’re meant to do our jobs and take care of our patients, but this place... felt different. However, as time went on, I came to understand why we and the people here care so deeply about the health and happiness of both our caregivers and the patients who use our services. Our work here is driven by a purpose that goes beyond merely providing services to those in need. We think beyond that; it makes me care about everyone more than when I worked at the hospital. We consider various factors related to our caregivers and clients, even caring about their families. We look into details like how many people are in the family, where they live, and what they do for a job. We look at their needs to figure out what kind of support we should give them. As I worked here longer, I started to understand this approach on a deeper level, and it truly resonated with me. The feeling I get from working with our students (caregivers) and clients is incredibly gratifying. I think everything we do is important, and I value every moment even more...I became more mindful of how my actions and thoughts could be connected to broader social issues existing in our society, beyond just the perspective of a nurse and patients. I started to realise and understand more deeply the complexities and challenges faced by people in our community. This has made me sure that I want to stay and use my skills and experience to help this organisation and our community for the long term [P48].”

Under this theme, it becomes clear that not all employees in social enterprises regard a passion for societal contributions as the primary source of life’s meaningfulness. Various other factors, including individual context, past experiences, and belief systems, influence how one perceives a meaningful life and aligns it with one’s work. Once this alignment occurs within the workplace, a stronger bond or “employee attachment” is formed. However, the success of this transition is contingent on several variables, including one’s worldview and the quality of self-reflection.

For those who indicate that “organisational relationship tie” leads to employee attachment, the data from this theme suggest that positive relationships with friends, colleagues, and leaders within the organisation may not be sufficient to sustain long-

term employee attachment. This is not to say that these relationships are unimportant. Since both motivation and relationships are dynamic factors that can change over time, they both play a role in forging the ties that become employee attachments.

Theme 5: Life conditions are a key factor in maintaining employee attachment.

This theme, developed from both unique insights under this specific theme and corroborating findings from other themes, focuses on a pivotal aspect: the life conditions of employees and their influence on sustaining motivation and attachment within a social enterprise. In the thematic Group 1, Theme 6, the element such as life conditions was mentioned in relation to unintentional employee retention in social enterprise as founders/leaders who care for their employees' well-being and conditions may install some mechanism that makes employees prefer to stay with a social enterprise longer. In other themes, the data also show that factors like financial stability, family obligations, and health significantly affect an employee's dedication to their role in the social sector. For example, Participant P39 highlighted the necessity of adequate income for those committed to social contributions. Besides, Participant P44's story further exemplifies how health changes across different life stages can alter motivation, even when driven by social goals.

Consider the additional excerpt of Participant P44 below.

"I've always been driven by social goals in my work. But as we age, our motivations evolve. In the past, interacting with kids in camps energised me, but now, as I've gotten older and my health has changed, those activities aren't as motivating. I still love working towards social contributions, just in different ways. Thankfully, my organisation understands this and has given me a role that suits my age and health. This makes me really content with my job. I've even turned down other job offers because I feel that my current role perfectly aligns with my passions, friendships at work, and health needs [P44]."

Additionally, Participant P2's experience shows how family financial responsibilities can impact career choices, possibly necessitating a shift to higher-paying roles in MNCs.

“If I had to support my parents financially, I think I wouldn't be able to work here. I would probably need to join an MNC for a higher salary. Fortunately, my life circumstances allow me to work in a field I'm passionate about [P2].”

These narratives underscore the importance of individual circumstances in enabling one to engage effectively in socially focused work. This theme confirms that an employee's life conditions play a crucial role in supporting their work and passion in the social sector. The excerpts below provide additional illustrations.

“I struggle with mental health issues and find it hard to cope with stressful work. This job suits me because they understand my limitations, and leaders and colleagues are very supportive. I'm happy here, surrounded by kind people, and the work suits my needs. However, I realise that if this job ever becomes too stressful or doesn't align with my health needs, I may not be able to continue working here [P29].”

“In the future, I might not be able to keep doing my current job. As I get older, it'll be hard to do things like climbing mountains, running camps, or playing with kids without getting tired. If a day comes when I can't do this job anymore, and if I cannot switch to environmental consulting or strategic planning positions. Due to my health, I might have to leave. But it won't be because I've lost my passion for environmental protection or social contributions; it'll be because of my health and physical condition [P1].”

“Many employees have diverse needs and challenges, such as limited work hours, mental health issues, or a lack of trust due to stigma. Some might even have undiagnosed mental health concerns. As leaders, it's crucial to understand and be aware of what's happening in their lives. This understanding allows us to provide support, find appropriate roles, and help them develop for a better life. You know... many are seeking just a normal,

peaceful life where they can work, earn money, and be surrounded by people who respect and care for them. We care about this, so they can stay with us for a long and continue to improve their life [27].”

The findings suggest that passion and motivation for societal contribution, good relationships with leaders and colleagues, and a positive work atmosphere are important. However, if an employee’s life conditions are not favourable, their commitment and attachment to the workplace may not last. Therefore, an individual’s life conditions are a crucial factor to consider. They are relevant in terms of employee motivation and the process of finding meaning and are essential in sustaining employee attachment.

4.5 Group 4: Social capital in social enterprises and its formation

4.5.1 Introduction

This thematic group synthesises key findings related to social capital formation in social enterprises. It draws on insights from thematic Groups 2 and 3, highlighting that meaningful interactions within social enterprises lay the groundwork for both positive relationship development and employee motivation. The data from this group further enriches our understanding of social capital in this context by dividing it into two themes:

Theme 1: The cultivation of social capital in social enterprises.

Theme 2: Social capital formation in social enterprises.

The first theme delves into the specific discoveries of social capital in individual relationships within the social enterprise environment. The second theme concentrates on the elements and processes that enable these relationships to evolve into significant social capital for social enterprises, thereby contributing to their overall success and sustainability.

4.5.2 Findings

Theme 1: The cultivation of social capital in social enterprises.

This theme explores the cultivation of social capital in social enterprises through the lens of interpersonal connections. The data show how these connections, fostered within the social enterprise context, not only enhance the organisation's social fabric but also yield diverse benefits. The theme delves into how social capital, nurtured through these networks, contributes to social enterprises' overall success and sustainability. It provides insights into the reciprocal benefits that arise from fostering solid and positive relationships among employees, leaders, and stakeholders in the social enterprise ecosystem.

Subtheme 1: Personal connections bring more than potential employees to social enterprises.

The data within this subtheme indicates that social enterprises often utilise their existing networks to access resources, such as potential employees. The findings suggest that these enterprises typically recruit qualified candidates through the established connections of both the founders and current employees. For a detailed example, consider the following excerpts from the founders of social enterprises.

“We usually find qualified employees through our personal connections. We prefer hiring people we already know, as we know their values, interests, and abilities. This makes communication easier, as we can openly discuss job details and their needs. Often, I learn about potential employees through joint work on social projects. I’ll approach them, talk about my company and the job we need filling. If they’re interested, we start working together. This approach is straightforward and effective. It’s not just my contacts; we also use our employees’ networks to find the right people [P19].”

“We often find potential employees through our own connections. For instance, when searching for someone, we look for individuals whose attitudes and values align with our organisation and whose skills match the job requirements. However, finding the right person is challenging. We’ve noticed that our best hires often come through personal connections. We might have worked with them on social projects or workshops or met at events focused on social contribution. So, we know their interest and ability from those activities and events. These shared experiences make communication easier, allowing us to understand each other’s expectations clearly. While we also use traditional recruitment methods, which bring in good candidates, it often takes a bit longer for them to adapt to the unique nature of working in a social enterprise [P25].”

“...approach those people who are in my personal connection is another good channel though. I just say this based on my experience. Please don’t get me wrong; I highly encourage you to do so. I mean, for me, what I have learned is that those people are the ones you may know before, or maybe you have had a chance to work with them before. You know them, and they know you; we can start conversations and share opinions easily, we can attune easier, and it becomes effortless for us to communicate openly and honestly. We can even anticipate what each other wants; it is just really easy for both of us to say things. Frankly, that’s why I say it is another good way...[P43].”

The data clearly indicates that activities related to social work, such as voluntary workshops and events focused on social contribution, play a pivotal role in fostering connections within the social enterprise sector. These gatherings are not just networking opportunities; they often lead to the formation of meaningful, high-quality relationships. One significant advantage of this dynamic is its potential benefit to social enterprises in their talent acquisition efforts. Engaging with individuals through these social activities allows organisations to evaluate potential candidates based on firsthand experiences. This approach provides a more holistic understanding of a candidate's abilities and personality and how well they could align with the organisation's social mission, enabling more informed hiring decisions.

Moreover, leveraging personal connections, especially those from existing employees, extends benefits beyond straightforward recruitment. It creates a network of individuals who are not only skilled but also deeply invested in the social cause, thereby enhancing the organisation's overall effectiveness and impact. Participant P13's outstanding narrative offers further insights into this phenomenon.

"I had the chance to recommend my friend for a job at this social enterprise. We met by chance, and I visited her at her home during her holiday. We caught up on everything that had happened in our lives. During our chat, she mentioned wanting a job in our hometown because she no longer wished to live and work in Bangkok; she wanted to move back. I told her about an open position at the company where I am working and suggested she apply. Fast forward, and we have worked at this social enterprise for over 20 years now... One advantage of our existing friendship is that it makes communication easy. Although we work in different departments, I have been able to teach her a lot about our organisation. New employees often have questions but might be shy to ask or unsure where to find answers. They may wonder about the purpose of our social work, why we help others, or even their role in the organisation, like where to go and what to do. ...However, through the recommendation and guidance of friends who referred them, as I did for my friend, they can learn and fit into the organisation easily [P13]."

The personal connections of founders and leaders play a crucial role in identifying qualified candidates for their organisations. Furthermore, the personal networks of existing employees significantly contribute to building and utilising social capital. Pre-existing relationships among employees enable quick sharing of knowledge, making it easier for new employees to integrate into the organisation and understand its values and culture. This process is essential in fostering social capital within social enterprises. Such connections not only expedite the transfer of knowledge and guidance but also help new employees quickly establish their own relationships and expertise in their roles. The existing relationships lay a foundation of trust, creating a bond among employees that fosters a cooperative and positive work environment. Additionally, these connections can lead to stronger employee attachment, further enhancing the organisational culture and effectiveness.

Subtheme 2: Positive relationships bring more capital to all parties.

The essence of this subtheme is to elucidate how relationships and connections fostered within the framework of a social enterprise significantly enhance the benefits reaped by both the community and the organisation. The previous subtheme suggests that social contribution events are key in building and utilising social capital. For this subtheme, a crucial discovery is the importance of interpersonal relationships within a social enterprise, whether between leaders and employees or among peers. When nurtured effectively, these relationships become a strong form of social capital, extending beyond organisational boundaries and bringing widespread advantages to social enterprises.

The concept of ‘bonding’ as a form of social capital underscores the importance of strong and cohesive ties within a group to foster community bonding and maintain a sense of homogeneity. In this study, ‘bonding’ refers to the attachment employees develop towards their organisation, fostered by positive interrelationships. Thus, such bonding is a crucial aspect of social capital in these environments.

In this respect, the multifaceted advantages of ‘bonding’ include efficient communication, enhanced cooperation, and the development of a more cohesive team. It fosters a supportive environment where members professionally and personally assist each other. The evidence of these benefits is observed in the insights from Thematic Group 2, which shows how employee motivation can be fostered and enhanced, and Thematic Group 3, indicating that employee attachment is strengthened through meaningful interactions. This, in turn, increases the organisation’s resilience to adversity and instils a sense of value and belonging among its members. Consequently, when employees develop social capital, especially in the form of ‘bonding,’ these benefits become apparent through their deepened attachment to the enterprise.

From a practical standpoint, an employee’s departure from a social enterprise represents a significant loss of human capital, especially given employees’ deep understanding of social values and the organisation’s mission. Such a loss impacts not just the skillset but also the organisation’s social capital. Therefore, ‘bonding’ social capital in social enterprises is crucial for employee retention and maintaining a workforce deeply aligned with the enterprise’s unique values and goals.

In addition to ‘bonding,’ the data revealed the ‘bridging’ aspect of social capital in social enterprises. Typically, ‘bridging’ refers to accessing resources outside the group of people. However, in the context of social enterprises, it extends beyond this conventional role. ‘Bridging’ not only facilitates reaching external resources but also significantly boosts the motivation of individuals working across different departments within the organisation and in distinct organisations. This motivational surge occurs through collaborative interactions. When people from various departments or different organisations work on related projects, they get opportunities to interact, exchange ideas and opinions, and assist each other in problem-solving. For instance, consider the following excerpts.

“I find much motivation from working across different departments. It’s an opportunity for me to meet people from other areas of our organisation. We exchange ideas and help each other out. It’s great to hear about their experiences. Those talks often inspire and energise me for my social work [P1].”

“I enjoy being involved in social projects outside our company. It’s a great way to meet and get to know others in our field. By interacting with more people, I learn a lot... about myself and reflect on my work. Hearing about their experiences really inspires me to work harder. Often, I find that meeting and working with them greatly boost motivation [P5].”

Drawing from existing literature, the concept of ‘bridging,’ as applied in this research, appears to offer individuals wider career options. This expansion of opportunities enables individuals to meet more people and build their own networks, and ultimately, it may lead them to leave an organisation. This trend is observable in social enterprises, as evidenced by the career trajectories of participants who frequently transition between jobs. Interestingly, the data reveals a unique phenomenon regarding employee departures. Employees who have built strong, valuable social capital within a social enterprise tend to maintain their support for the organisation in diverse forms, even after they have moved on from the organisation. This ongoing involvement highlights a nuanced aspect of employee relationships with social enterprises. Such departures do not necessarily sever ties; instead, they can evolve into different forms of support and contribution, maintaining a connection with the organisation. This pattern underscores the enduring impact of strong social capital and its role in shaping not just current employment relationships but also future collaborations. Consider the excerpts below.

“We have former employees who left to start their own businesses, but we still keep in touch. We share business knowledge, consult each other about problems we face, and remain very close. They also contribute positively to their communities, as do we [P18].”

“I’m not planning to leave the organisation... but the future is uncertain. If I ever do leave, I would like to follow in the footsteps of my seniors. They used to work here and then left to start their own businesses. Yet, they still keep in touch with the founders and stay updated on our activities, helping us with some activities. They think about society, run their businesses for both personal and community benefits, and care about their employees, just like our founders do here. I really believe in this approach. Working here with the founders and my colleagues has shown me that this is a good way to do business, both for ourselves and for others [P15].”

The data indicates that a positive relationship, which evolves into high-quality social capital, can continue to yield benefits for the social enterprise long after an individual has left the organisation. These benefits extend not only to the enterprise itself but also to those who continue working there. Furthermore, the data reveals instances where individuals, despite leaving their current positions in a social enterprise, express a commitment to continue contributing to the organisation in various ways. This suggests that the bonds formed within these enterprises often endure beyond the tenure of employment, highlighting the lasting impact and value of the relationships built within the social enterprise framework.

“I don’t have any plans to leave... I enjoy working here with my colleagues and the founders... Even if I leave in the future, I’ll keep returning to help as a volunteer [P30].”

“I don’t plan on leaving because everything is perfect for me here. I believe in my job; I appreciate how employees are treated, and I love the culture here. However, if I ever have to leave, it might be to continue my family’s business. Even if I return to my family business, I plan to keep volunteering... here... at this social enterprise. I want to take what I’ve learned here, especially about employee care and creating a sincere and transparent culture and apply it to my family business. My goal is to make my future employees feel as good as I do here, working in a positive environment surrounded by great people... [P32].”

The data suggests that the ‘bonding’ form of social capital, which is cultivated within a social enterprise, has the potential to evolve into other forms of social capital. For example, the experiences of Participants P18, P15, P30, and P32 illustrate how ‘bonding’ can transform into ‘bridging’ social capital. This transformation is characterised by the extension of internal, close-knit relationships to broader, more inclusive networks that connect diverse groups. Additionally, the narrative of Participant P45 below exemplifies the potential evolution into ‘linking’ social capital. In this case, relationships initially formed within the social enterprise have progressed to connect individuals with those in positions of authority or power.

“I’m not planning to leave the organisation anytime soon, certainly not within the next five years. However, if I do decide to leave in the future, I’m considering a role in a government agency where I can focus on policies related to social enterprises. My aim would be to support initiatives that benefit social enterprises, especially those addressing social issues like disability. Even though I might work for a government agency, I still see myself volunteering for this social enterprise. I believe in continuing to support their work, even if my professional path takes me elsewhere [P45].”

These findings underscore the dynamic quality of social capital in social enterprises, showing how internal bonds (bonding) can expand into broader community involvement (bridging) and interactions with higher-level authorities (linking). This theme reveals that high-quality social capital, nurtured and evolved within a social enterprise, can continue to benefit the organisation even after employees have left. The next theme delves into the processes through which this kind of impactful social capital emerges, as evidenced by the experiences and stories shared by the participants.

Theme 2: Social capital formation in social enterprises.

This theme is structured around the emergence of individual relationships within social enterprises, evolving into high-quality social capital. It is based on data and insights gleaned from stories shared by participants identified as possessing this high-quality social capital. In the context of this study, ‘quality social capital’ is defined by strong employee attachment, characterised by a commitment to continue contributing to the social enterprise. This includes not only the current employees but also those who have left and still contribute to the social enterprise, as well as those who express a desire to support the organisation even after their departure. While Subtheme 2 of the previous theme highlighted the various forms of social capital and their benefits to social enterprises, this theme focuses more on understanding the development of such quality social capital.

Subtheme 1: *Jing jai* and the emergence of trust in social enterprises

The process of identifying quality social capital within this study was primarily conducted through an analysis of the participants’ life stories. These narratives provided deep insights into how such social capital developed. A key finding emerged from these stories as many participants referenced ‘*Jing jai*’, a concept rooted in Thai culture. *Jing jai* encapsulates an individual’s sincerity, imbued with positive qualities like honesty, genuine care, and affection—traits that are often seen as the cornerstone of **an individual’s virtue**. Interestingly, the data revealed that the development of interpersonal trust, a critical component of quality social capital, varies significantly among individuals. This variation underscores the diverse ways in which people form and maintain trusting relationships. A prime example is the story of Participant P13, who stated that they would never leave the social enterprise and would continue working for the organisation as long as they are able to work.

“I sense their *Jing Jai* in everything they do for us. They’ve been a great support, especially in encouraging me to get treatment for my illness, SLE (Systemic Lupus Erythematosus). I don’t think I would get this kind of personal care in another company. They don’t just help me, but they extend the same kindness to all employees. For example, they developed banking systems to assist employees who are struggling with debt from informal creditors. Normally, they will pay off all debt first, let employees work, and pay back money to them without interest. You know, some just went without repaying the debt to them. However, they still continue with this helping system, believing that others still need assistance and saying, ‘We need to adjust the system, not just stop the help’...Their genuine concern for everyone is something I deeply respect. It’s not just about the help they’ve given me; it’s their overall goodness that impresses me... Working here has made me more aware and thoughtful about contributing to society. I’ve learned that we don’t have to be wealthy to make a positive impact. Since I started working with them, I’ve felt better about myself, knowing I’m helping others. I truly believe in our founder and this social enterprise. They’ve proven their commitment through actions, not just towards employees but also towards other farmers who aren’t directly connected to us... I’m fully committed to following our founder’s lead and supporting whatever they do [P13].”

In the development of relationships between participants and their founders, it is noticeable that a reciprocal process is consistently developed. This mutual exchange is not confined to just one or two instances; rather, it is a recurring theme in many participants’ stories. It occurs not only in founder-employee relationships but also among employees themselves. These narratives highlight varying degrees of reciprocity that manifest in the evolving relationships of individuals possessing quality social capital. This pattern is particularly evident in the narratives and excerpts selected for this thematic group.

Beyond merely recognising the reciprocal nature of these relationships, the data reveals that even when reciprocity is low during interactions, individuals can still recognise each other’s virtues and **establish trust through multiple interactions**. A prime example of this can be seen in the story shared by Participant P17, which stands out as a significant reference in this context.

“It took me a while to really understand and appreciate their *Jing Jai* and our leaders’ virtues. I’ve been with them for quite some time. Initially, I often wondered why our leaders did certain things, like helping people who weren’t part of our group. I could see their goodwill, but I hesitated to trust it fully. The idea of doing good without expecting anything in return seemed strange to me. I admit... there were many times I misunderstood their actions (laughs)...However, as I worked closely with them, their true nature became clear. At first, I just followed their lead because they were my bosses, even though I didn’t always understand their reasons. It’s easy to be sceptical and doubt people who seem too good to be true. Over time, as I learned more about what my bosses kept doing, my perspective changed. I started feeling good about the help I was giving to others. It wasn’t just because I was following orders; I genuinely felt happy doing it...I began to realise that their way of treating people, their manners, and behaviours were genuine virtues. Slowly, I came to recognise true goodness. My experiences working with them confirmed it. I have immense respect for them now. If I hadn’t met them, I might never have learned that we can do good for others without expecting anything in return. Doing so makes me feel good about myself, and it’s not just about respecting others but also about respecting ourselves. I am now believing in them and all things they do for society [P17].”

The narratives of individuals with quality social capital reveal that trust and strong relationship ties are not only built on reciprocal interactions but also depend significantly on cognitive processes. These processes involve how individuals interpret and perceive others. For instance, Participant P17’s story illustrates that trust is strengthened when one recognises and affirms the virtue in another, deeming them worthy of trust. This act of acknowledgement not only enhances trust but also fosters stronger relationships.

This highlights the crucial role of individual cognitive thinking in establishing trust, which is a precursor to developing quality social capital. Trust formation is influenced by various factors, not just the behaviour of leaders. Organisational practices and culture also play a significant part in how trust is conceived. Participant P32’s narrative below stands out in this regard, offering a clear example of how these elements collectively contribute to the development of trust and, subsequently, quality social capital.

“When I first started working here, it was all new to me. In this place, people openly talk about both work and personal issues. They’re honest–*Jing Jai* during both formal meetings and casual chats. Mistakes are openly admitted, and instead of blaming, everyone collaborates to find solutions. I had never seen such open communication before (space of talks). At first, I didn’t participate much in these discussions, but I soon realised the positive outcomes of this approach. Despite being introverted, I gradually started talking more and opening up. I even began to enjoy these open conversations... Day-to-day interactions surprised me. I didn’t expect people to sit down and ask questions like ‘How did the work go?’, ‘How do you feel?’ or ‘Do you feel appreciated today?’. Initially, I didn’t think sharing with others was helpful. But over time, I grew more comfortable expressing my thoughts and feelings. It’s become normal for me to talk about myself, my opinions, and my thoughts here. People listen without judgment and offer different perspectives, allowing me to choose what works best for me [P32].”

The development of trust and the recognition of others’ virtues, key factors in cultivating quality social capital, are further illustrated in the following narratives of Participants P15, P30, and P39. Their stories provide additional evidence of how individuals perceive and develop trust, intertwining it with the process of building quality social capital. These accounts offer valuable insights into the intricate dynamics of trust formation and virtue acknowledgement within social relationships.

“I really see their *Jing Jai*; genuine sincerity and goodwill... There was a time when two team members misunderstood each other, affecting their work together. Our leaders didn’t just ignore the problem, as might happen in other organisations. Instead, they stepped in with solutions to support everyone involved. They believe in helping to resolve issues, even though they are not directly involved, to ensure we all can work together comfortably... In many places, leaders focus only on outcomes and do not take the time to help employees work through their issues. But here, it’s different. They don’t take our feelings for granted. I’ve learned that caring about our colleagues and openly discussing and solving problems together is important. It’s not just about thinking, ‘That’s their problem, not mine.’ This incident is just one example of how our culture and practices reflect our organisation’s true values. Unlike other places where I’ve worked, where the practices didn’t seem genuine, here, the goodwill is real. It’s not just something written in a handbook. My trust in them comes from seeing proof

that they are truly trustworthy. Our organisation is filled with a frank and sincere atmosphere,... it's a thing I deeply appreciate [P15].”

“Their virtue and sincerity come from how they care for us and run the enterprise. Everyone here is open to each other. I trust my colleagues, and they trust me, too. I think this is because our leaders are sincere—*Jing Jai* in everything they do. We learn from this and have good relationships with each other. Over time, this has spread throughout the whole organisation [P30].”

The development of trust within our organisation is a dynamic process that involves more than just direct interactions. People observe not only how they are treated by others but also how their colleagues interact with each other. This observation extends to organisational practices, culture, and especially the behaviour of leaders. These elements serve as evidence and criteria for evaluating trustworthiness. As individuals assess these interactions and behaviours, they gradually build trust and interpersonal trust, which can eventually evolve into quality social capital.

The narrative shared by Participant P39 reinforces this point. It highlights that employees do not develop trust solely in what official organisational practices state. Instead, they also consider the everyday behaviours of leaders and fellow employees. This suggests that trust is a multifaceted concept in the workplace, influenced by various factors beyond formal policies and procedures. The way everyone in the organisation behaves and interacts plays a significant role in fostering a trustworthy and supportive environment.

“Our practice in the organisation has always been based on transparency and openness. I’ve always wanted our organisation to foster a cooperative atmosphere where everyone feels comfortable and can communicate openly. From the beginning, we established a practice where anyone could come and talk to me about any issue, whether work-related or personal. This approach worked well initially, with team members openly discussing their concerns and interests, including topics beyond work. However, as the organisation grew, I noticed that this practice gradually faded away. People stopped

coming to talk to me, and I realised that it's not always easy for someone to feel comfortable approaching me directly, especially if they see that others aren't doing it. This was a significant realisation for me, especially after a Christmas event where we discussed our projects, successes, failures, and future plans. We also had a small open talk session where everyone shared their thoughts and feelings. I then understood that this open communication had disappeared from our daily practice. To address this again, I decided we needed more than just an announced practice. We needed a 'ritual' like a regular talking session where I would initiate the conversation. This approach would help create a safe space for open dialogue. After implementing these sessions, I noticed a significant change. People began to speak up, share problems, and offer solutions. We could exchange opinions openly and kindly. It became clear that to create a positive and trusting atmosphere, especially in work related to social issues, trust among our team members is essential. This trust starts with my genuine intent and commitment to our beliefs. It's not enough to say that we have a culture or practice... it's the actions that count [P39]."

In this subtheme, it becomes apparent how quality social capital is closely linked to the emergence of trust. It becomes evident that trust is primarily established through meaningful interactions, particularly those involving reciprocal processes. However, it is also noted that trust can develop even in situations with lower levels of reciprocity. This happens through individuals' perception and interpretation of others' behaviour, accompanied by an evaluation process within their individuals' minds. A crucial finding of this subtheme is the significant role played by the behaviours of leaders and colleagues in the workplace in fostering trust. The data suggests that trust grows in relation to individuals' observations and perceptions of the virtues or values displayed by those they interact with. This insight opens new avenues for further investigation since it appears from the data that the emergence of trust in the context of developing quality social capital is intricately tied to the virtues or values of the individuals involved in these interactions.

Subtheme 2: The value transmission in the quality social capital formation process.

According to the previous subtheme, the data reveals an interesting pattern in the development of quality social capital; it seems to involve two key things along the development processes: validating virtues and establishing trust. In this subtheme, it can be noticed that during these processes, it appears that individuals often adopt the values of those they grow to trust. This is supported by evidence from numerous participants who possess quality social capital. These individuals tend to develop values similar to those they interact with closely and form strong connections with.

Taking into account the participants who were identified as having quality social capital expressed a desire to continue contributing to their affiliated social enterprises even if they eventually leave. In this context, Participant P32's story offers a more nuanced view of value adoption. P32 not only expressed a desire to continue contributing to the social enterprise through volunteer work but also planned to integrate the organisation's values of transparency and empathy into their family business. This shows a deep acceptance and agreement with the values learned during their time in the social enterprise. Interestingly, P32 was initially unaccustomed to the values and practices, particularly the open and sincere way of communicating and supporting colleagues. Over time, however, they grew to appreciate and value them. This journey underscores how working in a social enterprise and interacting with people there can lead to personal growth and a shift in values as individuals increasingly align with the positive social and ethical practices promoted within the organisations.

The concept that individuals transmit values to each other during the formation of quality social capital is further supported by the experiences of Participants P13, P17, and P15. Initially, these participants had little interest in social values or thoughts about contributing to society. However, their perspectives shifted dramatically after working in social enterprises and interacting with others in these settings. They began to embrace social values, expressing a strong commitment to societal

contribution. This change in mindset is evident in their expression of ongoing engagement with the social enterprise, even after their active roles there ended. Consider the following excerpt.

“I’m really happy to have found this community in the social enterprise... my colleagues, friends, and the founder. It’s a place where I can blend my personal and professional life seamlessly. I trust them and feel inspired to do good, just as they do. Before, I didn’t pay much attention to social contributions, but now, it’s always on my mind. Working with the founders has made me more conscious of its importance. They’re genuinely good people, not just talking about doing good for society but actually showing it through their actions, starting with how they treat their subordinates, colleagues, and friends... As I said, although I’m not planning to leave, if I ever do, I intend to follow in my senior’s footsteps. I’ll maintain contact with our founders and friends here and aim to be a supportive partner to the enterprise... And if I have my own enterprise, I aspire to be as good a person as they (founders) are, taking care of my team and contributing to our society in similar ways. I truly believe in this approach [P15].”

Building on Participant P15’s experiences, it becomes evident that there may be a process of learning and absorbing social values from founders and colleagues within the social enterprise. This exposure has instilled a deep sense of social responsibility in Participant P15, who expresses a desire to emulate their seniors and leaders in both social contributions and the ethical treatment of employees. This pattern of absorbing and internalising values during the development of quality social capital is also observed in other participants.

Participants P13 and P17, for instance, have similarly developed quality social capital. Both did not initially have a passion for social value but later developed and embraced it. However, unlike Participant P15, they have expressed a deep dedication to the affiliated social enterprise, planning to work there for as long as they live or are able to contribute. The finding further highlights another dimension of value absorption: participants not only learn from their founders but also fully embrace these values as their own. This is evident in their deep commitment to the

organisation and its mission, as well as in their approach to treating their subordinates kindly, mirroring the treatment they received from their founders.

“Working closely with my founder in the field has been a great learning experience for me. Over time, as I worked alongside them, I developed a real passion for contributing to social causes. The genuine kindness they showed to me and others, along with their relentless passion for helping others, inspired me to see them as a role model... Now, as I manage many subordinates, the lessons I learned from my leader have helped me grow and mature. I feel like I’ve become a better person, and I truly value this personal growth. I remember how well the founder treated me, and I strive to emulate those behaviours. I treat my team with kindness and work with them wholeheartedly. I believe that the approach to employee treatment that I’ve adopted from my founder can lead others to improve and grow as well [P17].”

Furthermore, the story of Participant P13 shows that when individuals truly embrace certain values, these values can strongly influence them to act in ways that are consistent with those beliefs. Consider the excerpt below.

“I have received good treatment from the founders and have learned ways to support others and contribute to society. I continue to follow my founder’s direction. The way they keep doing good things inspires me to keep contributing, even if sometimes no one notices. In the early days of the establishment of our organisation, they (the founder) always visited farmers who weren’t our clients and taught them about organic agriculture. Some welcomed our teachings, while others did not and rejected our methods. Nevertheless, my founders never gave up. There were also some bad employees left after their debts were paid off; my founder forgave them and continued doing good for others. These obstacles never discouraged them. I believe in this approach and keep it in mind... I have many subordinates, and I always treat them well, although it’s normal for arguments to occur while we work together. It also can happen when sometimes they (subordinates) misunderstand my intentions. Sometimes I help them, but they may not realise what I’ve done. This also happens to the beneficiaries I have dealt with. I genuinely want to help them, but they might not recognise it. I sometimes feel disheartened..., but my belief in our mission keeps me going. I continue to offer help and support, knowing they might... one day recognise it. And even if they don’t, that’s okay. I know for myself that what I’m doing is good [P13].”

Based on the data, the alignment of values among individuals who have formed strong ties within the social enterprise stands out as a significant observation. This alignment suggests that the relationships and trust built within such environments not only foster professional connections but may also influence personal value systems. The findings indicate that along with recognising others' virtues and establishing interpersonal trust, processes like evaluation process and value absorption seem to occur simultaneously. This dynamic process, which develops alongside the formation of quality social capital, potentially leads to individuals developing strong ties with the values they come to embrace.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, an exploration of the empirical findings of this study was presented, derived from an extensive analysis of data conducted throughout the course of fieldwork. This research, anchored in the narrative inquiry approach and underpinned by in-depth interviews, presented its findings through ‘the analysis of narrative’, which involved interpreting narratives to extract common categories and themes (Polkinghorne, 1995; Kim, 2016, p.196), thereby elucidating the study’s theoretical constructs. Chapter 4 systematically organised the developed themes as findings. This chapter discussed the themes and findings with the study’s conceptual framework, research objective, and research question, setting the stage for further conceptual development and generalisation.

Building on these findings, this chapter seeks to conceptualise and discuss these insights under three pivotal areas of knowledge according to the research framework and objectives. The aim is not only to serve as a discussion platform for the identified themes but also to bridge the gap in literature and practice, particularly in the realms of people management in social enterprises, employee motivation, and employee attachment.

The **first area** examines the complexities of people management dynamics within the distinct environment of social enterprises. It explores how the philosophy of social enterprises, workforce diversity, organisational goals, and leadership values influence people management practice. This discussion is a response to Research Objective 1: To explore how social enterprises manage their employees while upholding both social and commercial missions, using the case of Thailand.

The **second area** delves into the landscape of motivational forces driving individuals in social enterprises. This part of the discussion is in response to Research Objective 2: To understand the motivations of individuals working in social enterprises, specifically regarding their decisions to join, stay, or leave.

The **third area** investigates the development of employee attachment within social enterprises, responding to Research Objective 3: To understand the development of employee attachment within the dynamic environment of social enterprises. The final discussion area concentrates on the development of employee attachment, conceptualised as the “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” according to the research framework.

In the latter part of this chapter, the findings will be summarised, and new insights will be presented. This will include identifying the study’s emergent framework. Furthermore, the chapter will provide discussions of each research question, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the study’s outcomes and their implications for the broader field of social enterprise people management.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

5.2.1 Area 1 People management in the social enterprise context

In this section, the discussion builds upon the themes developed in Chapter 4, Group 1, focusing on the area of knowledge related to people management and retention within the social enterprise context. This exploration aims to address the current gap in the literature on people management in social enterprises. Despite a growing trend in academic interest, there remains a notable scarcity of studies in this area, indicating a need for further research across different social enterprise contexts (Bozaga & Salari, 2004; Haugh, 2012; Doherty et al., 2014; Newman et al., 2018; Belte, 2022). The discussion delves into several organisational elements within social enterprises, aiming to deepen our understanding of the diverse and contextual nature of their people management practices. Additionally, the insights gained regarding employee retention in this context open new perspectives, prompting further exploration of its importance and role in creating an environment conducive to employee growth and attachment.

5.2.1.1 Four Key Dimensions Shaping People Management in Social Enterprises

The data illuminates that the findings offer insights into the nuanced nature of people management practices in social enterprises. The finding themes shed light on the diversified and contextual nature of such practices and provide reasons for their adaptive responsiveness rather than a purely strategic orientation.

According to the literature, social enterprises operate on a spectrum that spans from purely philanthropic endeavours to exclusively commercial objectives (Dee, 1998). Some researchers, such as Alter (2007) and Sasaki and Koizumi (2016), suggest distinct types along this spectrum. In contrast, others, like Seanor et al. (2007), contend that social enterprises often oscillate within this spectrum based on funding availability and evolving social objectives. For instance, a social enterprise might lean more towards its social aims after securing the necessary funding. Interestingly,

this study's findings mirror this dynamism in people management practices, indicating they also shift along a spectrum. This adaptability results in management practices that are more responsive and adaptive, setting them apart from the often strategic-driven practices of conventional organisations.

Considering both the literature's perspective and the findings of this research, it becomes clear that social enterprises frequently adapt and shift along a spectrum. Factors such as the emergence of new social issues leading to revised social missions, financial constraints, operational expansion, industry differences, and the flexibility inherent in their business models all have profound effects on their operations. This, in turn, causes variations and adaptations in their organisational structure, particularly in relation to manpower planning and people management practices.

Building on the identified themes, this part underscores several elements that shape people management practices in social enterprises. These elements include workforce characteristics, the industry context in which the social enterprise operates, its specific type, necessary training investments, and the dual objectives pursued. From all the identified elements, **four primary dimensions emerge as particularly influential in shaping people management practices:** the philosophy underpinning the social enterprise, the diverse workforce groups, its evolving organisational goal, and the values upheld by its leaders and founders.

The Social Enterprise's Philosophy

The progression of social enterprises along the continuum reflects the enterprise's genetic makeup. In the illustrated spectrum below (Figure 5.1), one end emphasises pro-social goals, while the opposite end leans towards pro-commercial objectives. At the pro-social extremity, social enterprises prioritise their social missions. Here, every decision is gauged against its anticipated social impact and congruence with organisational values. For instance, a social enterprise might opt to employ

individuals with limited skills, recognising that they might not be as productive but deeming this as a means to foster social impact. Such choices support the broader goal of fostering community upliftment by offering developmental opportunities to its vulnerable members. Additionally, this pro-social stance propels social enterprises to continuously work on their mission, frequently leading them to uncover new social issues. This can, in turn, prompt them to revisit and potentially adapt their structural and business strategies. These adjustments can subsequently influence workforce management practices. Evidently, from the data, it is observed that different enterprises, driven by this pro-social orientation, have diverse practices tailored to their workforce's well-being. For example, while some social enterprises introduce banking systems for their employees, others might offer developmental programmes centred on career progression.



Figure 5.1 Philosophy Spectrum

At the other end of the spectrum lies the pro-commercial aspect; all actions necessary for a social enterprise to be viable and market-compatible are mentioned. This aspect involves adjusting operational practices to align with the specific business industry, considering the costs associated with operations, including training expenses, and ensuring compatibility with the chosen business model and scale. Each social enterprise operates within a specific industry and adheres to a particular social enterprise model. Consequently, their essence, constraints, and organisational operations can differ based on their position along this spectrum. According to the data, a social enterprise in the field of information technology or the high technology industry may require employees with very specific skills, whereas a social enterprise in the service and tourism industry may require employees with strong interpersonal

skills. On the other hand, social enterprises in the health industry may require health professionals as part of their core team, as opposed to an individual who is interested in social missions but has no background in health professions. All of these factors contribute to the organisation's selection practices. As social enterprises grow and scale up, certain practices become more significant, such as employee retention programmes, or the enforcement of rules and regulations to ensure organisational cohesion and effectiveness. Hence, the evolving size and structure of the organisation seem to necessitate adjustments to people management practices.

The dynamics of actions taken along these two dichotomies reflect the operational approach of social enterprises, which is referred to in this study as the social enterprise philosophy. This philosophy encompasses the pursuit of both social and financial missions while striving to maintain a delicate balance between them. Social enterprises embrace a wide range of actions to address the social problems they are passionate about, continuously seeking opportunities to create even greater social impact. Additionally, they strive for viability despite various limiting factors such as size, business industry, model, operational costs, training costs, and competition. Their goal is not only to be viable but also to establish compatibility with other commercial organisations in the market. This overarching social enterprise philosophy significantly influences the development and evolution of people management practices. As social enterprises move along the spectrum, their people management practices also adapt to their changing circumstances.

Different Workforce Groups

Based on the data, it is evident that each social enterprise is comprised of various workforce groups, each necessitating distinct management practices. As a result, their approaches appear flexible and diverse. The data indicates that people management practices are adapted to suit the unique characteristics of each employee group. These observations align with a study by Roumpi et al. (2020), which posits that while people management functions in social enterprises mirror those in the private

sector, their execution is more flexible and varied due to the diversity of the workforce.

Different employee groups within social enterprises demand distinct management practices tailored to their specific needs. For instance, social enterprises employing vulnerable individuals, such as those with disabilities or from underprivileged backgrounds, develop practices that encompass both work and personal aspects. Their training and support programmes are crafted to address the specific needs of each group: while some might need financial literacy education, others might benefit from urban living guidance or activities promoting social interactions. Conversely, social enterprises with a predominantly young workforce emphasise professional advancement, skills development, and personal growth. In those with older staff, the spotlight shifts towards retirement plans or initiatives allowing continued employment post-retirement. Besides, when an enterprise encompasses both young and older employees, it integrates practices suitable for each demographic. Furthermore, performance assessments within social enterprises also manifest flexibility, adapting to the unique traits of every workforce group. For instance, evaluations for staff with health-related constraints focus on individual progress in various life aspects, diverging from the typical productivity metrics found in mainstream commercial entities.

The varied nature of a social enterprise's workforce underscores the imperative for specialised people management practices. The unique practices discovered from the data, such as the establishment of a banking system, personal financial training courses, and a diverse range of training programmes (including sessions on workplace discrimination, initiatives to boost self-esteem, and self-discovery programmes), are a testament to this need. Additionally, the introduction of retirement programmes and specialised educational support further evidence that these practices are specifically devised to cater to the multifaceted needs of their diverse employee groups. This rich tapestry of practices speaks volumes about the

commitment of social enterprises to address the particular requirements of each segment within their workforce.

The Organisational Goal

The organisational goal is another significant dimension that influences people management practices in social enterprises. Distinct from the social and financial missions encapsulated in the social enterprise philosophy, as discussed in this study, the organisational goal pertains to the specific aims or objectives a particular social enterprise establishes at a certain point. Fundamentally, the type of social enterprise may shape its people management practices due to the differences in organisational structure, legal requirements, operational model, funding sources, and stakeholder engagement. However, data indicates that the organisational goal might exert a more significant influence on these practices than the enterprise's type itself, especially when comparing Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISE) to other social enterprise types. Ideally, WISE's objective centres on enhancing individual lives through training, with the end goal of reintegrating them into society. This might initially not emphasise the retention of employees within the organisation. However, the data suggests a different narrative since not all WISEs operate under this principle. The evidence indicates that when an organisational goal evolves, perhaps due to the introduction of a new business model or a change in the founder's or leader's perspective [P28, P47], a WISE might prioritise employee retention. In essence, even if a WISE does not inherently emphasise employee retention, this focus can become central if the organisational goal shifts. In the case of non-WISE social enterprises, such as those in the high technology industry [P39], the agricultural sector [P18, P23], or the tourism and hospitality sector [P19, P20], people management practices also appear to be influenced by the evolving organisational goal. As the organisational goal shifts, so do the people management practices, adapting to align with new objectives and priorities.

Recognising that the organisational goal and the social enterprise philosophy are interconnected is critical. When the organisational goal changes, it might have an impact on the functioning and structure of the social enterprise. Likewise, the organisational goal may be impacted if the social enterprise's operation and structure evolve to strike a balance between the social and financial missions. This interrelation highlights the entrepreneurial process inherent in social enterprises. As a result, both the social enterprise philosophy and the organisational goal have an impact on how people management practices are implemented within the organisation.

The versatility of these practices also shines through their adaptability to organisational structural changes and the incorporation of new employee segments. In many social enterprises, although selection methods might seem universally inclusive, emphasising passion as the key criterion for joining and potentially impacting the perceived social contributions of an enterprise, the data suggests a more nuanced reality. For example, the flexibility in employee selection practices at the social enterprise associated with Participant P20 (mentioned in Chapter 4, Group 1, Theme 2) exemplifies this. While the enterprise aims to accept all individuals passionate about their social missions, practical necessities, such as the specific skills and abilities needed for their new social projects, often necessitate adjustments in selection criteria based on each project's requirements rather than relying solely on inclusive selection criteria.

Founders/Leaders' Values

In addition to the philosophy of social enterprise, diverse workforce groups, and organisational goals, the values imparted by founders or leaders significantly influence people management practices in social enterprises. These fundamental principles serve as guiding pillars for the operation of the organisation, affecting both its functioning and the management of its workforce.

Based on the collected data, the values of founders and leaders encompass various facets, including commitment to social justice, inclusivity, sustainability, and adherence to ethical business practices. In the findings, four key phrases were addressed to highlight the findings:

“The intention of founders to pay high salary and the hidden meaning of salary under employees’ view.”

“Employees are akin to family members,”

“It is not about productivity; it is about creating a social impact,” and

“Social enterprises are platforms where employees and society develop collectively.”

These ingrained values not only create the foundation of the organisational culture but also significantly influence decision-making processes, particularly regarding people management practices.

The phrase “The intention of founders to pay high salaries and the hidden meaning of salary from the employees’ perspective” is particularly enlightening. Although the literature suggests that individuals who join social enterprises are often willing to accept lower monetary rewards in exchange for a sense of purpose (Truong & Barraket, 2018; Satar, 2018) - the data in this research also supports this notion. However, the narrative changes when salaries are seen not merely as economic compensation but also as recognition of social status and value in work. Founders

aim to dispel the belief that employment in a social enterprise necessarily involves a financial trade-off. Many offer salaries equivalent to market rates, with some even providing compensation packages that exceed those of for-profit organisations.

While it is understandable for social enterprises to offer lower salaries due to operational and income constraints, the data suggest a transformative trend shaped by the values and beliefs of their leaders. There seems to be a movement towards offering competitive salaries, challenging the traditional belief that employees in this sector should be content with lower wages due to the societal contributions of their work. This developing trend suggests potential shifts in the social enterprise sector, with the values of founders and leaders not only influencing practices within their organisations but also potentially reshaping societal norms broadly.

Furthermore, the phrase “Employees are akin to family members” reveals another value upheld by founders and leaders, which profoundly influences the practices within social enterprises. When leaders regard their employees as family, their management and care for employees are imbued with compassion and understanding. This familial perspective is evident in the various support practices established within social enterprises. Leaders address employees’ personal issues with practices like educational support, housing repairs, accommodation assistance, support for employees’ parents, and assistance with issues related to informal creditors. These practices showcase a deep commitment to the well-being of employees, going beyond the professional sphere and entering the personal realm, reflecting a genuine concern and care akin to that found within a family unit.

The phrases “It is not about productivity; it is about creating a social impact” and “Social enterprises are platforms where employees and society develop collectively” are intertwined values upheld by leaders within social enterprises. These guiding principles significantly influence employee retention strategies in these organisations. Many founders and leaders express comfort with the notion of

employees eventually leaving, embodying a unique perspective on employee retention. For those deeply committed to these values, retaining employees is not their paramount concern. Instead, they focus on fostering an environment where individuals can contribute significantly, grow professionally and personally, and then, perhaps, move on to effect positive social changes elsewhere.

Moreover, these values are mirrored in the unique practices established within social enterprises aimed at supporting employee development. Leaders in these settings are often willing to invest in their employees without a meticulous calculation of return on investment. It is not solely about immediate value retrieval but about fostering growth and development in their team members. Illustrative examples of these practices include investing in StrengthsFinder programmes [P19], covering the costs of driving education to facilitate employee transportation needs [P15], initiating employee work-exchange programmes with international partners [P20], and sponsoring employees in personal development endeavours, such as entering barista contests [P18]. These initiatives demonstrate not just a commitment to employees' professional skills but also an investment in their personal interests and ambitions, highlighting a holistic approach to employee development. This attitude helps establish a supportive environment where employees can thrive, contribute to the organisation's mission, and be prepared to make broader social impacts in the future.

Nevertheless, the dual missions of social enterprises often lead to complex dilemmas in their people management practices. These practices include employee selection, retention, training, support programmes, salary structures, and performance assessments. While these practices are influenced by the enterprise's social mission, they are also shaped by market forces, organisational goals, and the need to manage a diverse workforce. However, the data suggests that the values of founders and leaders play a significant role in guiding the decision-making processes for implementing these practices within specific social enterprises.

It is worth considering the extent to which the values of leaders and founders influence the nuances of people management within these unique organisations. How do these deeply held principles navigate and potentially resolve tensions between social missions, market dynamics, organisational objectives, and workforce diversity? Reflect upon the challenges experienced by Participant P18, who decided to select underprivileged individuals instead of the most skilled ones, and Participant P20, who encountered a dilemma during the selection process: should they accept those who are full of social passion but lack skills, or those with skills but no passion for the particular social project? In these cases, a delicate balance had to be maintained between qualifications, insight into social work, passion, and job-relevant skills. Also, consider Participant P47, who chose not to implement an employee retention programme despite its apparent necessity, and Participant P37, who faced a dilemma when deciding whether to enforce regulations and practices for a workforce group comprised of individuals with disabilities.

Delving deeper into these dynamics allows for an exploration of the subtle yet powerful ways in which leaders' values influence and actively shape social enterprises' practices. The dilemmas arising in the course of implementing and enforcing these practices reflect the intricate interplay between personal values, organisational philosophy, and the inherent challenges of operating within the social enterprise landscape. Considering these reflections opens up avenues for deeper understanding and critical thinking. People management within social enterprises seems to be shaped by their ever-evolving philosophy and goals. However, the values held by founders and leaders wield substantial influence, ultimately guiding and solidifying the practices adopted within the organisation.

It is worth emphasising that dilemmas can surface when it comes to balancing both commercial objectives and social missions. Within this context, the role of the founder and leader in social enterprises is paramount. Founders and leaders are crucial not only in developing people management practices and directing the organisation's procedures and activities but also in deciding the most appropriate

methods and scope of execution to accomplish the organisation's overarching goals and dual missions. Based on the findings, it appears that the values of leaders and founders are paramount in shaping people management practices, highlighting their indispensable role in navigating the complex landscape of social enterprises.

5.2.1.2 Employee Retention Within Social Enterprises

Within the realm of employee retention in social enterprises, there is limited existing literature, even though scholars have identified this as a crucial area worthy of investigation (Cerdin et al., 2018; Moses & Sharma, 2020; Dorado et al., 2022). The intricacies of social enterprise operations, coupled with the purpose-driven nature of the organisation, have left us with a scant understanding of how these organisations approach employee retention. Scholars have noted the challenge in identifying and retaining individuals who not only possess the requisite skills but also resonate with the organisation's values (Royce, 2007; Doherty et al. (2009). Venturing into this under-explored area, the present study unveils two divergent viewpoints regarding the importance of employee retention in social enterprises: one perspective considers it non-essential, while the other views it as absolutely vital, regards the two subthemes mentioned in findings in Chapter 4, Group 1, Theme 4.

The divergence in viewpoints regarding employee retention within social enterprises can be attributed to various factors. These include the industry in which the social enterprise operates, the costs associated with operations and training, the flexibility inherent in the organisation's structure and size, and, notably, the values embraced by its founders. Employee retention in social enterprises is indeed a multifaceted issue, shaped not only by the organisational philosophy and goals but significantly by the values of the founders and leaders.

Data from the study yields valuable insights. For instance, while large social enterprises typically emphasise employee retention more than their smaller

counterparts, size is not a definitive predictor of attitudes towards retention. Furthermore, although some social enterprises, notably those identified as Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISE), do not prioritise employee retention due to their focus on training and reintegration into the job market, there may be potential changes due to evolving business models, new organisational goals, or a new perspective of leaders/founders. Findings reveal divergent beliefs regarding the necessity of employee retention implementation among both WISE and non-WISE social enterprises.

In the intricate tapestry of factors influencing employee retention, the values upheld by the founders and leaders appear to be pivotal. This is evident from the myriad cases found in the study, encompassing enterprises that consider employee retention crucial and those that deem it non-essential. For example, consider the case of WISE associated with Participant P47. Despite the high training costs, the leaders opted not to implement a retention programme once their initial goal—extricating children from high-risk environments and equipping them with life skills—was achieved. Their decision, stemming from their core values, was made even though retaining these individuals would positively impact operations. Similarly, Participant P18's associated enterprise, while acknowledging the importance of retention, does not view it as imperative. For them, if the employee's departure leads to a broader social impact, they not only accept but support the transition, even if it means losing a qualified individual and potentially facing operational challenges.

In both cases, the decision regarding employee retention is deeply rooted in the values of the leaders. Even when retention seems beneficial for the enterprise, as in Participant P47's case, the leaders' values guide their decision not to pursue it. Similarly, Participant P18's enterprise operates under a value system that supports employees' decisions to leave to start similar initiatives, seeing it as a contribution to society rather than competition. Furthermore, for enterprises that do choose to implement employee retention programmes, the motivating factor behind such a decision often originates from the founders' and leaders' values, reflecting a

commitment to improving the lives of their employees, particularly those who are underprivileged. The data indicates that the primary driving force behind the implementation of employee retention programmes is not organisational productivity or profitability per se. Instead, it is closely aligned with the welfare of the employees, revealing a focus that distinctly sets social enterprises apart from traditional profit-driven entities. Interestingly, most retention-related practices implemented within these enterprises inherently pertain to enhancing the well-being of their employees.

Based on the findings, it is evident that most leaders and founders who do not implement retention programmes, as well as those who do, are primarily driven by the intention to support and help their employees rather than to enhance productivity for social enterprises. This altruistic intention has led to the development of many unique people management practices designed to support and assist their employees. For instance, the post-retirement employee support programmes in the social enterprises associated with Participants P22, P23, and P27 were initially created to help their employees. Later, the leaders found that these practices also enhanced employee motivation and fostered employee attachment.

Another practice that unintentionally creates employee attachment in many social enterprises is the ‘space of talks.’ This practice was designed to enhance employee well-being, but it also improved employee motivation and positive relationships, fostering an environment that nurtures employee attachment. Based on the findings, social enterprises created a ‘space of talks’ to facilitate communication, knowledge exchange, problem-solving, and emotional sharing, thereby including topics such as employees’ personal issues. There were also cases in which social enterprises that employ underprivileged or health-compromised individuals utilised the ‘space of talks’ to address employees’ fundamental requirements and serve employees’ basic needs, ultimately contributing to their well-being and personal development.

Other unique practices have been developed to manage and support employees in addressing personal issues and somehow create potential employee attachment as

well. For example, some social enterprises assist employees with essential arrangements in the unfortunate event of their parents' passing, track employees' informal debts, support employees' children's education, address home repair needs due to storms, and source doctors and treatments for employee sickness. These people management practices were developed with the intention of taking care of employees, but they have unintentionally become tools for creating retention systems in many social enterprises.

While these practices may stem from a variety of motivations, all can unwittingly foster employee attachment. The establishment of positive relationships in the workplace and a compassionate and cooperative atmosphere, coupled with the founder's and leader's concern for employee well-being, often result in the creation of unique practices and support systems that improve the lives of the employees. These not only improve employees' lives but also develop a sense of appreciation and satisfaction in them. This positive transformation frequently fosters a strong bond with both the organisation and their coworkers. Furthermore, initiatives such as 'space of talks' serve as dynamic platforms to produce ideas, exchange knowledge, and regenerate employee motivation, cultivating a pervasive sense of belonging and a renewed passion for work among employees. When employees are treated with respect and given opportunities for advancement, they exhibit increased motivation, performance, and well-being (Getz, 2009, p.37).

When 'space of talks' is promoted in an organisation, it becomes a listening tool for leaders, fostering openness among people within the organisation. Leaders become more aware of their employees' needs, employees receive support from their leaders, colleagues learn from and encourage each other, and unique practices to support employees are developed as leaders identify their employees' needs through this tool. These kinds of practices occur in many social enterprises. Even though their leaders and founders do not intentionally aim to create retention systems for productivity purposes, these practices have nonetheless become unintentional retention systems within social enterprises.

5.2.2 Discussion of Research Objective 1

Revisiting the literature gap: A notable gap in the study of social enterprises is people management within the social enterprise context (Haugh, 2005; Doherty et al., 2009; Short et al., 2009; Newman et al., 2015, 2018). Literature indicates that social enterprises operate differently from traditional organisations and need to develop their own principles for managing employees (Borzaga & Solari, 2004; Lyon & Ramsden, 2006; Royce, 2007; Winkler & Portocarrero, 2018). However, the diversity of social enterprises poses challenges to developing effective people management practices. Despite these challenges, effective people management is crucial for sustaining social enterprises and strengthening the field's literature (Okorley & Nkrumah, 2012; Satar, 2018). Additionally, studying social enterprises in different geographical contexts can provide deeper insights and enrich the existing literature (Haugh, 2012; Doherty et al., 2014; Chandra & Kerlin, 2021).

Based on the identified gap in relation to social enterprise people management, this study addresses this gap by exploring how social enterprises in Thailand manage their employees. Understanding the origins and reasons behind people management practices can offer valuable insight supporting the development of literature in the social enterprise study field, which can further potentially foster the development of effective people management strategies in this sector. The discussion in this section responds to this identified gap and will be addressed in response to **Research Objective 1:** To explore how social enterprises manage their employees while upholding both social and commercial missions, using the case of Thailand.

In Area 1, the focus is on people management within social enterprises in Thailand. While social enterprises share similarities with traditional organisations in terms of people management activities like recruiting, selection, training and development, performance appraisal, remuneration and benefits, and retention, their implementation of these practices differs significantly. While conventional organisations prioritise profitability, efficiency in managing people, and maximising

outcomes, social enterprises are profoundly influenced by their social mission and values. This fundamental difference shapes how social enterprises implement their people management practices.

The analysis reveals four key dimensions: the philosophy of social enterprises, workforce diversity, organisational goals, and the values of founders and leaders. These factors contribute to a more adaptive and responsive people management approach compared to traditional organisations. While the philosophy of social enterprises and workforce diversity are well-documented in the literature as shaping people management (Bozaga & Defourney, 2004; Doherty et al., 2014; Roumpi et al., 2020), the findings highlight the substantial impact of organisational goals and the values upheld by founders and leaders.

Social enterprises, inherently dedicated to addressing social problems, continuously strive to find creative solutions, which in turn impact their operational strategy. When fresh revelations about the fundamental origins of social problems are uncovered, social enterprises may modify their goals accordingly. This inherent adaptability frequently results in alterations to the organisational framework, influencing their methods of managing people. The findings reflect the nature of social enterprises, characterised by continuous movement and flexibility in how they operate their activities. Consequently, activities related to managing people are also adjusted and changed based on their organisational goals. For instance, examples from the findings show that social enterprises may need to rearrange their employees or recruit specific skilled talent due to additional social projects or additional social goals. This may require a more intentional recruitment strategy instead of an inclusive selection. Similarly, when social enterprises adjust their business model to extend income generation towards farming and agricultural activities, they may find retention more important than the initial goal of reintegrating their people into the market.

The dual mission of social enterprises often leads to dilemmas in practice implementation. However, it appears that the values of founders and leaders are paramount in shaping the direction of these implementations. For instance, examples from the findings show that social enterprises often recruit and select employees with the primary intention of helping them rather than choosing the most skilled or talented candidates. Additionally, some social enterprises choose not to implement employee retention programmes, despite their apparent necessity, because they prioritise supporting employee capability and development. When implementing retention programmes, the intention is often to support their employees rather than to maximise profitability or organisational efficiency. These examples demonstrate that the values upheld by leaders and founders play a crucial role in guiding people management practices within social enterprises, highlighting the significant impact of leadership values on organisational decisions and strategies.

The significant impact of leadership values on people management within social enterprises is evident in the many unique practices developed within these organisations. For instance, the post-retirement program, the ‘space of talks’, home repair assistance, children’s education support, and training and development initiatives that address personal issues, as well as managing informal creditors, are all examples of practices designed to support employee well-being and capability development. These practices were initially created to help employees thrive both personally and professionally. Interestingly, these initiatives have also contributed to a positive work environment that fosters employee attachment. By addressing the holistic needs of employees, social enterprises unintentionally create a supportive atmosphere that enhances employee retention. While the primary goal of these practices is to improve employee well-being and development, they inadvertently serve as effective tools for retaining employees.

The findings indicate that while organisation type, industry, and size are all important, the identified four dimensions seem to shape people management in social enterprises predominantly. Central to this is the value-driven ethos that permeates

these organisations, profoundly impacting people management. This value-centric approach is particularly evident in the significant role that leaders' values play in shaping people management practices. In the context of employee retention, this is manifested in leaders' focus on nurturing employees not just as the organisation's broader mission but also as key agents for societal change. This method goes beyond merely aiming for profitability; it fosters employees' overall well-being and capability development.

In conclusion, people management in social enterprises is diverse and dynamic, evolving with their philosophy, diverse workforce, changing organisational goals, and the values upheld by their founders and leaders. While this study may not provide a definitive answer to what constitutes effective people management in this sector, it sheds light on why people management in social enterprises is inherently fluid. Social enterprises continuously adapt as they discover new ways to solve or alleviate social problems, which influences their overall operations. The study highlights that the values upheld by leaders and founders are paramount. When a specific value system drives social enterprises, their people management practices adapt accordingly. Thus, the search for effective people management in social enterprises may vary greatly depending on the values of the particular organisation. Social enterprises may need to deeply understand their own values and the values of their employees to develop specific, effective people management strategies tailored to their unique context.

5.2.3 Area 2 The nature of motivation of people working in social enterprises.

This section builds on the themes established in Chapter 4, Group 2, with a focus on employee motivation within social enterprises. The objective is to address the noticeable gap in existing research on this topic. This examination delves into the complexities of motivation, including why employees choose to join, remain with, or leave social enterprises. The findings enhance our understanding of the nature of employee motivation within the context of social enterprises.

5.2.3.1 Initial Motivations for Joining

This study's findings reveal that the initial motivations of individuals who join social enterprises are diverse. Some individuals are driven by a desire to contribute socially, stemming from their empathy and personal experiences related to specific social issues, which align with their values. Others become aware of social issues through university activities such as voluntary initiatives, rural development projects, workshops on social issues and social enterprises, and events hosted in collaboration with NGOs, government agencies, and other third-sector entities. These experiences shift their interests, leading them to seek jobs in social enterprises and other third-sector organisations. Additionally, some individuals join social enterprises without a primary interest in social contributions. This group includes those with firsthand experiences of the social issues the enterprise addresses, initially participating as social aid recipients or beneficiaries of the organisation's efforts. Others are attracted by the job content and context rather than the social mission. These individuals find professional and personal satisfaction in the nature of the job itself. Therefore, while some employees are primarily motivated by the social impact of their work, others are driven by a need for help (as beneficiaries) or by the professional and personal satisfaction derived from the nature of the job. This diversity in motivations underscores the varied pathways through which individuals are drawn to social enterprises.

However, individuals who first exhibit apathy towards the social impact frequently establish a sense of affiliation with the profession and develop a connection with the job and organisational values over time. This evolution in perception and attitude is noteworthy. A notable number of participants expressed a change in their perception of their work and its significance in their lives. Their focus gradually transitioned from task completion to developing an understanding and recognition of the significant societal implications of their endeavours. They began to see themselves as vital contributors to societal well-being, eventually becoming a significant motivator in their work.

5.2.3.2 Reasons for Demotivation and Leaving

The findings reveal several key factors that lead to employee demotivation and potential departure in social enterprises. For instance, employees feel demotivated when projects, originally conceived to aid beneficiaries, fall short of delivering the anticipated results. This is particularly significant in social enterprises, where the impact of perceived failure resonates deeply with value-driven employees. Any shortcomings related to the core social mission can severely affect their motivation. Additionally, employees experience demotivation when they believe their work is not as highly valued by others as it is by themselves. This can happen when project partners or beneficiaries do not adequately acknowledge their efforts. Such undervaluation can lead to frustration and demotivation, stemming from the belief that their work is not receiving the recognition it deserves. Moreover, employees feel demotivated when they perceive their contributions to organisational tasks and duties as insufficient or falling short of expectations. When they feel they are not fully contributing to their roles, it leads to a perception of not truly contributing to both social impact and positive outcomes for their organisation. This perception leads to demotivation and often prompts them to consider leaving their jobs. In this regard, lack of tangible impact, perceived undervaluation, and perceived low contribution to the organisation are the factors identified as affecting their intrinsic motivation.

In addition to the previously mentioned factors, employees in social enterprises, like their counterparts in other sectors, can become discouraged and contemplate departure due to poor management systems, unbalanced workloads, and unfair treatment. This includes limited opportunities for career advancement and alluring positions in other organisations. These factors are well-documented in the existing literature (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003; Kim & Lee, 2007; Amin, 2009; Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Nguyen et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the decision to leave a social enterprise is often influenced by additional personal and professional considerations. Employees' family members' perceptions of their work can significantly impact their motivation and decision to stay or leave. Additionally, the aspiration to launch their own ventures or pursue promotions elsewhere also contributes to their contemplation of departure. Interestingly, while promotions within the organisation are typically seen as positive, in some cases within social enterprises, they can surprisingly demotivate employees. These factors collectively have the potential to demotivate employees and lead to their decision to leave social enterprises. However, all these elements will be discussed in detail within the "Motivations for Staying" section. This will provide a nuanced understanding of how and why these factors affect employees' decisions, examining cases where employees ultimately decide to leave and those where they choose to stay. By exploring these dynamics, deeper insights can be gained into the motivational landscape within social enterprises. Captivating reasons for demotivation and leaving in this section establishes a foundation to further explore, particularly concerning the motivation to stay.

5.2.3.3 Motivations for Staying

5.2.3.3.1 The Three Pillars of Motivation and Life Viability.

Based on the findings, the research points to three key drivers – three pillars of employee motivation within social enterprises. These include:

1. Recognition of personal skill and career development: Employees are motivated by opportunities for personal and professional growth.
2. Sense of meaningfully contributing to the organisation: Feeling that their work significantly contributes to the organisation.
3. Realisation of social impact: Understanding and valuing their role in creating positive social change.

Each factor plays a critical role in shaping the motivational environment within social enterprises. This analysis and conceptualisation are based on participants' current motivations for continuing to work in social enterprises. However, the subsequent section on the development of employee attachment will specifically delve into the analysis of sustained motivation, focusing on how motivation evolves into long-term employee attachment. In this section, the findings will primarily discuss the motivations that encourage employees to stay and work.

The first pillar emphasises **the recognition of personal skills and career development**, highlighting how employees appreciate their personal growth and career progression. The findings reveal that this motivation extends beyond traditional career ladder advancement to include a broader scope of personal and professional self-enhancement. Employees are motivated by witnessing their skills and abilities develop over time, which strengthens their sense of self-efficacy. Although the literature indicates that social enterprises may provide limited prospects for traditional career progression, which could result in some individuals leaving owing to the constraints of career paths (Seet et al., 2021), many leaders of social enterprises are cognisant of this concern. As a result, certain employees choose to depart due to the restricted prospects available. Nevertheless, many individuals

conveyed their choice to stay in their present professions without advancement, deriving enduring motivation from their functions. Specifically, the experiences of Participants P11 and P44 serve as prime examples of this particular situation. Their stories illustrate how working in social enterprises is a valuable opportunity for skill acquisition and professional expertise development, even without traditional career progression.

The second pillar, **a sense of meaningfully contributing to the organisation**, pertains to employees' feelings of significance and contribution within the organisation. This is a potent motivator not only for beneficiary employees, who often feel a deep sense of gratitude towards their organisations but also for other groups of employees. In fact, this factor can be particularly impactful for employees who are underprivileged or have disabilities. For instance, those supported by social enterprises often develop a desire to make meaningful contributions to the organisation in return, and this appreciation can enhance their motivation. However, the importance of self-recognition in this perspective is not limited to these employee groups; it is also significant for other employees. Without a sense of meaningful contribution, employees may not feel as connected to the social enterprise as expected, and they may eventually leave, as evidenced by the stories of Participants P44, P38, and P36. This sense of contribution fosters a feeling of worth and connection toward the organisation and its leadership, serving as a powerful motivational factor.

The final pillar, **recognising the significance of contributing to social impact**, pertains to employees' realisation of their crucial role in driving positive social change. This pillar is frequently highlighted in the literature on employee motivation, particularly in the context of social enterprises and other third-sector organisations (Amin, 2009; Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Brolis, 2018). It posits that employees in these sectors often link their motivation to the social contributions they make. Employees in social enterprises often find a profound sense of fulfilment in knowing that their daily efforts contribute to larger social goals, such as alleviating poverty, promoting

sustainability, or advancing education. This sense of contributing to something greater than themselves can be a powerful motivator, often surpassing traditional incentives like salary or job security. The findings indicate that a decline in recognition of one's contribution to social impact can lead to demotivation and, ultimately, employees leaving a social enterprise. In essence, this pillar captures the essence of what makes working in a social enterprise unique and rewarding, particularly for those driven by the desire to contribute positively to the world around them.

These findings highlight a critical insight: the absence of any of the three main motivational pillars—recognition of personal skill and career development (personal and professional growth), a sense of meaningful contributing to the organisation (organisational contribution) and recognising the significance of contributing to social impact (involvement in social impact)—can substantially undermine employee motivation, potentially leading to their departure from the social enterprise.

For instance, individuals who value personal and professional development but feel their contribution to social impact is inadequate can become demotivated, ultimately deciding to leave (as seen in participant cases P5, P8, and P40). Conversely, some employees recognise their societal impact but feel disconnected from the organisation, unable to fully contribute or utilise their abilities. This perception leads to decreased motivation and eventual departure (as seen in cases P38, P36, and P44). Furthermore, there were cases where employees believed they were making a significant contribution to both the organisation and its social impact but were dissatisfied with their own personal development and career advancement. As a result, they left the social enterprise. The case of Participant P9 is a very dramatic illustration of this trend, but it is not unique. There are other examples where employees left for identical reasons, highlighting a pattern of discontent with personal and professional development within the organisation.

Maintaining a harmonious balance among these three motivational factors is essential for enhancing employee motivation in social enterprises. Each aspect makes a distinct contribution: personal and career development enhances self-efficacy, contributing to the organisation cultivates a sense of value and affiliation, and understanding one's role in social impact nurtures a feeling of societal contribution.

Additionally, the findings reveal that this three-pillar motivational framework must operate within the context of “life viability.” This concept refers to the necessary conditions for personal thriving, linking to the theme under Group 3—employees' life conditions. For example, employees must receive sufficient income for their living needs, and their workload and job responsibilities must align with their life conditions, including health constraints. This means to include limitations such as the inability to work long hours, manage high-stress environments, or cope with physical disabilities. Therefore, while the three pillars are pivotal in enhancing motivation in social enterprises, their effectiveness is significantly enhanced when aligned with the “life viability” concept, considering the life conditions of the employees. This holistic approach ensures not only motivation but also the well-being and overall satisfaction of employees in social enterprises.

5.2.3.3.2 The Dynamic of Motivation and Interpersonal Interaction

In the preceding section, the research findings shed light on the motivational landscape of individuals staying with social enterprises. Delving deeper, the study reveals that the nature of motivation for people in such organisations largely stems from personal interactions with individuals both within and outside the organisations. This section will further explore how these interpersonal interactions can amplify employee motivation in social enterprises, providing deeper insights into the nuances of employee motivation within this unique sector.

Based on the research findings, individual interactions are a key factor in generating and reinvigorating motivation within social enterprises. Interpersonal dynamics among team members, colleagues, leaders, and beneficiaries can significantly boost collective motivation. Figures 5.2 and 5.3, entitled “The Interactive and Contagious Motivation” and “The Motivation Flowchart,” respectively, graphically depict the concepts derived from the research findings, especially Theme 3, Group 2 of Chapter 4. These visual aids illustrate the interactive evolution of motivation within social enterprises, where the drive of each individual is bolstered through a network of interactions.

Figure 5.2 features representations of individuals working within social enterprises. Letters A, B, and C represent each individual, assigning each the role of an actor. Based on the findings, the stories and experiences of participants are conceptualised and located to explain how their interpersonal interactions enhance individual motivation while working within social enterprises. These scenarios, depicting the dynamic interplay of motivational forces among these actors, are further explained in the flowchart in Figure 5.3.

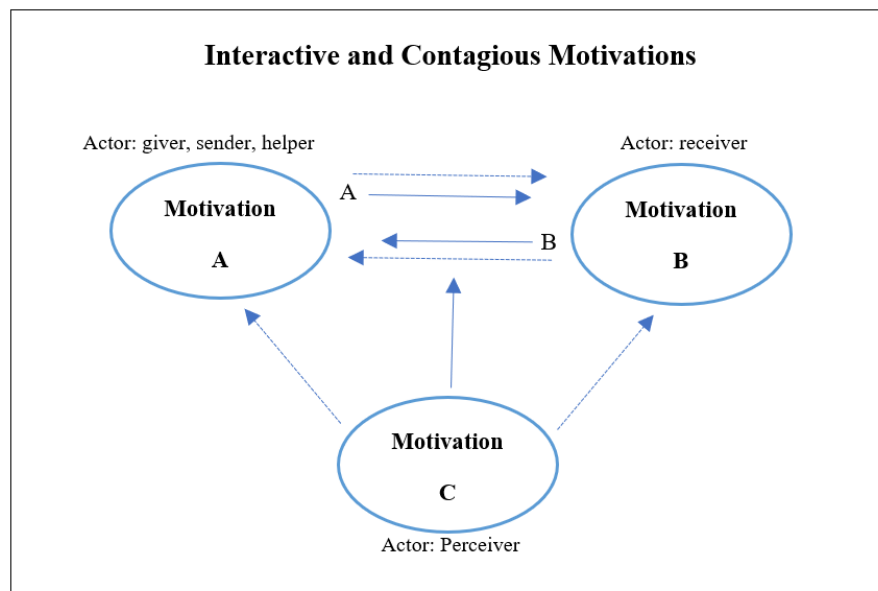


Figure 5.2 The Interactive and Contagious Motivation

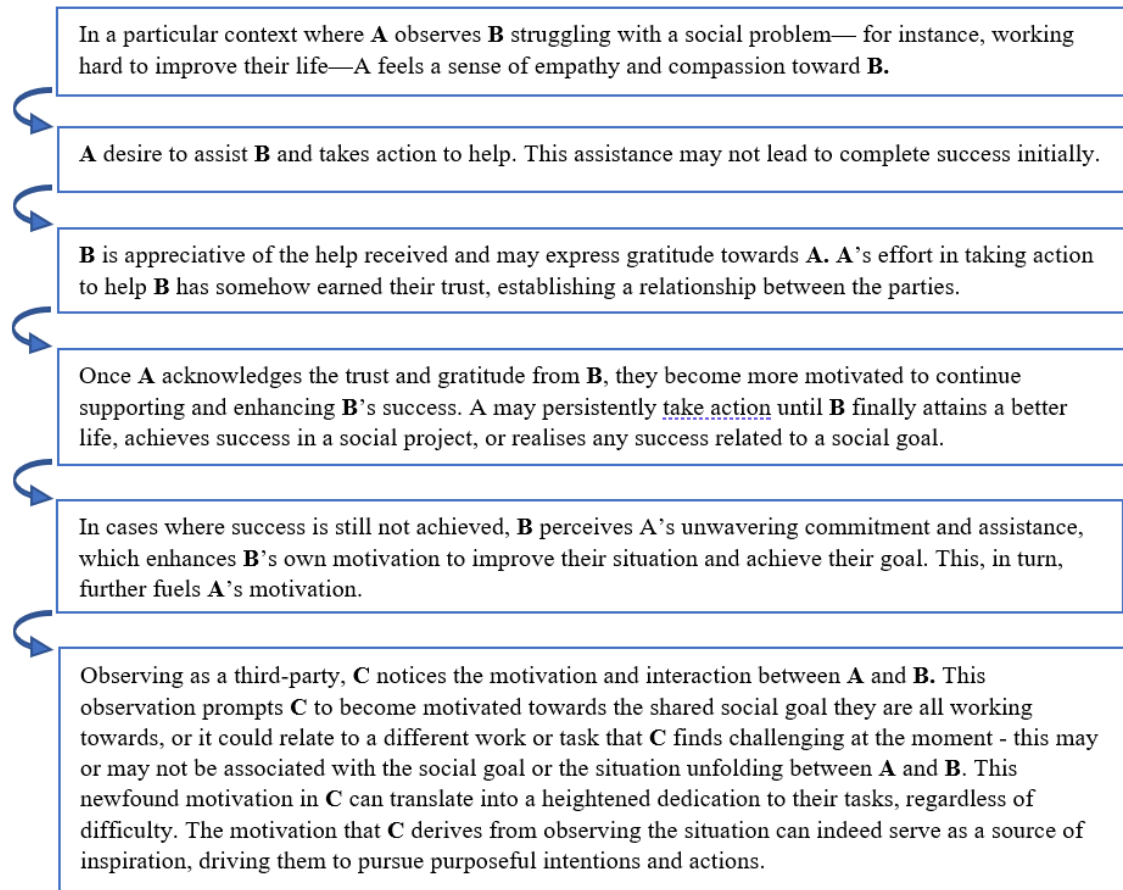


Figure 5.3 The Motivation Flowchart

According to Figure 5.2, ‘A’ encompasses individuals actively engaged in addressing social issues—ranging from founders of social enterprises to employees, social entrepreneurs, or anyone deeply committed to societal challenges or driven by altruism. ‘B’ represents the beneficiaries, which include underprivileged individuals, vulnerable groups, villagers, or even non-beneficiary employees within the social enterprise. The motivation of ‘A’ often springs from an altruistic drive and can be rejuvenated through interactions with ‘B’. These interactions may range from engagement in specific projects or social issues to simple acts of goodwill and positive treatment. Conversely, ‘B’ gains motivation from ‘A’s’ actions, often responding reciprocally when they perceive assistance or positive intentions. Such interactions can cultivate a resilient motivation between the parties. Meanwhile, ‘C’, not directly involved in the interactions between ‘A’ and ‘B’, is motivated by

observing their exchanges. The inspiration for ‘C’ arises from seeing ‘A’s’ profound dedication and enthusiasm, not only for specific projects or social issues but also in their positive interactions with ‘B’. This observation of the dynamics and momentum between ‘A’ and ‘B’ enables ‘C’ to experience the ripple effect of this interactive motivation, demonstrating how even those peripherally connected to the core activities can be impacted.

While the diagram and flowchart present an optimistic view of motivational dynamics within social enterprises, it is important to recognise that these representations are derived from patterns observed in the data and may not universally reflect every individual’s experience in this realm. The depiction of motivational sources and their interactions in “The Interactive and Contagious Motivation” diagram is insightful. However, it is crucial to note that the ripple effect of motivation often hinges on shared or similar values between the parties involved. The strength of motivation stemming from interactions may be diminished in the absence of a mutual appreciation of values. For instance, if ‘B’ or ‘C’ did not admire or value ‘A’s’ efforts towards social impact, or the general goodwill actions of ‘A’, or if they did not see ‘B’s’ efforts as valuable, the anticipated motivational surge might not occur. In other words, if the actions of ‘A’ or ‘B’ are not perceived as valuable, whether they pertain to social impact or general goodwill, the motivation might not be enhanced. Therefore, the underlying shared values that drive these motivational interactions may be of paramount importance.

Based on these findings, it is evident that interactions among individuals can dynamically enhance motivation within the social enterprise realm. These interpersonal interactions can be pivotal in helping individuals working in social enterprises to both maintain and rejuvenate their motivation, underscoring the significance of these dynamics in the unique context of social enterprise work. This highlights the critical role of fostering strong interpersonal relationships and a supportive environment to sustain and enhance employee motivation in social enterprises.

5.2.3.3.3 Stages of Employee Motivation: Visible Impact and Inwardly Driven

In this section, the dialogue extends the themes established primarily in Chapter 4, Group 2, Theme 4, where the findings show the evolution of employee motivation within social enterprises. Employee motivation can evolve through the working life journey and eventually become a deeper commitment. In this regard, the study reveals that employee motivation evolves over time, manifesting in various forms at different career stages. Two distinct phases of motivation were identified: ‘Visible Impact Motivation’ and ‘Inwardly Driven Motivation.’

The ‘**Visible Impact Motivation**’ phase is characterised by employees being primarily driven by the tangible outcomes of their actions, whether related to their anticipated social impact or other positive outcomes. Their motivation is fuelled by witnessing the direct results of their work and assessing how their efforts contribute to positive change. In contrast, the ‘**Inwardly Driven Motivation**’ phase represents the maturation of employees’ motivation. In this stage, employees remain committed even when the outcomes of their work are not immediately apparent, indicating a deeper, more intrinsic commitment to their work and the organisation.

The findings in this section and the stories of Participants P10 and P2, as well as P8 and P11 mentioned in Chapter 4, are particularly insightful in explaining the difference between these two motivations. While both P10 and P2 were demotivated due to the lack of genuine interest in the project’s social benefits from the partner companies, P10 eventually later decided to leave the enterprise. In contrast, participant P2 managed to overcome this challenge by shifting their focus to educating partners about their work’s true value and potential impact. This proactive approach allowed P2 to find a new source of motivation in social contribution, as their motivation became based not only on the outcomes for beneficiaries but also on the broader social impact of educating partners about the importance of their CSR projects.

Similarly, while both Participants P8 and P11 were demotivated by promotions, P8 later decided to leave the enterprise, whereas P11 overcame the demotivation by shifting their perception of social contribution. Participant P11 moved from focusing on the visible impact of social projects on beneficiaries to emphasising the importance of educating, training, and mentoring subordinates to understand social work and their contributions to society. This shift in focus allowed P11 to find renewed motivation in their role.

The stories of Participants P11 and P8 can provide a comprehensive explanation of why promotions can sometimes decrease employee motivation, leading to departure. They also explain why, in some cases, promotions initially decrease motivation, but employees eventually regain their motivation and choose to remain with the organisation. While promotions are typically associated with career advancement and enhanced motivation, they can sometimes lead to demotivation in a social enterprise setting. Promotions often entail changes in roles and responsibilities, potentially reducing an employee's direct interactions with team members and beneficiaries. Such a shift might weaken established relationships and lessen the sense of fulfilment that comes from hands-on engagement. As these interactions decrease, employees may begin to feel less impactful within the organisation, contributing to demotivation. Moreover, promotions might inadvertently limit opportunities for personal interactions, which are crucial for enhancing or even sustaining motivation. For instance, moving away from front-line roles, where individuals can directly witness and contribute to social impact, can lessen their sense of making a real difference. The transition from working closely with a team or directly with beneficiaries to a more administrative role can erode the very interactions that initially fuelled their motivation.

The findings and discussions on how employee motivation stems from interpersonal interactions, as covered in the previous section (The Dynamic of Motivation and Interpersonal Interaction), help explain why promotions can sometimes lower employee motivation. Promotions can disrupt the motivational dynamic by altering

the nature of the work and reducing established interactions among individuals. Employees often derive satisfaction and a sense of impactful contribution from their collective actions and interactions with others. Additionally, insights from this section, particularly the ‘Visible Impact Motivation’ phase, enhance the understanding of this phenomenon. These insights illustrate how promotions that reduce direct, interpersonal interactions can diminish employees’ sense of impact and fulfilment, leading to decreased motivation and, eventually, their departure from the social enterprise.

However, not everyone who is promoted experiences a decrease in motivation and chooses to leave the social enterprise. There are instances where employees successfully navigate this transition and rediscover their motivation from alternative sources upon receiving promotions. The findings underscore such successful transitions, highlighting how employees can adapt and thrive in their new roles. The ‘Inwardly Driven Motivation’ phase, identified in this study, further enhances our understanding of this phenomenon. In this phase, employees maintain their commitment and motivation despite changes in their roles, driven by a deeper, intrinsic dedication to their work and the organisation’s mission.

Initially, employees are motivated by the visible and tangible impacts of their work, with immediate positive outcomes significantly boosting their motivation. However, motivation may wane if results are delayed or less visible. As employees progress in their careers and engage in reflective practices about their roles and contributions, their motivation can evolve and become more intrinsic, resilient, and less dependent on immediate outcomes. Based on the data, it is observed that the transformation of motivation from ‘Visible Impact Motivation’ to ‘Inwardly Driven Motivation’ seems to require interpersonal interactions. These interactions significantly enhance individual reflection on one’s actions, the actions of others, and their mutual interactions. According to the research data, this transition often becomes evident after a considerable duration within a social enterprise, typically five years or more. However, time may not be a factor in this transition; it may largely depend on how

employees perceive and interpret their work, life, and workplace, and this pertains to their processes of meaning-making and finding meaningfulness in their roles.

While motivation in the realm of social enterprise work can be reinforced through interpersonal interactions within a shared value framework (as discussed in the previous section), the transformation of motivation from the first phase to the second phase also requires interpersonal interactions to enhance individuals' meaning-making processes. It is essential to note that motivation is subject to change, fluctuation, and transformation. Individuals working in social enterprises often seek and find ways to gain and regain motivation by considering the events and values they encounter, as well as the significance of their actions. The additional insights presented here highlight that the process of meaning-making may be central to maintaining and regaining individual motivation in the context of social enterprise work.

The results from the analysis of the two phases of the motivation stages indicate that for employees engaged in purpose-driven work within social enterprises, the process of meaning-making is crucial, as it endows their roles with a deep sense of purpose, thereby reinforcing their motivation. Nevertheless, findings show that this meaning-making process is not static; various life transitions and changes influence it. It necessitates individuals to introspectively assess what constitutes meaningful work and life, which can result in a diverse array of outcomes. Critical considering, this process is potentially shaped by factors such as age, health status, and current life conditions, as individuals' needs and perceptions of what is meaningful can evolve over time. The process is highly individualistic, reflecting the unique journey of each person.

This part of the analysis connects to the findings under Group 3, particularly Theme 4. The exploration of employee meaning-making processes will be discussed in depth in Area 3. Additionally, elements such as employees' family members'

perceptions, which are found to relate to reasons for demotivation and leaving, also influence how employees conceive meaningfulness. This element reappears in Group 3, Theme 4, affecting the meaning-making process of individuals. Therefore, these aspects will be explored further in Area 3 to provide a deeper understanding of their impact on employee motivation, the meaning-making process, and the potential development of employee attachment.

5.2.4 Discussion of Research Objective 2

Revisiting the literature gap: One of the notable gaps in this study pertains to employee motivation. Reviewing the retention literature reveals that employee motivation plays a crucial role in an employee's decision to stay with an organisation (Ramlall, 2004; Saks, 2006; Zin et al., 2012; Rubenstein et al., 2018). In social enterprises, employees are committed to their roles not just for financial reasons but also for the social impact of their work (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Brolis & Angel, 2015). They often trade lower compensation for the fulfilment derived from societal contributions, and many of them stay because of these intrinsic motivations (Amin, 2009; Satar, 2018; Nguyen et al., 2020; Tortia et al., 2022). Employee motivation in the context of social enterprises is complex and still requires further study (Brolis, 2018; Seet et al., 2021; Dupret et al., 2022; Parker, 2024). When individual motivation is not static as it can change, evolve, and be influenced by personal experiences, socio-cultural factors, and the organisational environment (Latham & Pinder, 2005; Boswell et al., 2008), studying motivation solely within the context of organisational work may not provide a comprehensive view, especially in social enterprises where individual background and social and personal values drive employees.

This study addresses this gap by investigating the motivation that drives employees to join, stay, or leave social enterprises. Referring to the findings and outcomes discussed in Area 2, this section responds to **Research Objective 2:** To understand the motivations of individuals working in social enterprises, specifically regarding their decisions to join, stay, or leave.

In Area 2, the findings are divided into three parts: Initial Motivations for Joining, Reasons for Demotivation and Leaving, and Motivations for Staying, corresponding to the research objectives. Regarding initial motivations, the study reveals a wide range of reasons why individuals choose to join social enterprises. While some are driven by a deep passion for social values and the impact of their work, aligning with the social enterprise's mission, others may not initially prioritise social impact. Those with an innate purpose-driven mindset primarily derive their motivation from the concrete societal consequences of their pursuits, echoing themes in the literature about third-sector organisations (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Brolis & Angel, 2015).

However, the findings also show that not all employees join social enterprises out of a passion for the social mission or social values. Some are attracted to the job's content and nature without an initial interest in social impact, and there are those who join as beneficiaries before transitioning to full employment with the social enterprise. This diversity in initial motivations contributes to the complexity of employee motivation in social enterprises. As Caringal-Go and Hechanova (2018) noted, employees in social enterprises often exhibit traits from diverse sectors, seeking competitive perks and compensation comparable to those in for-profit organisations while also having a pro-social mindset and a preference for working with a social purpose.

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal that for those initially less focused on social impact, their motivation and perception evolve over time, reflecting a broader learning and value-absorption process within their roles. This observation aligns with Dorado et al.'s (2022) findings, which indicate that employees can assimilate organisational values while working with the affiliated social enterprise, particularly through people management practices. The research findings provide a unique perspective, highlighting that employees assimilate organisational values not only through people management practices but also through interpersonal interactions with others both within and outside the organisation. These interactions include communication with colleagues, collaboration with organisational partners,

involvement with community members associated with the social enterprise, and connections with its beneficiaries. These interpersonal interactions seem to be central to how employees integrate organisational values and discover personal motivation related to their careers. This part of the findings is supported by the findings on the Motivations for Staying part. In summary, exploring initial motivations provides a fundamental understanding of the range of motivations among those working for social enterprises and the potential for their motivation to grow, evolve, and vary.

The findings for the Reasons for Demotivation and Leaving part align with existing literature, highlighting several factors that influence employees' decisions to leave social enterprises. These factors include poor management systems, unbalanced workloads, unfair treatment, limited opportunities for career advancement, attractive positions in other organisations, and the aspiration to start their own business or social enterprise. These reasons are well-documented in existing literature (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003; Kim & Lee, 2007; Amin, 2009; Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Nguyen et al., 2020).

An interesting finding from the study is that promotions, traditionally viewed as a motivator, can sometimes decrease motivation and drive employees to leave in the context of social enterprises. This is because promotions often lead to reduced interpersonal interactions. Employees in social enterprises, who are typically value-driven, derive meaning and motivation from their interactions with colleagues and beneficiaries. These interactions help them see the social impact of their work. When promotions move them away from front-line roles, where they can directly witness and contribute to social impact, to more administrative roles with less contact with people on the front line, it can erode the interactions that initially fuelled their motivation. The analysis of the findings in the Motivations for Staying section clearly explains this phenomenon. In summary, the findings on the Reasons for Demotivation and Leaving part establish a fundamental understanding of the factors that potentially demotivate employees and lead to their decision to leave social enterprises.

For the Motivations for Staying part, the data analysis identified three key insights. The first concerns the intrinsic motivations of employees who work for social enterprises, which are composed of three pillars. This three-pillar motivational framework consists of the recognition of personal skills and career progress. This pillar emphasises the importance of recognising and developing employees' personal and professional capabilities. It is not just about career progression in traditional terms (like promotions or salary increases) but also about individual development, which includes life skills, self-capability, and mental self-care that enhance holistic self-development. This comprehensive development contributes to an individual's sense of self-efficacy, meaning their belief in their ability to succeed and handle various situations. The second pillar involves feeling a sense of meaningful contribution to the organisation. This implies that employees need to feel that their work is valuable and has a significant impact on the organisation, thereby enhancing and sustaining their motivation. This sense of contribution boosts their feeling of belonging and importance within the enterprise. The final pillar recognises the importance of contributing to societal impact. In mission-driven organisations, such as social enterprises, employees are often inspired by the desire to create positive change in society. Therefore, acknowledging their own impact is crucial for enhancing their motivation.

An important discovery of this motivational framework is that the lack of any of these pillars might have a detrimental effect on the long-term motivation of employees. Additionally, it appears that employees can identify and reinforce these motivations through participation and interaction with others. Furthermore, a thorough analysis reveals that to maintain the motivation of individuals working in social enterprises, it is essential for these organisations to operate with the concept of 'life-viability'. This concept pertains to the necessary conditions and factors for human flourishing. Employees should be provided with adequate remuneration to meet their living expenses, and their workload and job obligations should align with their personal well-being and health circumstances. While the three pillars are crucial in enhancing motivation in social enterprises, their effectiveness may be significantly improved when connected with the 'life viability' concept. The notion of 'life

viability' emerged as crucial, indicating that the well-being of employees and their motivation in social work are inherently interconnected within social enterprises. Hence, social enterprises must prioritise the holistic welfare of their employees, including their physical and mental well-being, to support and enhance their employee motivation.

The second key insight from the Motivations for Staying part uncovers the dynamic nature of motivation among social enterprise employees. It was found that motivation in this context is often contagious, emerging from interpersonal interactions within the social enterprise environment. These interactions play a crucial role in enhancing, maintaining, nurturing, and supporting employees' motivation, particularly for those driven by a social purpose. This aspect helps explain why career promotions sometimes lead to decreased motivation, as they might reduce opportunities for interpersonal interactions between employees and their significant contacts. With fewer interactions, employees may have fewer opportunities to see and evaluate the expected outcomes of their work or the anticipated social impact. Consequently, this can negatively affect the three core motivational pillars, as interacting with others helps employees cultivate and evaluate their motivation. The findings suggest that in social enterprises, employee motivation is significantly influenced by the quality of interpersonal interactions.

In fact, the significance of these interactions is integral to the three-pillar motivational framework. If social enterprises implement management practices and foster a culture that enhances positive interactions, employees will have more opportunities to realise and reflect on their self-esteem, abilities, and self-worth in relation to the organisation and its social impact. This supportive environment can potentially enhance employee motivation by ensuring that employees feel valued and connected. When employees can see the impact of their work and receive recognition through positive interpersonal interactions, it reinforces their sense of purpose and commitment. Additionally, fostering a collaborative and inclusive culture where

employees feel their contributions are recognised and valued can further strengthen their motivation.

Beyond recognising the importance of interpersonal interactions in fostering employee motivation, the insights indicate that the effectiveness of these interactions may be significantly influenced by the shared values upheld by the employees' colleagues, beneficiaries, leaders, and organisational project partners. Therefore, while interpersonal interactions are crucial for boosting motivation, their positive impact may depend on the degree of shared values among the individuals involved. When there is a strong alignment of values, the interactions are more likely to be meaningful and motivating.

The third key insight from the Motivations for Staying part identifies two key stages of motivational development. The first stage, 'Visible Impact Motivation,' is driven by directly seeing the results of one's efforts and understanding their contribution to positive change. The second stage, 'Inwardly Driven Motivation,' is a more mature form of motivation that persists even when the results are not immediately visible. The findings suggest that the progression from extrinsic to more intrinsic motivation (from Visible Impact to Inwardly Driven) in social enterprises is deeply rooted in the meaning-making process. This process involves individuals reflecting on their experiences and interpreting them, leading to a deeper understanding of the significance of their actions and roles. Findings show that interpersonal interactions play a critical role in this process by providing opportunities for reflection and growth.

In summary, the findings in Area 2 enhance the understanding of the motivation of employees in social enterprises. Individual motivation is dynamic and capable of changing and growing. Individuals who are not initially driven by social impact can learn from others and develop a value-driven motivation over time. Additionally, extrinsic motivation can evolve into more intrinsic, mature, and resilient forms. A

key insight gained from this part of the study is that interpersonal interactions can significantly enhance, foster, and reignite motivation for those working in social enterprises. These interactions seem to be particularly effective in boosting motivation when there is a shared set of values among the individuals involved. When employees, colleagues, beneficiaries, and organisational partners uphold similar values, their interactions become more meaningful and reinforcing. This alignment in values helps create a supportive and cohesive work environment where individuals feel connected to each other and the organisation's mission, thereby strengthening their motivation and commitment.

Moreover, interpersonal interactions can enhance the development of employee motivation through the meaning-making process. This process can elevate motivation from extrinsic to more intrinsic, mature, and resilient forms. **When the outcomes of this meaning-making process align with the values and goals of the workplace, it can potentially lead to a strong commitment to staying with the social enterprise.** However, achieving these positive outcomes does not solely depend on fostering interpersonal interactions. The meaning-making process is dynamic and influenced by various factors, including personal experiences, socio-cultural context, and organisational environment.

The findings on this part do not provide definitive answers on how to build shared values among people to support interpersonal interactions that enhance employee motivation in social enterprises. Nor does it offer a clear method for supporting the individual's meaning-making process to foster positive outcomes and elevate motivation to a more intrinsic level or a strong commitment to the organisation. Nonetheless, the insights from this part contribute to the literature on employee motivation in social enterprises by highlighting the significant role of fostering positive and interpersonal interactions among employees. Such interactions are crucial in supporting and enhancing employee motivation in the context of social enterprise.

5.2.5 Area 3 The development of employee attachment

In this section, the discussion builds upon the themes mainly developed in Chapter 4, Groups 3 and 4, focusing on the research framework regarding the evolution of employee attachment, which is identified as “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie.” This section aims to enhance the understanding of how employee attachment emerges in the context of social enterprises. It begins by exploring the antecedents of both “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie.” The discussion then moves to examine the impact of Thai social norms on the evolution of these ties and to explore their interrelation. Findings also address the conditions that facilitate the development of robust employee attachments.

5.2.5.1 The antecedent of the ties.

Within the context of this research, the term “organisational relationship tie” refers to all aspects of positive relationships that contribute to employee attachment, including the emotional and psychological bonds that develop willingly between employees and their workplace. Besides, “motivation tie” refers to all aspects of motivation that contribute to employee attachment, encouraging employees to stay and enhancing organisational productivity willingly. The developed themes regarding the potential antecedent conceptualised on each type of tie will be discussed in the following section.

The Organisational Relationship Tie

Based on the findings regarding the antecedent of “organisational relationship tie,” the genesis of robust relationships can typically be traced back to connections formed at an individual level. The study’s findings indicate that shared interests and **similar life experiences** often serve as the bedrock for these potent connections, providing a natural platform for initial interactions like discussions and knowledge exchanges between individuals. These open up possibilities for individuals to grow their relationships and develop strong ties.

Findings also indicate that **shared values and beliefs** further lubricate the pathway for more frequent and deeper interactions, effectively tightening the bonds between individuals. However, the cultivation of these strong ties is contingent upon many factors. Time, for instance, is a significant contributor since it affords individuals more opportunities to interact and consolidate their relationships. Nonetheless, the findings reveal that time or the duration of interactions (e.g., how long we have known each other) is not as pivotal as their intensity and significance. In this context, ‘intensity and significance’ refer to meaningful interactions and incidents that strengthen the bond between individuals. For example, knowing someone for a long time does not necessarily lead to a strong relationship if there have been few opportunities to interact meaningfully or collaborate on significant tasks. Conversely, relationships are strengthened through meaningful experiences, such as helping each other or working together on important projects, which create a deeper connection and mutual understanding. Shared values play a critical role in this process, as they can provide a common ground for these meaningful interactions, fostering trust and cooperation. Based on data, relationships appear to be fortified when individuals navigate through both joyous and challenging work-related experiences together, sharing appreciation and facing obstacles as a unit. This shared journey of successes and difficulties further solidifies their bond, making their relationship more resilient and impactful.

Findings also reveal that the inception of an ‘organisational relationship tie’ can be derived from an inclusive **atmosphere and a cooperative ethos** within a social enterprise, fostering a deep sense of connection and attachment to both the workplace and its members. Moreover, positive relationships between employees and founders or leaders also play a crucial role in reinforcing this organisational tie. Such relationships flourish when leaders are responsive and understanding of employees’ concerns, leading to compassion and strengthened bonds. Positive relationships often manifest when employees feel supported and valued by their leaders. The development of relationships is intricate, and the process through which these relationships evolve into ties that anchor employees to their workplace is even more complex. In some cases, employees become attached to their workplace due to

positive relationships with founders or leaders; in others, strong relationships with colleagues and teammates are the binding force, even if relationships with bosses or leaders are weak. In this regard, the findings suggest that the **reciprocal process** embedded in the relationships between individuals appears to be a vital indicator of the strength of the “organisational relationship tie.”

The Motivation Tie

The “motivation tie” refers to all aspects of motivation connected to employee attachment, characterised by employees’ authentic desire to stay and contribute to the organisation. Literature reveals that individuals working in the third sector, driven by values, draw motivation from a passion for their work and concern for societal issues (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Brolis, 2018). These findings were also reflected in the current study, where **individuals’ altruism** emerged as a key antecedent. This intrinsic passion and willpower can foster a “motivation tie,” encouraging prolonged employment. However, the findings indicated that sustaining this intrinsic drive requires **individuals’ confidence** and anticipation of future success, even when facing challenges. Hence, employees’ perceptions of their work, along with confidence in what they do, play a pivotal role in sustaining motivation.

According to the findings, another critical antecedent of the motivation tie is **dignity** associated with work, significantly strengthening an employee’s commitment. When employees perceive their jobs as dignifying, it enhances their attachment to the organisation. Furthermore, it was found that **deep admiration and trust towards founders and leaders** also significantly influence employees’ motivation to stay. For instance, when treated with kindness and respect, employees often develop a deep appreciation for their benefactors, fostering feelings of gratitude and attachment to the organisation or leader. Such feelings typically arise from experiences of compassion, understanding, and mutual gratitude, which somehow drive individuals’ motivation. The findings related to the “motivation tie” antecedent demonstrate its connection to the antecedent of the “organisational relationship tie.”

A critical analysis of this discussion reveals that the developed themes regarding the antecedents of ties highlight various potential factors that are pivotal in strengthening employee attachment within an organisation. While the concepts of “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” may seem distinct in their definitions regarding the study framework, the findings indicate that they share several common antecedents. For instance, deep admiration toward leaders/founders and shared values can be antecedents of both the “organisational relationship tie” and the “motivation tie.” For instance, while some employees admire their leaders/founders and develop feelings and strong relationships, leading to a commitment to stay and work due to these positive relationships, others admire their leaders/founders and cultivate motivation in their work because they aspire to emulate their leaders/founders’ dedication to working for others. This overlap suggests that certain factors may be universally important in fostering both types of ties, contributing to a more integrated understanding of how relationships and motivation interact to enhance employee attachment. The results of this part establish a fundamental understanding of the development of employee attachment in social enterprises and pave the way for further analysis. These insights hint at the possibility that the development of sustainable employee attachment might involve an intricate interplay between both types of ties.

5.2.5.2 Thai social norms and the development of “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie.”

The findings of this research illuminate that the intensification of both “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” seems contingent upon specific social norms, as the nature of each norm mandates distinct behavioural responses. Certain social norms facilitate the strengthening of ties, thereby enhancing employee attachment, while others may yield weaker ties.

In the case of Thai social norms uncovered in this study, two significant elements—*bunghun* and *kreng jai* — predominantly influence the development of organisational relationship ties and motivation ties. To encapsulate, *bunghun* refers to indebted goodness as the psychological link between someone who helps another person out of kindness and sincerity and the person who receives the help, who remembers the good deed and is always ready to pay it back or reciprocate the kindness (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995). *Kreng jai* is characterised by an individual's deliberate restraint of their own wishes or interests to prevent potential discomfort or discord, thereby preserving harmonious and cooperative relations (Nimanandh & Andrews, 2009). Although *kreng jai* can be manifested in various forms, including compliance with others' requests even in challenging circumstances, a reluctance to inconvenience or disrupt others, refraining from displaying displeasure or anger to avoid causing discomfort, avoiding the assertion of one's own opinions or needs, and hesitancy in giving instructions or orders to superiors or more experienced peers (Nimanandh & Andrews, 2009). Within the framework of this study, the facet of *kreng jai* most pertinent to the development of ties pertains to a hesitancy to interfere with or disturb others.

To elucidate the evolution of ties, it is essential to consider the facilitative role of *bunghun*. This social norm can significantly influence employees or beneficiaries within a social enterprise, fostering a sense of indebtedness and commitment towards the organisation. *Bunghun* encompasses two crucial social norms: "*katanyoo rookhun*" and "*mettaa karuna*." The former, *katanyoo rookhun*, embodies feelings of gratitude and indebtedness, while the latter, *mettaa karuna*, denotes mercy and kindness (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995).

Each of these norms within *bunghun* triggers distinct actions from individuals. For example, when employees perceive they are treated well, supported, or assisted by founders, leaders, or the organisation at large—viewing the workplace as a supportive entity in their lives—they will likely respond differently based on the underlying norm driving their feelings. If their feelings align with *katanyoo*

rookhun, employees tend to reciprocate by demonstrating loyalty and commitment to the founders, leaders, or the social enterprise itself, aiming to repay the goodwill they received. This reaction facilitates the formation of **organisational relationship ties**. On the other hand, if individuals are motivated by *mettaa karuna*, they are inclined to extend help to others in need, driven by the assistance and support they receive. This compassionate response is indicative of the development of **motivation ties**.

Upon comparing the actions elicited by *bunkhun*, it is evident that the ties resulting from *katanyoo rookhun* (where there is a sense of indebtedness and a perceived obligation to repay the benefactor) manifest more intensely. These robust ties significantly increase an individual's likelihood to remain within the organisation. In contrast, ties that stem from *mettaa karuna*, which are born when recipients of help feel compelled to assist others, do not necessarily anchor individuals as strongly to the organisation. With *mettaa karuna* as the driving force, individuals might continue to engage in acts of assistance and support towards others even after departing from the organisation. Therefore, although the development of both the "organisational relationship tie" and "motivation tie" is enhanced by social norm *bunkhun*, the degree of intensity of each tie is different. Regarding the results, the degree of intensity of tie emerging by *bunkhun* into "organisational relationship tie" is stronger than the tie enhanced by *bunkhun* into "motivation tie" since the norm '*kratanyoo rookhun*' which is the main drive of the strong relationship among actor require action to take from the receiver such as doing something in return to the specific giver while the norm '*mettaa karuna*' under *bunkhun* which is the main drive of the emergence of "motivation tie" do not specifically require the actor (receiver) to do something for paying back to the giver. In this case, *mettaa karuna* drives individuals to extend their goodwill and take action for others. Therefore, the *mettaa karuna*, which normally drives the emergence of a "motivation tie", does not result in the intensity degree as much as the '*katanyoo rookhun*' that drives the emergence of an "organisational relationship tie."

According to the findings regarding social norm *kreng jai*, this social norm aids in the development of ties within an organisation in two distinct ways. First, when employees are the recipients of favourable treatment, like forgiveness from leaders or strong support from colleagues, they frequently feel obligated to reciprocate by becoming useful team members and abstaining from posing any difficulties that may harm their peers or superiors. This sense of obligation, derived from *kreng jai*, often causes individuals to reconsider and eventually decide against leaving the organisation, even if departure was their initial intention. The reluctance to leave stems from a desire to prevent causing issues for those they care about within the organisation, particularly if those individuals have been supportive. This mindset, characterised by thoughts like “I cannot leave; my departure would create problems for my colleagues and superiors”, is indicative of the development of **organisational relationship ties** influenced by *kreng jai*.

Secondly, the tie emerges when individuals experience acts of benevolence or forgiveness from founders, leaders, or colleagues. Influenced by *kreng jai*, these individuals will likely strive to avoid making mistakes in the workplace that could cause difficulties or distress for their superiors or those in positions of authority. Over time, this careful and considerate behaviour can foster a deepening desire to remain with the organisation, potentially evolving into a strong **motivational tie**. This dynamic often unfolds as individuals nurture an intention to be competent and intelligent contributors, effectively offering their skills and abilities to the benefit of their leaders and the organisation as a whole. Thereby, they potentially open up a new avenue for engaging in seeing their skill and ability development or critically reflecting on the meaningfulness of their work as a new source of their motivations.

In essence, the difference in actions leading to the formation of “organisational relationship tie” and “motivational tie” through *kreng jai* can be succinctly explained. “**Organisational relationship tie**” typically originates from a sense of belonging and a perception that leaving the organisation would inconvenience or harm close colleagues/leaders, thus compelling individuals to stay. In contrast,

“**motivation ties**” are often sparked by an individual’s determination to enhance their skills and contribute more effectively to the organisation to express gratitude for the support and kindness they have received from superiors or colleagues.

Based on the distinctions between organisational relationship ties and motivation ties that arise from *kreng jai*, it is evident that the latter has more significant potential to forge stronger connections. This is because the **organisational relationship tie**, originating from the sentiment ‘I cannot leave since it will trouble my loved ones’, allows for eventual departure once individuals ensure their absence will not negatively impact those they care about. In other words, there is contemplation of leaving under the right circumstances. On the other hand, the **motivation tie**, rooted in the attitude of ‘I will exert my utmost effort to support my boss’, enhances individuals’ willpower to work diligently and hone their skills continuously. This commitment can subsequently unveil additional motivational factors, including job satisfaction, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, all of which serve to reinforce and solidify the tie, making it more durable and resilient in the long run. Therefore, the development of the tie enhanced by *kreng jai* into a “motivation tie” has a higher degree of intensity as individuals can discover other sources of motivation to enhance the tie. In contrast, the development of the tie that *kreng jai* enhanced into an “organisational relationship tie” has less degree of intensity as individuals will find a way to leave once they are sure that their leaves will not trouble their loved ones who continue working after their leaves.

Based on these results, Table 5.1 summarises the differences in the intensity of ties that emerge from different social norms.

Table 5.1 The Intensity Level of Ties by Social Norms

Social norms		Tie intensity level	
Bunkhun	—————→ Motivation tie	Strong	★ ★ ★
Bunkhun	—————→ Organisational relationship tie	Strongest	★ ★ ★ ★
Kreng jai	—————→ Motivation tie	Moderate	★ ★
Kreng jai	—————→ Organisational relationship tie	Weakest	★

According to the table, the developed ties can be ranked from the strongest to the weakest, with each level of strength having a corresponding potential to cultivate strong employee attachment. The research findings elucidate that different types of social norms significantly influence the degree of employee attachment differently. In this context, both “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie”, which are influenced by the social norm *kreng jai*, are generally not as resilient as those shaped by *bunghun*. This is because *bunghun* carries a stronger sense of obligation and is more heavily enforced by society. People who fail to follow social norms *bunghun* are likely to face more significant negative consequences from their community. On the other hand, *kreng jai* is less stringent compared to *bunghun*. People who neglect to practice *kreng jai* may still face some social disapproval, but the repercussions are generally less severe than when *bunghun* is disregarded.

Therefore, according to Table 5.1, *bunghun* has resulted in a stronger degree than *kreng jai*, and as discussed previously, the “organisational relationship tie” enhanced by *bunghun* gets a stronger degree than the “motivation tie” enhanced by *bunghun*. Thus, the strongest tie is the “organisational relationship tie” enhanced by *bunghun*, while the “motivation tie” has a strong intensity level. For the developed ties enhanced from *kreng jai*, as discussed previously, the “motivation tie” enhanced by *kreng jai* gets a stronger degree than the “organisational relationship tie.” Besides, since *bunghun* results in a stronger degree than *kreng jai*, the intensity levels of the “motivation tie” and “organisational relationship tie” resulting from *kreng jai* are moderate and weakest, respectively.

In fact, *bunghun* can persist and be sustained over time, potentially enduring until one of the involved parties passes away, with the possibility of extending to the deceased’s family (Nimanandh & Andrews, 2009). However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the *bunghun*-fortified ties may not retain their strength indefinitely; their vigour may wane over time. For instance, *bunghun*’s potency may gradually diminish as it integrates and acclimates to dominant Western cultural norms, though *bunghun* will not entirely vanish from Thai society (Atmiyanandana

& Lawler, 2003, p. 237). However, this endurance is dependent on individual perceptions and personal associations. Similarly, the influence of *kreng jai* may also diminish over time. Individuals might become hesitant to practice *kreng jai* towards others, especially if the latter exhibits undesirable characteristics, such as selfishness or a lack of moral integrity (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995, p. 49).

It is essential to acknowledge that while social norms do play a pivotal role in influencing the levels of employee attachment development, the reality of this developmental process is not solely explicable by social norms. Behind the scenes of action-driving social norms, there exists a nuanced process of the development of employee attachment. In this regard, the meaning-making process in relation to personal life and the cumulative positive relationships are also related. For instance, factors like a positive and cooperative work atmosphere, the sense of dignity employees derive from their association with a social enterprise, and the impressions employees hold towards their leaders – indicated as reasons why employees in social enterprises decide to stay – are also underpinned by the thoughts individuals have when evaluating and making decisions on staying or leaving. These aspects will be discussed further in Section 5.2.5.4: The Meaningfulness and the Process of Meaning-Making. Furthermore, some conditions identified as strengthening and sustaining employee attachment will be discussed in the following section.

5.2.5.3 The interweaving of two ties and conditions of the development of employee attachment.

The earlier discussion on antecedents paves the way to identify potential antecedents of “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie.” The subsequent discussion also elucidates the role of social norms in strengthening employee attachment. In this section, the study’s findings highlight specific conditions for the development of “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” concerning the evolution of employee attachment.

The findings suggest that neither “organisational relationship tie” nor “motivation tie” alone can yield strong employee attachment unless they are combined. Participants who reported deciding to stay due to one type of ties (either organisational relationship tie or motivation tie) seemed likely to leave eventually. For example, Participant P1, who identified organisational relationship tie (stemming from *kreng jai* and positive relationships with colleagues) as the primary reason for staying, indicated plans to leave eventually. Similarly, Participant P9, driven by a passion for working with teammates and a motivation to contribute to a social enterprise sharing their values, also finally left due to a lack of positive relationships with leaders. Based on the insights found, the myriads of participant stories substantiate the idea that sustainable employee attachment typically requires a combination of both types of ties. In this regard, based on the stories shared by Participants P11, P13, P14, P15, P17, P40, P44, P47, and P48— who identified the strong employee attachment, the common element that led to the sustenance of their employee attachment is the intertwining of both organisational relationship tie and motivation tie. In this respect, Participant P11’s story excellently illustrates how these ties can be intertwined. P11, who has a long-standing passion for social work, shared experiencing periods of discouragement when the job did not yield the expected social impact or when external parties did not value the social mission, among other significant challenges encountered over time. During these times, the supportive colleagues and positive relationships provided the encouragement needed to continue working through the challenges and setbacks. Conversely, periods of separation from supportive colleagues and a decline in relationships adversely affected P11’s motivation. However, reflecting on the social impact achieved, the recognition of the potential for further positive outcomes for beneficiaries, and the new source of motivation in supporting the young generation to make an impact helped reignite P11’s motivation, sustaining their attachment to the organisation. This interplay between motivation and organisational relationship ties is a common experience for value-driven employees and plays a significant role in the development of employee attachment over time. Therefore, for the quality of employee attachment, both **“organisational relationship tie”** and **“motivation tie”** must be intertwined.

According to the conditions for developing employee attachment, the concept of “life viability” or the employees’ life conditions is a critical factor in sustaining this attachment. This condition shows the relationship toward the motivational framework (the three pillars motivational framework) discussed in Area 2, which must operate in conjunction with “life viability” for the three motivational pillars to sustain employee motivation effectively. Findings in this section revealed that the intertwining of the “organisational relationship tie” and “motivational tie” must function within the realm of “life viability,” or a favourable life condition for the employee, thereby sustaining employee attachment. In other words, when employee attachment is established, meaning that the organisational relationship tie is activated and intertwined with the motivational tie, this intertwining can be maintained if it operates under favourable employee life conditions. This implies that employee attachment will be sustained if employees have adequate personal thriving conditions, such as receiving sufficient income for their living needs and having workloads and job responsibilities that are compatible with their life conditions, including any health constraints. This could mean accommodating limitations such as the inability to work long hours, manage high-stress environments, or physical disabilities.

These considerations are crucial since individual needs are diverse and impact how employee attachment is sustained. For example, an individual may have passion and motivation for their work and excellent relationships in the workplace, indicating strong employee attachment. However, if they do not earn enough to meet their basic needs or face health limitations that prevent them from working as before, this established attachment may not endure. Therefore, the conditions of the employees related to the “life viability” concept mentioned in relation to employee motivation (in Area 2) are another key factor in sustaining established employee attachment.

Hence, to develop and sustain employee attachment, two main conditions must be met. First, the organisational relationship tie and the motivational tie must intertwine. Second, they must function effectively in conjunction with the employees' well-being (favourable life conditions). In other words, employee attachment will be sustained if these intertwined ties are developed with an awareness of and consideration for employees' life conditions and well-being.

5.2.5.4 The meaningfulness and the process of meaning-making: the core of motivation tie.

Based on the analysis, the results show that while social norms play a crucial role in fostering and reinforcing the development of employee attachment, they alone are not sufficient to influence the entire decision-making process regarding an individual's choice to stay or leave, nor are they enough to maintain the ties. Additionally, according to the findings on the conditions for strong and sustained employee attachment, although the intertwining of "organisational relationship tie" and "motivation tie" can strengthen and sustain employee attachment, this intertwining affirms the sustained nature of employee attachment once established; they do not represent the fundamental antecedents nor the sole cause of each tie type's formation and development.

When considering the identified antecedents of the "organisational relationship tie", such as an inclusive atmosphere, cooperative ethos within a social enterprise, and shared values and beliefs, which foster positive relationships, and the identified antecedents of the "motivation tie", like passion for societal issues or dignity in work, although they are antecedents found based on data, they do not reflect the core cause of each tie type's formation and development.

In this regard, a deeper examination of the evolution of these ties reveals that the process of individual meaning-making plays a central role in forming and maintaining the “**motivation tie.**” Similarly, further analysis of the “**organisational relationship tie**” shows that the inherent virtue in individual relationships is vital to its formation and sustenance.

This section will explore the meaningfulness and meaning-making process in relation to the motivation tie. In the next section, 5.2.5.5: The Virtue Between Individuals’ Relationships, the core of the organisational relationship tie will be discussed further.

According to the antecedents and the formation of the “motivation tie,” it is evident that a genuine passion for and value assigned to one’s job can significantly strengthen the motivation tie, which encompasses both job satisfaction and motivation derived from social norms (e.g. social value, passion in work, social norms can enhance the development of motivation tie). However, in a deeper critical analysis, the study’s findings highlight that the crucial factor underpinning the motivation tie is the alignment of an individual’s perception of a meaningful life with engaging in meaningful work. This pivotal alignment not only cultivates attachment but also enhances and sustains the tie’s strength. Consequently, the individuals’ feeling of meaningfulness engenders a resilient form of willpower, unyielding and not easily dissipated even in the face of unexpected outcomes, such as project failures or the absence of tangible social impact.

Under the umbrella of individuals’ feelings of meaningfulness regarding the gathered data, it appears that two intricately interconnected concepts exist: a meaningful life and meaningful work. A meaningful life involves the pursuit of purpose and significance in one’s existence, marking a personal journey characterised by self-discovery and growth. Conversely, meaningful work refers to the emotional engagement and awareness that an individual invests in their job, role, or calling, imbuing it with a sense of personal importance. When individuals’ pursuit of a meaningful life resonates with their quest for meaningful work, a deep and

significant connection emerges, and the feeling of meaningfulness arrives. This alignment creates a harmonious workplace environment, fostering strong employee attachment. Such a bond represents a deep connection between the individual, their work, and the broader organisational context, establishing a framework of significance and importance in the professional realm. However, achieving alignment between a meaningful life and meaningful work is not a straightforward process; it necessitates time, individual reflection, and an understanding of one's unique circumstances.

Based on the findings, the concept of a meaningful life varies among individuals, further diversifying the alignment process. As revealed by the findings, employees in social enterprises perceive and align meaningful life and work in distinct ways. According to the data, the alignment of meaningful life and meaningful work (the individuals' feeling of meaningfulness) is often influenced by **how they and their families value and respect their professions**, as this is intricately linked to personal dignity and meaningfulness in the Thai context. For instance, individuals might inherently find their work meaningful and align it with their life's purpose. Still, if their family does not value or respect their profession, it could weaken the connection between perceived meaningful life and meaningful work. Such misalignment can lead to feelings of discontent, particularly when family members fail to understand or appreciate the individual's role, thus affecting their perception of meaningfulness.

Therefore, meaningfulness here is not only related to the meaning-making of oneself toward the passion for one's work but also to social and surrounding society, like individuals' friends and family members. Furthermore, the alignment of meaningful life and meaningful work is even more complicated since individuals vary in their perceptions of what constitutes a meaningful life. According to the findings, for some, perceiving their **job as a divine calling** or a means to accrue merit can infuse their lives with meaning. For others, a meaningful life is derived from having a job that provides **job security** and a sense of **dignity and respect among loved ones**.

Nevertheless, there are also those who find meaning in leading a tranquil and **peaceful life**, free from disturbances or undue stressors such as health issues or financial troubles. For example, consider individuals struggling with health conditions or informal debts; finding employment at a social enterprise that understands and supports their limitations can bring the peace and normalcy they have sought throughout their lives, making their work at such enterprises meaningful.

In the varied landscape of social enterprises, employees might find meaningful life in different ways. It could be through engaging in meaningful work, contributing to **social impact**, or working in alignment with their **values and beliefs**. Alternatively, it might simply stem from a pleasant work environment, adequate income, and positive relationships with colleagues and bosses, irrespective of the intention of making a social impact or societal contribution. Indeed, this diversity in the perception of meaningful life within social enterprises can be attributed to the workforce's varied composition, with individuals bringing different life experiences, beliefs, religions, ages, life circumstances, and social roles to the table. Thus, the process of aligning meaningful work with meaningful life is inherently diverse and complex, even within the same workplace, as it is significantly influenced by an individual's unique context and perspective.

What has been found to contribute to the success of this alignment process in individuals' lives seems related to the meaning-making process. The findings reveal that the successful meaning-making processes of individuals working in social enterprises vary depending on their backgrounds. Notably, not all employees in social enterprises initially embark on their careers with the explicit goal of contributing to a social mission. For instance, stories shared by Participants P13, P17, and P48, who stated that they would stay with their associated social enterprises until they could no longer be with them, illustrate this nuanced journey. These individuals did not commence their roles with a focus on making a social impact. However, as they immersed themselves in their work, they developed a deep appreciation for their contributions to society and the assistance they provided to

others through their roles. Over time, these employees internalised the values of their respective social enterprises, growing to cherish work that extended benefits beyond their personal gains to affect others positively. This newfound appreciation has subsequently enriched their sense of leading a meaningful life and has fortified their motivations and attachment to their organisations.

Specifically, employees who join social enterprises, particularly those who have overcome life challenges or have been beneficiaries of social enterprises, often find the meaning-making process more straightforward when their employment enhances their quality of life. Conversely, individuals who join based on shared values might undergo a more complex, nuanced process of meaning-making in the long run. In this regard, they may experience a more multifaceted process of engagement and commitment due to the continual reflection, reassessment, and emotional investment inherent to their roles. While these individuals extract substantial satisfaction and a deep sense of meaning from their work, the journey they undertake is nuanced and complex.

For example, they might enter the organisation with elevated or specific expectations about its impact and operations (e.g. social impact). Any misalignment between expectation and reality might spawn disillusionment, prompting a re-evaluation of the derived work meaning. Additionally, these individuals might consistently assess whether their values and beliefs still align with their work and the organisation's practices/values over time, rendering the meaning-making process more dynamic and intricate. Moreover, working in a value-driven manner, these individuals might also experience pronounced emotional peaks and troughs, responding to the organisation's successes and challenges. This emotional roller-coaster can make the discovery and maintenance of meaningful work emotionally taxing and challenging.

Taking cues from Participant P11's narrative in Chapter 4 resulted in valuable insights. P11, initially motivated by creating social impact, derived satisfaction from successful projects and close collaboration with teammates. However, with time, promotions, and colleagues departing or moving departments, P11's work enjoyment dwindled. Their new role distanced them from direct beneficiary interaction, leading to a reassessment of their work's meaning and its alignment with their life goals. Nevertheless, P11 found meaning in mentoring and supporting newcomers in the organisation, continuously reflecting on and locating the meaning and impact of their work throughout their career.

This ongoing reflective journey might explain why individuals who have social values and tie them to social impact from the beginning might undergo a complex meaning-making process. However, this does not imply that those who join with social values inherently face a more complicated process compared to those who initially join without these values. Each individual's journey of alignment and meaning-making process is distinct and cannot be easily generalised. The meaning-making process demands careful navigation and reconciliation of myriads of internal and external factors, each adding layers of complexity and depth to their experience.

5.2.5.5 The virtue between individuals' relationships: the core of organisational relationship tie.

As mentioned in the previous discussion, the core underpinning of each type of ties may differ, as do their identified antecedents. In the previous section, how the meaning-making process underpins the evolution of the "motivation tie" becomes the core that enhances employee motivation and supports a resilient form of motivation for individuals working in social enterprises has been discussed. In this section, the discussion will focus on the "organisational relationship tie."

Based on the findings in section 5.2.5.1 The antecedent of the ties, the data indicate that the antecedents of the organisational relationship tie can be traced to elements such as shared interests and life experiences, common values and beliefs, the duration of interactions, and the presence of both joyous and challenging work-related experiences among individuals, as well as an inclusive atmosphere and cooperative ethos within a social enterprise. These elements foster relationships and contribute to individuals feeling attached to social enterprises. However, a deeper critical analysis of the findings suggests that what may precede and activate these antecedents is related to the virtue of an individual or the virtues present within the individuals' relationships. The subsequent discussion will explore how virtue can be the activating antecedent of interactions between individuals, which fosters quality relationships and evolves into an organisational relationship tie. Furthermore, it is posited that this virtue can also serve as a social capital antecedent, as it not only facilitates employee attachment but also brings about broader positive outcomes that benefit social enterprises.

According to the findings, especially the thematic outcomes of Group 4 of Chapter 4, the Thai social norm, "***Jing Jai***," is a pivotal element contributing to trust among individuals and formulating quality relationships that can formulate the "organisational relationship tie." Though not frequently mentioned in academic literature, the term ***Jing Jai*** can be loosely translated as "sincere"; however, it encapsulates more than the Western understanding of sincerity (Holmes & Tangtongtavy, 1995, p74). It represents a spectrum of positive qualities, such as honesty, genuine care, and affection, offering a richer context than its English counterpart. As described by Hallinger et al. (2000), ***Jing Jai*** implies that individuals should harbour sincere interest and intentions underpinning their actions. It suggests that actions must stem from authentic emotions, thoughts, or beliefs, not being superficial or executed merely for outward display.

Based on the findings, *Jing Jai* effectively acts as a catalyst that fosters trust and facilitates the development of ties between individuals in the workplace. For instance, if a leader demonstrates empathy and offers support to teammates or employees, *Jing Jai* becomes a measure for evaluating the genuineness of the leader's virtue. Consequently, the leader's virtue is subtly assessed by the recipients of their actions. If the recipients perceive the leader's actions or behaviour as genuine (i.e., their virtue is authentic), then it is expected that the recipients, if they are responsive, will reciprocate positively. This could manifest in their behaviour or feelings towards the leader. Similar to the principle of reciprocity, when someone treats us well, we are inclined to respond in kind. In this context, a positive response is anticipated to foster ongoing positive interactions. Conversely, if the leader's support is perceived as insincere or self-serving, indicating a lack of *Jing Jai*, it can erode the trust of the recipients and negatively impact interpersonal dynamics.

As mentioned previously, *Jing Jai* represents a spectrum of positive qualities such as honesty, genuine care, and affection. Typically, individuals' behaviour is imbued with honesty and integrity when they embody *Jing Jai* in their interactions with others. *Jing Jai* is instinctive, maybe more often felt than observed, and lays the foundation for trust and respect in interpersonal interactions, leading to positive relationships. It is important to note that *Jing Jai* in the actions or behaviours of individuals is not easily feigned, as it is subject to the scrutiny of others who can typically discern the difference between the genuineness of one's intentions and the congruence between one's words and actions. This discernment is achieved over time through consistent behaviour. It is a long-term evaluative process where the receiver continuously assesses the sincerity of the giver's actions. If the giver's actions suggest hidden agendas or expected reciprocations, this undermines *Jing Jai*, leading to a loss of trust and weakening of interpersonal ties. This dynamic underscores the ongoing interplay of perception and behaviour between individuals, highlighting the importance of honesty, affection, and sincere interactions for maintaining trust and healthy relationships in the workplace. *Jing Jai*'s evidence can be sought in the actions of leaders and colleagues and the implementation of the organisational practices, culture, values, and communication processes. According to the findings,

Jing Jai acts as an unspoken facilitator for the development of quality relationships. When individuals, especially those in a position to give, are perceived as lacking *Jing Jai*, it not only impedes the formation of stronger ties but can also deteriorate pre-existing ones. Thus, *Jing Jai* is instrumental in fostering trust in relationships, which in turn enhances the development of deeper ties, culminating in a holistic positive sentiment that becomes an “organisational relationship tie.”

According to the academic literature, what seems to be related to explaining *Jing Jai* in this context is “**virtue**.” Sullivan Mort et al. (2003, p.83) describe virtue as ‘positive, morally good values such as love, integrity, honesty, and empathy, which must be acted upon to become genuine virtues.’ Based on the criteria of ‘**virtue**’ provided by Sullivan Mort et al. (2003)⁴, and Montague (1992), virtues are specific moral qualities or character traits considered morally good, such as honesty, courage, or compassion. These are seen as stable and deeply entrenched character states that encompass both a disposition to act in certain ways and a set of moral beliefs. In this light, *Jing Jai* is comparable to **virtue**. However, they are not identical. While virtue is discussed as encompassing a more comprehensive range of moral qualities like courage, justice, and prudence (Foot, 2002) within complex ethical systems in Western philosophy (Hursthouse, 2001) across different cultures and situations (Sullivan Mort et al., 2003), *Jing Jai* can specifically refer to sincerity and authenticity. Therefore, when individuals act, others can judge whether their virtue is “*Jing Jai*,” meaning true or authentic, or not. If deemed “*not Jing Jai*,” indicating the perceived virtue is not true or authentic, then the conceived virtue is not considered genuine. Thus, while **virtue** refers to a set of genuine, virtuous moral habits and thoughts, *Jing Jai* also implies this meaning and serves more as a scale to assess if an individual’s virtue is authentic.

⁴ 1. That the agent is consciously aware of what she/he is doing. In other words, the virtuous action did not occur accidentally or ‘coincidentally’.

2. The agent must choose to perform the virtuous action for its own sake, not for any ulterior motive.

3. The agent must continue to act in this way until the action has become habituated.

Interestingly, in terms of language translation, “*Jing Jai*” means being sincere and transparent about who you are. The Thai term “*Jing Jai*” can also apply to honesty in vice; for example, if someone is openly bad, they are still “*Jing Jai*” in being a bad person. However, in Thai culture, *Jing Jai* typically denotes a positive set of morals. Therefore, in the context of this research, the findings suggest that the social norm *Jing Jai*, which plays an important role in fostering trust and positive relationships that ultimately become the “organisational relationship ties,” reflects the “**virtue**” of individuals or virtue within their relationships. Consider this: if individuals do not exhibit virtuous qualities, those who interact with them are unlikely to recognise any virtue in them, which can hinder the development of trust, admiration, and positive relationships. Although *Jing Jai* enhances positive interaction and may refer to the essence of the “organisational relationship tie,” in this research context, to put it in a universal understanding, “**virtue**” is a more appropriate term to refer to the core of a solid and sustainable organisational relationship tie, as it encompasses a holistic aspect of meaning.

5.2.5.6 The Social Capital Within Social Enterprise and the Unique Form of Employee Attachment

Building on the understanding that individuals’ virtue seems to be the core of the ‘organisational relationship tie,’ the themes developed, particularly in Group 4 of Chapter 4, offer informative insights into how an individual’s virtue forms the foundation of this tie. Additionally, the findings and discussion in this section reveal insights into the formation of social capital within social enterprises.

Before delving into the discussion, revisiting the following terms regarding the social capital form can foster a clearer understanding:

Bonding: Bonding refers to strong, reciprocal ties within a network characterised by high levels of trust and exclusive identities, often manifesting in family relationships (Andriani, 2013). These ties focus on strong, multiplex connections within a group (Nahapiet, 2008).

Bridging: Bridging involves networking within diverse groups to connect people who are typically apart, encompassing networks of friends, neighbours, and acquaintances (Halpern, 2005). It represents the strength of weak ties and focuses on external connections, such as loose friendships or work relationships within a group (Nahapiet, 2008; Andriani, 2013).

Linking: Linking refers to relationships that connect groups or individuals to those in different groups. It functions as a vertical form of bridging that supports infrastructure. It connects groups with different political and financial powers, allowing access to resources unavailable within one's own group (Sabatini, 2009).

The Unique Form of Employee Attachment.

Based on the literature, employee attachment in social enterprises in this research context is associated with the bonding form of social capital. Bonding refers to the strong and reciprocal ties fostered within a group, community, or organisation. These ties, characterised by high trust and shared values (Nahapiet, 2008; Andriani, 2013), create a close-knit community where employees feel deeply connected to their peers and the organisation's mission. This environment is conducive to developing emotional and psychological bonds, which are essential for both employee motivation and relationships to become an employee attachment. However, the bonding form of social capital found in social enterprises does more than foster unity and enhance the motivation of individuals; it seems to be able to evolve into other forms of social capital, such as bridging and linking, which ultimately bring more benefits to social enterprises.

In the context of this study, the social capital forms of bridging and linking can create new opportunities for employees by providing access to additional resources and information through their connections and networks within and outside the organisation. These extended networks may expose employees to alternative career choices, increasing the likelihood of resignation from their current social enterprise. Therefore, while bridging and linking forms of social capital are valuable for

expanding professional horizons, they can also lead to higher resignation rates in social enterprises as employees pursue new opportunities.

According to the findings, the way people meet others, seek alternative jobs, and decide to leave a social enterprise is happening. However, the leaving outcome shows unexpected results, ultimately bringing many more benefits to the social enterprise. It was found that individuals who had worked for a social enterprise and then left to work in other organisations or start their own businesses continued to connect with the social enterprise's founders, leaders, or colleagues who still worked there. They shared information, brought new knowledge, and exchanged resources.

Although the employees no longer work with the social enterprise, their strong social capital continues to bring resources and knowledge back to the enterprise. Participants shared those good relationships with founders and colleagues, and the social enterprise itself enables employees who have left to work elsewhere or start their own businesses to continue sharing helpful information, providing support, and consulting with people or the founders of the social enterprise. They willingly share knowledge and resources and become valuable partners. Participants from both the founder's and employees' perspectives view their departure not merely as leaving but as an opportunity to contribute to the social enterprises they were part of, aiming to foster the organisation's sustained growth. This demonstrates that positive relationships, which evolve into social capital, benefit social enterprises beyond just employee attachment. This kind of employee attachment extends beyond the organisation's boundaries, creating a unique form of ongoing support and collaboration that continues to benefit the social enterprise; a unique form of employee attachment.

Forming Social Capital and Unique Employee Attachment Within Social Enterprises

The findings indicate that positive relationships within social enterprises evolve into valuable social capital. This complements the previous analysis and findings on the development of social and human capital (organisational relationship ties and motivation ties), especially in the context of employee attachment. These insights contribute to a broader understanding of how quality social capital is formed within social enterprises. The following discussion will explore how this unique employee attachment is developed and sustained. By the end of the discussion, there will be an explanation of how individuals' virtue seems to be the core of organisational relationship ties and its significance in forming social capital within social enterprises.

Findings from the research analysis suggest that strong and sustained relationships that bring benefits to people in networks in the context of social enterprise (quality social capital) often originate from an individual's altruistic motives or the recognition of such motives in others. For example, leaders or founders who possess genuine goodwill towards others, including their employees, can establish positive relationships. When the recipients of this kindness and goodwill, such as employees, recognise and appreciate these gestures, it lays the groundwork for further developing strong ties. This phenomenon occurs not only in hierarchical relationships, like those between leaders and followers or founders and employees but also among peers and colleagues. When team members show good intentions and goodwill towards their coworkers, it naturally elicits a desire in their colleagues to reciprocate positively.

In the context of this research, such **altruistic motives** are viewed as manifestations of the **individuals' virtue**. To simplify and visually represent the findings, **Figure 5.4** provides an overview of the steps from altruistic motives (virtue) leading to the emergence of quality social capital. It is important to note that this simple pattern of

quality social capital development is developed based on the research data and intended to offer a lens through which the development of quality relationships into social capital can be viewed rather than representing the entire development process. The steps depicted are meant to facilitate a deeper understanding of the following discussion.

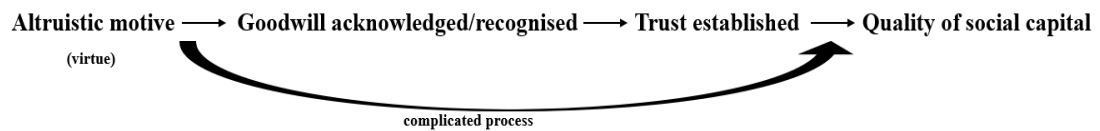


Figure 5.4 Simple View of The Formation

According to the illustrated figure, high-quality social capital originates from individuals' altruistic motives or virtues. The data suggest that strong relationships among individuals often start with the perception of virtue, frequently identified as another individual's altruistic motive. In fact, an individual's virtue is recognised or acknowledged through interactions. These virtues become apparent during interpersonal interactions, where the other individuals' behaviours, opinions, and attitudes are observed and assessed. Based on the data, it seems like in these interactions, individuals investigate to confirm the authenticity of another's virtue, such as the sincerity of their goodwill or the genuineness of their character. Consequently, a positive relationship forms, establishing a foundation for trust. When trust is established, it increases the likelihood of forming quality social capital.

However, according to the literature on 'trust', how trust emerges is still ambiguous, as it is a complex and dynamic process. In the context of social enterprises, although there is limited empirical research on trust relationships (Seanor & Meaton, 2008), some evidence from Murdock (2005), as cited in Bull et al. (2019, p.243), reveals that 'trust is founded in value and beliefs.' This suggests that trust can be established through a shared set of values and beliefs, meaning that when people or groups share the same values, they are more likely to trust each other. Additionally, the literature

indicates that relationships of 'trust' are related to the 'reciprocal process'. This means that people, through their networks of interactions, can gain a deeper understanding of complex situations by sharing and learning about what is important and necessary. Through these reciprocal processes, they can build reputations and start to trust each other more.

In this regard, the findings from this research provide empirical data on this dynamic. It was found that there is a propensity that the more reciprocal relationships occur, the stronger the establishment of trust between the actors, resulting in very strong and sustained social capital. There were stories shared by the participants who have strong social capital with social enterprises, as many of them have been in situations where they received help from social enterprises or their founders/leaders. They indicated that they trust those people and want to work with them, or even if they decide to leave, they expect to continue contributing to the social enterprises. However, considering a deeper understanding of their decision process with the emergence of their interpersonal trust, only getting help from others may not be enough to gain trust until it enhances the development of such quality social capital. Simply put, reciprocity alone in their relationships may not be sufficient to elevate social capital into high-quality social capital or unique employee attachment. Analysing this together with the identified element, such as the individuals' virtue, where many participants mentioned it as a point at which they start having trust, it can be understood that when individuals perceive the virtue of others, they do so through their interactions. At this stage, trust is probably not established instantly via only one-time interaction. However, trustworthiness seems to arrive in their mind first. To establish trust between individuals, there must be a process that facilitates strong trustworthiness, and along that process, there must be many interactions between the individuals that allow them to ensure the established trust.

Figure 5.5, developed from the data, visually represents the dynamic interactions between individuals that contribute to building trust and fostering the development of quality social capital. In the diagram, individuals ‘A’ and ‘B’ are depicted engaging in a range of interactions, symbolised by arrows. This illustration aims to clarify how these interactions, varying in nature and intensity, play a crucial role in establishing trust, a key component in the formation of strong social capital within social enterprises.

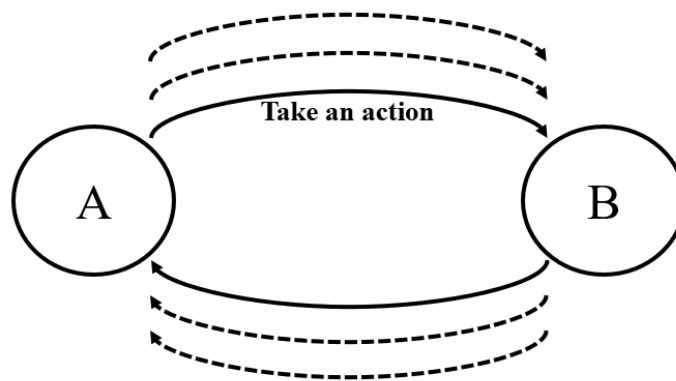


Figure 5.5 The Individuals’ Interactions

According to the diagram, it is assumed that interactions start with ‘A’ initiating action towards ‘B’, motivated by altruism. The nature of these actions and interactions varies. Based on data, they can range from simple gestures like engaging in small talk, having pleasant conversations, offering encouragement, giving useful suggestions, providing opportunities, listening to ‘B’s inquiries, showing generosity, assisting with daily tasks, or expressing forgiveness towards ‘B’. Alternatively, they can escalate to more significant actions, such as helping ‘B’ out of debt, offering a job, aiding ‘B’s family members, rescuing ‘B’ from danger, or even saving ‘B’s life. Throughout these interactions, ‘B’ perceives and interprets ‘A’s actions and behaviours, initiating an **evaluation process**. ‘B’ may internally question ‘A’s sincerity, the genuineness of the advice given or the authenticity of ‘A’s virtue. In essence, this process gradually builds and ensures trust.

According to the data, interactions that involve a more reciprocal process tend to establish strong trust and are likely to lead to quality social capital. For example, the story of Participant P13 has demonstrated this concept well. It describes the development of their relationship with the founder and the social enterprise, starting from admiration of the founder and recognition of their virtue, evidenced in decision-making and how they treat employees and beneficiaries. The deepening of trust is linked to an incident where the founder supported Participant P13 during an illness, covering their medical expenses and ensuring their job security. Participant P13 believes that other companies might not have shown the same level of support. This experience strengthened their relationship, leading Participant P13 to develop a high level of loyalty. As a result, they not only recommend friends and family to join the enterprise but also plan to stay and work for the social enterprise as long as possible.

The story of Participant P17 illustrates that the development of quality social capital, particularly trust, often requires numerous interactions. These interactions serve as opportunities to verify another individual's virtues or behaviour. The P17's experiences, involving both positive and negative interactions with colleagues and leaders, highlight that trust is built gradually. Misunderstandings and disagreements between parties are part of this process, but ongoing collaboration and observing the leader's behaviour during crises contribute to solidifying their trust. This progression, from initial trust to established trust, plays a vital role in the development of social capital. It suggests that individuals somehow undergo an internal **evaluation process**, continually assessing and reaffirming the virtues of those they interact with. This story underscores the complexity and depth of relationship-building related to trust, emphasising that individuals engage in a continuous evaluation process to establish strong, lasting social capital

Participant P32's story further illuminates how trust emerges and positive relationships evolve into quality social capital. Participant P32 recounts how they gradually opened up and began trusting and sharing opinions with teammates and leaders after initially being reserved during 'space of talks' sessions. This

transformation was influenced by witnessing genuine mutual support, integrity in problem-solving, and a cooperative atmosphere. These experiences highlight the gradual establishment of trust, underscoring the necessity of numerous interactions for trust to deepen. Additionally, P32 strongly appreciates their leader's support in developing their skills and abilities. Despite the possibility of leaving for family business reasons, P32 is determined to continue supporting the social enterprise. Moreover, P32 expressed a desire to integrate the respectful and cooperative work culture experienced in the social enterprise into their family business. This story underscores that trust and positive relationships not only open the door for ongoing support and the development of social capital but also facilitate the internalisation of valuable values. It suggests that employees learn and **absorb values from the social enterprises** they are associated with **and from the individuals with whom they have positive relationships**, such as leaders or founders. This highlights the broader impact of these positive relationships.

In addition to Participant P32's narrative, stories from Participants P15 and P45 similarly demonstrate the power of interpersonal interactions in building trust and facilitating the learning and adoption of values from one another. Participant P15, who was initially indifferent to social impact and societal contributions, evolved through their experiences. They became more engaged with work that has social value, and even if they may ultimately leave or start their own venture, they intend to continue supporting the affiliated social enterprise and contributing positively to society. Participant P45 also shares a similar outlook, underscoring the transformative effect of working in a strong social ethos setting. This outlook also happened with stories shared by Participants P13 and P17, who initially did not emphasise social contributions but later developed social value after working with social enterprises. These findings enhance the understanding that within the process of developing quality social capital, individuals indeed internalise values from one another, including social values. This internalisation of values is integral to the formation of quality social capital.

Additionally, a critical analysis reveals that the development of quality social capital (unique employee attachment) also involves **social norms**, which play a crucial role in facilitating meaningful interactions. It is evident that social norms influence individuals' behaviours and decisions during their interactions. For instance, in **Figure 5.5**, after 'B' interprets and evaluates 'A's behaviours or virtue, social norms significantly determine how 'B' should respond to 'A'. While social norms are particularly influential in this response phase, they also subtly guide every step of the process, from how individuals perceive and interpret behaviours to their decisions on how to act in return. Consider the initial stages of interaction, as shown in **Figure 5.5**. Even before 'A' begins to interact with 'B', social norms are at work, influencing 'A's behaviours and decision-making. These norms, which are the unwritten rules of behaviour in a society or group, help shape the nature of the interaction from the very start. They dictate not only the way 'A' approaches 'B' but also how 'B' perceives and reacts to 'A's actions. Throughout the interaction, these social norms continue to subtly influence both parties, playing a critical role in the development of trust and the individuals' internal evaluation processes toward the formation of quality social capital. It plays a crucial role in making the interactions between parties meaningful.

Nearing the conclusion of this discussion, it appears that the development of quality social capital (unique employee attachment) involves several key factors: individual virtue, meaningful interactions, trust formation, internal evaluation processes, social norms, and the absorption of values, particularly social values with a commitment to societal impact. This internalisation of social values is crucial for developing unique employee attachments. Strong relationships between individuals, particularly those built on reciprocal interactions, contribute significantly to forming robust social capital. However, the mere presence of reciprocal interactions may not suffice to develop quality social capital. For example, even if employees leave the social enterprise, their strong ties may persist, leading to occasional information sharing or mutual assistance. However, based on findings, when these individuals internalise social values and a commitment to social contribution through their meaningful relationships, they are more likely to maintain a strong, ongoing connection with the social enterprise. This suggests that reciprocal interactions alone are insufficient; the

cultivation of social values through meaningful interactions is essential for forming quality social capital in social enterprises. Consequently, these internalised social values foster a high commitment to societal impact, transforming strong ties into quality social capital. This ensures sustained connections and continued contributions to the social enterprise, even after employees have moved on. The cultivation of an individual's social value through meaningful interactions seems to be crucial for the formation of quality social capital in the context of social enterprises.

Reflecting on the discussion so far, the findings reveal a unique form of employee attachment within social enterprises that persists even after employees leave the organisation. The data provide rich insights into how this quality social capital, or unique employee attachment, emerges and develops. The key takeaway from this discussion is that the formation of quality social capital involves several crucial factors, with two significant: individuals' virtue and meaningful interactions. Individuals' virtue is paramount because it seems to serve as the foundation for any initial action, leading to further interactions with others. In this context, individuals' virtue can refer to altruistic motives inherent in their behaviour, such as genuinely treating others kindly, offering help and support, and expressing goodwill. These virtues lay the groundwork for meaningful interactions, which can develop into strong-quality social capital or unique employee attachment. The second critical factor is meaningful interactions, which are essential for fostering the development of quality social capital. The findings indicate that meaningful interactions consist of multiple engagements, allowing individuals to evaluate whether the people they interact with are worth their trust, feelings, and efforts to maintain relationships. For these interactions to lead to quality social capital, they seem to be driven by reciprocal processes, social norms, and shared social values.

In summary, the findings highlight that the development of quality social capital and unique employee attachment within social enterprises hinges on the interplay of individuals' virtue and meaningful interactions. These elements not only create strong, reciprocal ties but also foster an enduring commitment to the social

enterprise's mission and values, even beyond direct employment. These insights reaffirm the findings presented in Section 5.2.5.5: 'The virtue between individuals' relationships: The core of organisational relationship tie,' highlighting the central role of individuals' virtue in forming organisational relationship ties. Furthermore, the insights gained from this discussion contribute to the broader literature on social capital formation, offering a deeper understanding of these dynamics within social enterprises.

5.2.6 Discussion of Research Objective 3

Revisiting the literature gap: One of this study's primary gaps concerns employee attachment. Reviewing retention literature and theories illuminated the importance of understanding employee attachment within social enterprises. While traditional retention studies typically focus on organisational strategies to encourage employees to stay, they may not fully integrate the employee perspective, such as motivation and commitment regarding purpose and meaning, organisational culture, or interpersonal relationships, which can significantly impact the work environment and retention (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Chan, 2010; Soltis et al., 2013; Black, 2021; Lamane-Harim et al., 2023). This can lead to an incomplete understanding of the factors driving retention, particularly in unique contexts like social enterprises. On the other hand, studies on employee motivation, although they consider the employee's viewpoint (Amin, 2009; Brolis & Angel, 2015; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Farny et al., 2019; Seet et al., 2021), primarily explore what drives employee motivation and commitment in their work. These studies, while insightful, may overlook how these motivational drivers (e.g., passion for work, personal values, a sense of purpose, personal satisfaction) interact with broader systemic factors (e.g., life experience, social and cultural influences, organisational environment) that contribute to long-term retention or the evolving nature of motivation (Latham & Pinder, 2005; Boswell et al., 2008).

This study adopts a broader approach that integrates both perspectives, leading to the study of employee attachment instead of solely focusing on retention management or employee motivation. The study addresses this gap by investigating the development of employee attachment within social enterprises. Referring to the findings and outcomes discussed in Area 3, this section responds to **Research Objective 3:** To understand the development of employee attachment within the dynamic environment of social enterprises.

In Area 3, the discussion seeks to enhance the understanding of the development of employee attachment within social enterprises by critically examining the antecedents, evolution, and interrelation of the “organisational relationship tie” (as a form of social capital) and the “motivation tie” (as a form of human capital), which anchor individuals to a social enterprise. The initial analysis identified key antecedents for organisational relationship ties, such as shared interests, similar life experiences, gratitude, and a positive work atmosphere. In contrast, the societal value of work, dignity associated with the job, and admiration for leaders emerged as antecedents for motivation ties. Initially, these elements appeared to directly contribute to employee attachment in social enterprises. However, further analysis revealed the pivotal role of social norms in evolving employee attachment. The findings highlight how different Thai social norms, such as *bunkhun* and *kreng jai*, shape the strength and nature of these attachments. Findings indicated that social norms characterised by elements of reciprocity, a strong sense of obligation, and heavy societal enforcement tend to create stronger ties. These specific social norms lead to more robust and sustained employee attachment. This suggests that the socio-cultural context in which a social enterprise operates significantly impacts how employee attachment is fostered.

In addition to identifying factors contributing to strong and lasting employee attachment, it has been observed that social norms alone are not sufficient to fully influence an individual’s decision-making process regarding staying or leaving a job. A comprehensive examination of the development of the “organisational relationship tie” and the “motivation tie” reveals that the **individuals’ meaning-making process** plays a crucial role in establishing and sustaining motivation ties. This process allows individuals to recognise the significance of their life and work, leading to the cultivation of a strong and enduring sense of purpose and resilience. In this research context, the meaning-making process refers to how individuals reflect on what is meaningful to them. If this sense of meaningfulness aligns with their workplace, whether or not it connects to the organisation’s social values, strong and sustained employee attachment emerges. This suggests that social enterprises and their leaders

can play a significant role in fostering an organisational environment that supports and shapes this individual process.

Regarding the development of the “organisational relationship tie,” the findings indicate that the inherent virtue in individual relationships, or the individual’s virtue, is the essential quality in establishing and maintaining these ties. This discovery emerged from a thorough examination that revealed another important Thai social norm called *Jing Jai*, which pertains to the concept of trust-building among individuals and its role in fostering high-quality relationships that create strong employee attachment. *Jing Jai* embodies sincere interest and genuine intentions, which are fundamental to building trust and positive relationships. The individual’s virtue reflects the ethical behaviour of those within the social enterprise. This ethical behaviour fosters trust and strengthens bonds among employees, creating a supportive and cohesive work environment. Additionally, the discovery of unique employee attachment shows that the individual’s virtue is central to developing positive relationships, not only within the organisation but also extending beyond it. Individuals who develop these strong, virtue-based relationships are more likely to maintain contact, share information, and bring benefits to the social enterprise even after they leave. This indicates a lasting impact of an individual’s virtue on employee attachment.

This implies that the development of employee attachment in social enterprises is closely related to individual virtue and how employees perceive and interpret others’ virtues. When virtues are genuinely exhibited, there is a greater propensity for developing positive relationships, which can potentially evolve into sustained employee attachment. Social enterprises and their leaders can demonstrate virtue through ethical behaviour, showing moral and genuine interest in their actions to develop positive relationships within the organisation. Establishing an organisational environment that fosters these virtues can further enhance the development of strong, lasting employee attachments.

Furthermore, **meaningful interactions** play a crucial role in the development of employee attachment by involving and facilitating the three key elements: social norms, the individual's meaning-making process, and the individual's virtue. Findings indicated that meaningful interactions are important because they provide the context and opportunity for these elements to come into play. They serve as the medium through which social norms are observed and reinforced, allowing individuals to understand and align with the cultural and ethical expectations of the social enterprise. Meaningful interactions also support the individual's meaning-making process by providing experiences and reflections that help employees internalise their sense of purpose and significance within the organisation. These interactions allow employees to see how their work aligns with their personal values and the broader mission of the social enterprise, thereby fostering a deeper connection and commitment. Additionally, meaningful interactions enable the expression and recognition of individual virtue. Through regular, genuine interactions, employees can demonstrate and perceive sincerity, ethical behaviour, and altruistic motives in themselves and others. This mutual recognition of virtue strengthens trust and positive relationships, further solidifying employee attachment. The findings suggest that meaningful interactions are the mechanism through which social norms, individual meaning-making processes, and individual virtues are activated and reinforced

In summary, the development of employee attachment within social enterprises is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including social norms, individual virtues, meaning-making processes, and meaningful interactions. Social enterprises, with their dual missions of social impact and financial sustainability, create a unique environment where employees' personal values, sense of purpose, and community connection play significant roles. Findings highlight that employee attachment in these settings is not solely driven by traditional motivational factors but is deeply rooted in the social and ethical context of the organisation. Understanding how these factors interact within the dynamic and diverse environment of social enterprises can help social enterprises and leaders tailor strategies to foster strong and sustained

employee attachment, ultimately enhancing organisational effectiveness and employee retention.

5.3 The Emergent Framework from Data Insights

The theoretical framework, a cornerstone of any research investigation, provides the lens through which data is interpreted and analysed. In this study, the initial theoretical framework, developed in Chapter 2, was constructed based on the existing literature on Job Embeddedness, Social Capital, and Human Capital. Its purpose was to guide the exploration of the development of employee attachment within social enterprises in Thailand. However, as the research progressed, it became evident that the initial framework needed to be reconsidered in light of the empirical data.

This discussion aims to revisit the theoretical framework, addressing how the new insights gained from the research necessitate modifications and expansions. In the subsequent sections, an overview of the initial theoretical framework will be summarised. Following this, a concise summary of the research findings, highlighting areas of alignment and divergence with the initial framework. Finally, the emergent framework will be discussed, as well as its implications for the study and future research.

The initial theoretical framework for this study was developed based on three core theories: Job Embeddedness, Social Capital, and Human Capital. Job Embeddedness offers a valuable perspective for understanding why employees choose to stay or leave a social enterprise. This theory is particularly well-suited in the social enterprise context as it incorporates cultural, value-based, and social context factors, recognising that employees' commitment stems from personal values, a sense of purpose, community connections, and people relationships rather than solely financial reasons. It also includes factors related to employees' lives outside the organisation's boundaries that still impact their decision to leave or stay. These

factors include community involvement and relationships with individuals not affiliated with the organisation, such as connections within a church or religious community, relationships with neighbours, or children's school communities. While these factors may not seem directly related, they can significantly influence an employee's decision to stay or leave. However, constructs within Job Embeddedness, such as "Links" and "Fit," do not fully explain how these factors lead to an employee's decision to stay or leave, as they overlook the aspect of employee attachment.

To address this gap, the study integrates concepts from social capital and human capital to explore the development of employee attachment. By doing so, the study introduces two constructs:

“Organisational relationship tie”: Developed based on the concept of social capital, this construct explores how employee relationships within the organisation evolve into strong employee attachment.

“Motivation tie”: Developed based on human capital theory, this construct explores how employee motivation transforms into employee attachment to the organisation.

This theoretical framework's primary purpose was to guide the investigation into how these constructs, “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie,” develop into employee attachment within the context of social enterprises. The framework posits that these constructs are crucial for fostering strong employee attachment, which in turn significantly influences employee retention within social enterprises. Having established the initial theoretical framework, this study sought to understand the development of employee attachment within social enterprises. However, the research findings reveal several key elements that were not fully anticipated by the initial framework, highlighting a divergence in understanding the mechanisms and core elements at play.

According to the findings, elements related to Job Embeddedness, such as “Links” and “Fit,” are also evident in the empirical data. These elements suggest that relationships and employees’ perceived alignment with the organisation, including personal goals, values, and career plans, contribute to employee attachment. However, as indicated in the theoretical framework, these elements alone were perceived merely as factors influencing the decision to leave or stay. By incorporating social capital and human capital through the lens of employee attachment, the findings reveal that the core elements critical for developing strong employee attachment in social enterprises include **social norms, individuals’ meaning-making processes, and individuals’ virtue**. Additionally, the mechanism driving this development is **meaningful interactions** within social enterprises. The following discussion will delve into how these elements are identified as the core elements of the emergent framework, starting with concluding the key findings, identifying the significant elements, and proposing the emergent framework and implications.

5.3.1 Key Findings and Implications

The key findings regarding **Area 1** indicate that people management in social enterprises is a holistic approach influenced by their dual mission, diverse workforce, evolving organisational goals, and the values of founders and leaders. The central premise shaping people management in social enterprises fundamentally stems from the values advocated by the enterprise’s leaders amid their dual missions. Leadership values prioritising employee well-being and capability development drive retention within the social enterprise context. This approach allows employee attachment to grow organically rather than relying on traditional strategies such as rewards, compensation, benefits, or other hygiene factors to enhance their decision to stay. These findings provide the foundation for understanding people management and retention within social enterprises.

The key findings regarding **Area 2** are primarily related to employee motivation within social enterprises. The findings indicate that interpersonal interactions are crucial for employee motivation in these settings. Employees in social enterprises are typically value-driven. Their motivations are also driven by their interactions with colleagues, leaders/founders, organisational partners, and beneficiaries. These interactions help them see the social impact of their work and their meaningfulness. Additionally, the discovery of three pillars of motivation revealed that employee motivation consists of recognition of skills and career progress (enhancing self-efficacy), a sense of meaningful contribution to the organisation (boosting a sense of belonging and importance within the social enterprise), and recognition of social contribution (enhancing awareness of self-contributions toward society). These findings imply that to realise these three pillars of motivation, interactions between people are essential, as they open up more opportunities to reflect on self-esteem, ability, and self-worth in relation to the organisation and the social impact they contribute.

Moreover, the findings on Contagious Motivation further highlight the importance of interpersonal interactions. This phenomenon demonstrates that motivation can spread within the organisation, creating a supportive and inspiring environment that fosters greater commitment and engagement among employees. It was found that employees can recognise and be influenced by the motivation and willpower of others. This contagious motivation enhances their own motivation and occurs through these interpersonal interactions.

Furthermore, the findings regarding the 'Stages of Employee Motivation' underscore the significance of interpersonal interactions. The results indicate that employee motivation can progress from extrinsic to more intrinsic, mature, and resilient forms, thereby enhancing their commitment to the organisation. This transformation is facilitated by the individual's meaning-making process, which is deeply influenced by interpersonal interactions. The meaning-making process involves how individuals learn, reflect, and internalise their sense of meaningfulness. These findings suggest

that employees can conceptualise what is meaningful and align it with organisational values, social contributions, and workplace culture. Consequently, this alignment elevates their motivation to a more resilient form, potentially leading to a stronger commitment to stay with the organisation.

However, further critical analysis provides additional context to these findings by emphasising that for interpersonal interactions to yield the positive outcomes identified, they must be meaningful interactions, not merely ordinary ones. Insight indicated that shared values make these interactions meaningful because they create a sense of common purpose and understanding. When individuals share the same values, their interactions are more likely to be aligned with mutual respect, trust, and a deeper connection, enhancing the quality and impact of their engagements. In conclusion, the findings in Area 2 highlight the importance of interpersonal interactions within social enterprises, as they can foster employee motivation and potentially transform it into a stronger commitment, which may lead to employee attachment.

The key findings regarding **Area 3** primarily focus on employee attachment within social enterprises. Various identified factors contribute to the development of employee attachment. An investigation into the antecedents of “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” reveals that they share some common antecedents. For example, admiration and gratitude for founders or leaders can drive employees to stay, influencing both their motivation towards their work and their relationships with these leaders. This admiration fosters a desire to work closely with them and remain with the social enterprise. Although the initial theoretical framework treats “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” as separate concepts, these findings suggest that the development of employee attachment may involve a complex interplay between both types of ties.

A deeper analysis reveals that **social norms** play a significant role in developing employee attachment by driving the formation of both “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie.” However, different social norms strengthen these ties in distinct ways. The findings indicate that social norms characterised by reciprocity, a strong sense of obligation, and heavy societal enforcement create stronger ties. These features lead to more robust and sustained employee attachment.

Furthermore, the findings reaffirm the significance of **the individual’s meaning-making process**. According to the initial theoretical framework, the “motivation tie” element incorporates insights from human capital literature, which identifies employee motivation as a form of human capital, enhancing employees’ commitment to their jobs and organisations. The investigation and analysis based on the “motivation tie” in this study indicate that the individual’s meaning-making process is central to its development. This process involves individuals reflecting on what they find meaningful and aligning it with their organisation and work. When employees perceive their job and organisational affiliation as meaningful, it fosters intrinsic motivation, leading to strong and sustained employee attachment. This intrinsic motivation is crucial because it drives employees to remain committed and engaged with the organisation beyond superficial or external incentives.

In this study, the significance of focusing on the individual’s meaning-making process, rather than merely on meaningfulness, lies in its dynamic and transformative nature. While meaningfulness is the outcome, the meaning-making process is the journey that leads to this outcome. It involves a continuous cycle of learning, reflection, and internalisation, which helps individuals adapt their perceptions and align their motivations with their work environment. By understanding and being aware of this process, organisations can better facilitate conditions that support meaningful interactions and experiences during employee tenure; thereby, it has the potential to nurture intrinsic motivation and strong attachment.

The first mention of the meaning-making process appears in the findings from Area 2. It indicates that this process involves how individuals learn, reflect, and internalise their sense of meaningfulness. The findings in Area 2 suggest that employees conceptualise what is meaningful and align it with organisational values, social contributions, and workplace culture. However, the findings from Area 3 add further context and nuance to the concept of the meaning-making process. It was discovered that the sense of meaningfulness for employees in social enterprises varies significantly. For some, it is related to social contributions and organisational values, while for others, it is more tied to their specific role within the social enterprise, independent of a commitment to broader social or organisational values. This variation stems from how individuals perceive and create meaning for themselves. While meaningfulness is dynamic and can change based on the experiences and environments individuals encounter, the individual meaning-making process is critical in this transformation, and social enterprises and the work environment play significant roles in shaping it. These insights enrich our understanding of the meaning-making process and highlight its importance in this research. The meaning-making process involves how individuals learn, reflect, and internalise their sense of meaningfulness within their workplace rather than just the organisational value or social mission. This underscores its significance in developing strong employee attachment and motivation.

According to the initial theoretical framework, which incorporates insights from social capital literature, strong relationships among individuals can create bonds that potentially lead to employee attachment. The term “organisational relationship tie” was developed to investigate these kinds of relationships. The analysis of the “organisational relationship tie” findings indicates that **an individual’s virtue** is central to the development of this tie.

This conclusion stems from the identified Thai social norm of ‘*Jing Jai*,’ which plays a crucial role in fostering trust and reciprocal processes, thereby facilitating the development of positive relationships among individuals and between individuals

and their workplaces. The findings indicate that *‘Jing Jai’* is comparable to **virtue**. However, since the term virtue can vary in meaning, the insights related to *‘Jing Jai’* frame it as an individual’s sincere interest and intentions underpinning their moral actions. It suggests that actions must stem from authentic emotions, thoughts, or beliefs rather than being superficial or performed merely for outward display. Findings indicate that the “organisational relationship tie” forms when a person’s genuine virtue is evident in their actions. Others can then sense and assess their sincerity before responding. If these actions are seen as truly virtuous, the other person is more likely to respond positively. Additionally, findings indicated that employees could perceive this virtue not only through direct interactions but also through the organisational culture, management practices, and working environment within social enterprises.

The findings related to the discovery of **unique employee attachment** within social enterprises further underscore the importance of individual virtue. Unique employee attachment refers to a distinct form of employee commitment and connection within social enterprises that extends beyond traditional employment boundaries. It persists even after employees leave the organisation, driven by intrinsic motivation and a continued desire to support and contribute to the social enterprises. The findings regarding the development of unique employee attachment indicate that **an individual’s virtue** and **meaningful interactions** are central to fostering this attachment.

For the individual’s virtue, this conclusion is based on observations that altruistic motives often initiate the development of positive and sustained relationships. These relationships typically begin with recognising virtue, where individuals assess and perceive the authenticity of others’ actions. When virtue is sensed, reciprocal actions follow, leading to the development of strong, positive relationships and, eventually, unique employee attachment. This process is similar to the development of the “organisational relationship tie.” However, what sets this unique employee attachment apart seems to be the significant role of **social values** absorbed from

founders, leaders, or the social enterprise, which further fosters this phenomenon. These findings confirm that individual virtue is central to the development of employee attachment within social enterprises. However, for this attachment to become unique, it seems to encompass the social values absorbed from the social enterprise, founders/leaders, or close relationships, inherently fostering a commitment to social contributions.

Regarding **meaningful interactions**, the findings enhance the understanding of what constitutes meaningful interactions in this research context. The development of unique attachment stemming from an individual's virtue is most effectively achieved through meaningful interactions. The analysis clarifies that meaningful interactions seem to consist of several key elements. First, there must be **multiple interactions** between individuals, allowing enough time to learn and reflect on each other. Second, **social norms** play a crucial role in influencing how individuals think, act, and behave. Third, there must be a **reciprocal process** element within the relationships. Lastly, **shared social values** among those in developed relationships are essential. These findings add more context to the discovery of the importance of interpersonal interaction in Area 2, where interpersonal interaction that leads to the enhancement of employee motivation seems to have an element of shared value. Findings from Area 2 and Area 3 affirm the importance of meaningful interactions, as this element seems to be a mechanism underpinning the development of employee attachment. Meaningful interactions facilitate positive relationships among people, enhance contagious motivation, and support the individual's meaning-making process.

The final significant finding pertains to **the conditions necessary** for developing strong and sustained employee attachment. The findings indicate that both the "organisational relationship tie" and the "motivation tie" must be intertwined to achieve robust employee attachment. This result affirms earlier investigations into the antecedents of each type of tie, suggesting that these ties cannot be separated when fostering attachment. This interconnection implies that social and human

capital are also intertwined and challenging to separate. Studying these elements within an integrated framework can provide more comprehensive insights and knowledge. The second condition is about the 'life viability' concept. Life viability refers to the capacity of social enterprises to recognise and support the holistic life conditions of their employees. This concept encompasses both the personal and professional dimensions of employees' lives. Findings suggest that sustained employee attachment is likely to develop when employees' overall life conditions are well-supported, contributing to their well-being.

5.3.2 The Emergent Framework and Implications

5.3.2.1 The Emergent Framework

Having established the initial framework, this study sought to understand the development of employee attachment within social enterprises. However, the research findings reveal several key elements that were not fully anticipated by the initial framework, highlighting a divergence in understanding the mechanisms and core elements at play.

The core elements identified as critical for developing strong employee attachment in social enterprises include social norms, individual's meaning-making processes, and individual's virtue. Additionally, the mechanism driving this development is the meaningful interactions within social enterprises.

Core Elements

Social norm: The shared expectations and unwritten rules of behaviour that guide individuals' actions and interactions within social enterprises. These norms shape how individuals think, act, and relate to others, influencing the development of trust and reciprocal relationships. Social norms also encompass cultural values, ethical standards, and collective beliefs.

The individual's virtue: The genuine, intrinsic qualities that drive moral actions and behaviours, characterised by sincere interest and intentions stemming from moral authentic emotions, thoughts, or beliefs. Individual virtues such as sincerity and genuine interest in helping or expressing goodwill to others are fundamental to building trust and high-quality relationships. When individuals possess this virtue, incorporating social values absorbed from the social enterprise, leaders/founders, or positive relationships developed within the organisation, it can lead to a unique employee attachment that persists even beyond direct employment.

The Individual's meaning-making process: The dynamic and ongoing process by which individuals learn, reflect, and internalise their sense of meaningfulness. When individuals align their personal values, beliefs, and experiences with their organisational roles and workplace, a deeper sense of purpose and intrinsic motivation can be developed. This process builds a strong and sustained attachment to their work and organisation.

Mechanism

Meaningful interactions: The quality and depth of exchanges between individuals both within and outside social enterprises that foster mutual understanding, self-reflection, trust, and strong relationships. These interactions are characterised by several key elements: repeated and consistent engagement over time, the influence of shared social norms guiding behaviour, reciprocal processes where actions and support are mutually exchanged, and the presence of shared social values. Meaningful interactions are crucial in developing strong employee attachment as they enable individuals to reflect on and internalise their experiences and develop trust, potentially aligning personal and organisational values and motivations.

5.3.2.2 Comparison of the Initial and Emergent Frameworks and Their Implications

While the initial theoretical framework provides a foundation for understanding employee attachment through “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie”, the findings highlight additional dimensions and mechanisms that are critical for comprehending how employee attachment develops in social enterprises.

By incorporating **social norms**, the emergent framework acknowledges the cultural and societal influences on employee behaviour and attachment. This inclusion recognises that employees’ decisions are not made in isolation but are influenced by the broader social context in which they operate. Different societies and communities will have distinct socio-cultural factors that impact the development of attachment. This implies that it is essential for social enterprises and leaders to understand the values and culture of those who work within the organisation, including their own organisational values. By doing so, they can better grasp what factors contribute to the development of employee attachment. Moreover, the discovery of characteristics of social norms that foster employee attachment in the Thai context implies that for Thai society, social enterprises and leaders can integrate social norms that embrace reciprocity into organisational management and practice. This understanding of the social norm aspect would help social enterprises and leaders become aware of social-cultural influences and understand how they could foster employee attachment by fostering supportive work environments in their own context.

The initial theoretical framework primarily focused on relationships and motivational factors related to social enterprises without delving into the subjective experiences of employees. Incorporating the element of the **individual’s meaning-making processes** provides a deeper awareness and understanding of how employees internalise their experiences and derive personal significance from their work. This perspective highlights the psychological and emotional dimensions of employee

attachment, emphasising the importance of recognising and supporting these processes.

In this regard, it is crucial to consider the environmental factors that potentially influence the meaning-making process. These factors include employees' backgrounds, experiences, and personal values, as well as organisational factors such as management practices and workplace environment. These factors are related to the concept of 'life viability,' where employees' favourable life conditions play a significant role in shaping their perception of meaningfulness. By addressing employees' well-being and supporting their capability development, social enterprises can foster their meaning-making processes, leading to positive outcomes that potentially enhance employee attachment.

This holistic approach involves being open to learning and understanding others, recognising the diversity of individual needs and experiences, and fostering a supportive environment that encourages personal and professional growth. Social enterprises that invest in these areas can create a culture that promotes reflection and demonstrates how employees' work contributes to both social impact and business success. This alignment can foster a deeper sense of purpose and belonging, which are essential for developing strong and sustained employee attachment. By employing this holistic approach, leaders can create an environment that supports the employees' personal and professional growth, potentially enhancing their attachment to the organisation.

The initial theoretical framework addressed relationships and motivation but did not explicitly consider the role of individual virtues. Positioning an **individual's virtue** as a core element suggests that altruistic motives and ethical behaviour are fundamental to forming strong and positive relationships within social enterprises. This shift underscores the ethical and moral dimensions of employee attachment, which are particularly relevant in the context of social enterprises. This implies that it

is crucial for social enterprises and their leaders to demonstrate ethical behaviour, maintain transparency, and uphold accountability in all actions. These virtues should be evident not only in individual behaviours but also in the organisation's culture and practices. By fostering an environment that values ethical conduct and integrity, social enterprises can strengthen the attachment of their employees and promote a positive, trust-based organisational climate.

Lastly, while the initial theoretical framework describes factors influencing attachment, it does not clearly explain how these factors interact. Identifying **meaningful interactions** as the driving mechanism behind the development of employee attachment clarifies this process. This insight helps to operationalise the abstract concepts of social capital and human capital, demonstrating how everyday interactions contribute to attachment. This implies that social enterprises and their leaders should recognise the benefits of fostering meaningful interactions among their employees. By promoting regular, positive interactions, they can support employees' processes of making meaning, enhance motivation, and foster strong, positive relationships within the organisation. This, in turn, can lead to a more committed and engaged workforce.

5.3.2.3 Positioning of the Emergent Framework

The initial theoretical framework posited that “organisational relationship tie” and “motivation tie” are crucial for fostering strong employee attachment, which in turn can significantly influence employee retention within social enterprises.

The emergent framework builds upon this foundation by incorporating additional dimensions such as social norms, individuals' meaning-making processes, individual virtues, and the importance of meaningful interactions. It posits that these constructs are critical for understanding the nuanced factors that foster strong and sustained employee attachment within social enterprises, which typically vary across different contexts. Consequently, it is essential for social enterprises and their leaders to study these constructs within their own organisations, people, and communities to develop

tailored strategies for fostering employee attachment. This emergent framework represents how employee attachment develops in social enterprises and offers constructs for other social enterprises to consider in developing their own strategies for managing and retaining their employees.

5.4 Addressing the Research Questions

5.4.1 Research Question 1

Revisiting the literature gap:

Identified literature gaps in social enterprise management highlight people management as a crucial area. This gap was addressed by exploring how social enterprises in Thailand manage their employees, with findings discussed in relation to Research Objective 1. However, another significant gap pertains to the scarcity of studies on retention within social enterprises despite its recognised importance (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Moses & Sharma, 2020; Dorado et al., 2022; Godfroid et al., 2022). Most existing studies focus on related areas such as employee motivation, relations, and commitment, often applying traditional HR theories and practices. These studies typically identify practices that support retention or enhance employee commitment and motivation (Brolis & Angel, 2015; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Black, 2021; Seet et al., 2021), but few directly investigate how social enterprises retain their people. Given the significant variation in social enterprises by type and geographical context (Haugh, 2005; Doherty et al., 2014), it is beneficial to learn from various cases about how they retain their employees. This approach may provide more context-specific insights into retention within social enterprises, offering perspectives beyond general practices.

To fill this gap, this study provides findings specifically emphasising retention within social enterprises, responding to:

Research Question 1: How do social enterprises manage and retain their employees?

Social enterprises manage their employees through a unique approach which is fundamentally different from traditional for-profit organisations. People management in social enterprises is diverse and dynamic, evolving with their dual mission (philosophy), diverse workforce, changing organisational goals, and the value upheld by their founders and leaders. While the dual mission and diverse workforce are identified in existing literature shaping their people management (Roumpi et al., 2020; Dorado et al., 2022), the dimensions such as the evolving organisational goals and leadership values identified in the findings add more context to the literature of social enterprise people management that the effective people management in social enterprises is not a one-size-fits-all solution but is deeply influenced by the unique value and goal of each organisation. When the findings reveal that the values upheld by founders and leaders seem paramount; this study would suggest that in order to develop effective people management, social enterprises may need to deeply understand their own values and the values of their employees to develop their specific effective people management strategies tailored to their unique context.

The findings reveal that social enterprises do not emphasise employee retention for profitability or management efficiency. Instead, the focus is on the holistic development of employees, aligning with the organisation's overarching goals. This approach manifests in differing perspectives on implementing retention programmes within these organisations. Some argue that social enterprises do not need retention programmes as they prioritise social value over operational efficiency, believing that employee well-being and capability are more important than retention. Conversely, those favouring implementing retention programmes contend that these initiatives are crucial for supporting particularly underprivileged employees. Despite differing approaches to retention, both leaders and founders—whether they implement these programmes or not—are motivated by a desire to support their employees rather than to enhance productivity. This illustrates that the primary driving force behind retention strategies in social enterprises is the social values upheld by their leaders rather than traditional business metrics.

In the context of social enterprises, the concept of employee retention transcends the traditional goals of organisational stability and profitability. Instead, founders and leaders view retention as a strategy to foster individual development during an employee's tenure. The emphasis is not merely on retaining staff but on enhancing their well-being and equipping them to contribute meaningfully to society, whether they remain with the organisation or not. This approach shifts the focus from profit maximisation to prioritising the personal and professional growth of employees. It aims to nurture their capabilities in a way that, beyond benefiting the organisation, prepares them to be active and valuable contributors to societal well-being. In doing so, social enterprises create a workforce that is not only effective within the workplace but also empowered to make a positive impact in the wider community.

When founders and leaders of social enterprises manage their employees with a focus on values, prioritising well-being and capability development, a variety of unique people management practices are crafted and tailored specifically to the needs of each social enterprise. These findings reveal that such unique practices, developed to support and care for employees, inadvertently serve as retention systems. While certain practices within social enterprises aid in employee retention, the primary intention behind creating these practices was not to retain people but to enhance their well-being and develop their capabilities. Despite a lack of extensive studies on retention within the social enterprise sector, these findings underscore a significant shift in how retention is perceived in this landscape. It suggests that retention may be more about improving an employee's well-being, supporting an employee's capability development, and allowing the natural progression of attachment, retention, or departure to unfold. The decision to stay or leave becomes a deeply personal choice, one that is nurtured and respected by the enterprise.

In conclusion, this research suggests that the approach to employee retention in social enterprises diverges significantly from traditional for-profit organisations, with implications that extend beyond mere organisational confines. While unique practices developed to support employees may enhance retention organically,

intentionally using them solely as tools for retention is not typically aligned with the ethos of social enterprises, which is driven by social values rather than strategic employment retention. Furthermore, there is no guaranteed outcome, as these practices tend to function best when they emerge naturally. In this context, the supportive practices that evolve within social enterprises create a friendly work environment and a nurturing organisational culture. This environment may inadvertently sow the seeds of what could be seen as ‘employee retention,’ but this is an organic byproduct rather than a planned outcome. Thus, in the realm of social enterprises, employee retention is less about strategically reducing turnover rates through traditional methods like rewards, compensation, or other extrinsic incentives. Instead, it is about fostering a natural attachment among employees, allowing their commitment to grow organically and ensuring their decision to stay is motivated by genuine engagement and alignment with the organisation’s values.

5.4.2 Research Question 2

Revisiting the literature gap: Reviewing retention literature and theories illuminated the importance of understanding employee attachment within social enterprises. While traditional retention studies typically focus on organisational strategies to encourage employees to stay, they may not fully integrate the employee perspective, such as motivation and commitment regarding purpose and meaning, organisational culture, or interpersonal relationships, which can significantly impact the work environment and retention (Ohana & Meyer, 2010; Chan, 2010; Soltis et al., 2013; Black, 2021; Lamane-Harim et al., 2023). This can lead to an incomplete understanding of the factors driving retention, particularly in unique contexts like social enterprises. On the other hand, studies on employee motivation, although they consider the employee’s viewpoint (Amin, 2009; Brolis & Angel, 2015; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018; Farny et al., 2019; Seet et al., 2021), primarily explore what drives employee motivation and commitment in their work. These studies, while insightful, may overlook how these motivational drivers (e.g., passion for work, personal values, a sense of purpose, personal satisfaction) interact with broader systemic factors (e.g., life experience, social and cultural influences, organisational

environment) that contribute to long-term retention or the evolving nature of motivation (Latham & Pinder, 2005; Boswell et al., 2008).

To fill this gap, this study adopts a broader approach that integrates both perspectives, leading to the study of employee attachment instead of solely focusing on retention management or employee motivation. Investigating the development of employee attachment within social enterprises can provide findings responding to:

Research Question 2: How does employee attachment develop within social enterprises?

Employee attachment within social enterprises is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by several key factors. The research findings highlight that social norms, individual virtues, the meaning-making process, and meaningful interactions significantly shape the development of employee attachment. Each of these elements plays a crucial role in fostering a strong and sustained connection between employees and their organisation, especially within the unique context of social enterprises. The following are the identified significant elements playing important roles in fostering and sustaining employee attachment.

Social norms: Social norms are pivotal in shaping employee attachment. These norms, such as '*bunghun*' and '*kreng jai*' in Thai culture, emphasise mutual respect and reciprocity with a sense of obligation. These cultural elements create a robust foundation for both "organisational relationship ties" and "motivation ties." When employees operate within a framework that values cooperative and reciprocal relationships, they are more likely to develop strong bonds with their colleagues and leaders. This sense of duty and mutual respect enhances the resilience of employee attachment, making it more likely that employees will remain committed to the social enterprise. Additionally, these norms help create a cohesive work environment where employees feel respected and valued, further strengthening their connection to the organisation.

The individual's virtue: Individual virtue is another crucial factor in developing employee attachment. It is defined as genuine, intrinsic qualities that drive moral actions and behaviours. Findings indicate that individual virtues such as sincerity and genuine interest in helping or expressing goodwill to others are fundamental to building trust and high-quality relationships. Individuals, whether they are employees, founders, leaders, partners, or beneficiaries, who demonstrate these virtues foster a positive work environment where trust can flourish. Moreover, when these virtues are complemented by social values absorbed from the social enterprise, leaders, or colleagues, they significantly enhance the development of unique employee attachment. This unique attachment refers to a distinct form of employee commitment and connection within social enterprises that extends beyond traditional employment boundaries. It persists even after employees leave the organisation, as they continue to desire to support and contribute to the social enterprise.

The meaning-making process: Based on the findings, the meaning-making process is found to be central to the development of motivation ties. This dynamic process involves individuals reflecting on and internalising what they find meaningful in their work and organisational affiliation. Employees who align their personal values and beliefs with the organisation will express a deeper sense of purpose and intrinsic motivation. This alignment fosters strong and sustained employee attachment, as employees see their roles as meaningful contributions. Notably, employees can also view their roles as meaningful contributions and align them with their organisations independently of social values or the organisation's social mission. The process is not static but evolves as individuals encounter new experiences and challenges, continually reinforcing or shaping their commitment to the organisation. For instance, an employee might initially have a basic understanding of the social enterprise's mission, but over time, as they witness the impact of their work, they can develop a deeper sense of purpose. The findings suggest that the behaviours of individuals within social enterprises, including management practices and organisational culture, significantly influence the development of this process.

Meaningful interactions: Meaningful interactions act as the mechanism through which social norms, individual virtues, and the meaning-making process are activated and reinforced. These interactions provide opportunities for employees to observe and align with cultural and ethical expectations, reflect on their roles, and build trust through genuine exchanges. Social enterprises that foster environments conducive to meaningful interactions can significantly enhance employee attachment. These interactions must be frequent and deep enough to allow individuals to learn, reflect, and internalise their experiences, leading to a potentially robust and resilient form of employee commitment. For instance, regular team meetings, feedback sessions, and informal gatherings can serve as platforms for these meaningful interactions.

Apart from these significant elements, the findings reveal the **conditions** necessary for strong and sustained employee attachment. This attachment is sustained when the “organisational relationship tie” and the “motivation tie” **intertwine**. In other words, both positive relationships and intrinsic motivation must be present for employee attachment to be sustained. If employees have positive relationships with colleagues and a desire to stay but lack motivation in their roles, the attachment will not last. Similarly, if they are motivated in their roles but do not have positive relationships, they may eventually leave. The intertwining of these ties ensures that employees feel connected to their colleagues, leaders, and organisations with a sense of willingness, happiness, and commitment.

Additionally, another crucial condition for sustaining employee attachment is the **favourable life conditions of employees**. Findings suggest that attachment is more likely to be sustained when it is developed under favourable life conditions. This introduces the concept of ‘life viability.’ The concept posits that for employee attachment to be sustained, basic needs must be met, including sufficient income, manageable workloads, and support for personal health and well-being. This underscores the necessity of creating a supportive environment that addresses both

personal and professional needs, ensuring that employees can maintain their attachment to the organisation over time. Social enterprises must ensure that their employees are not only motivated and well-connected but also have their basic life needs adequately met. When these conditions are satisfied, the established employee attachment is more likely to be sustained.

How Employee Attachment Develops Within Social Enterprises

Employee attachment within social enterprises develops through an intricate interplay of social norms, individual virtues, meaning-making processes, and meaningful interactions. The development process involves with social norms, such as mutual respect and reciprocity, which set the foundation for building strong organisational relationships and motivation ties. Individual virtues, including sincerity and genuine interest in helping and expressing goodwill to others, further enhance these relationships by fostering trust and positive interactions. Besides, the employees' meaning-making process is crucial in this development, as employees reflect on and internalise their values and beliefs, aligning them with the social enterprises. This alignment can create a deeper sense of purpose and intrinsic motivation, reinforcing their commitment to the organisation. Furthermore, meaningful interactions act as the catalyst, providing opportunities for employees to connect, share experiences, build trust, and enhance each other motivation, further strengthening their attachment.

Moreover, for employee attachment to be sustained, it must be supported by favourable life conditions, or 'life viability'. This includes ensuring that employees have adequate income, manageable workloads, and support for their health and well-being. The intertwining of organisational relationships and motivational ties, along with these supportive life conditions, creates a robust environment where employee attachment can thrive. Understanding these conditions helps illuminate how employee attachment develops in social enterprises. By addressing employees' basic needs and ensuring their well-being, social enterprises can create an environment where employees feel valued and supported. This holistic approach not only

strengthens their connection to the organisation but also fosters a deeper commitment to its mission.

In conclusion, employee attachment in social enterprises is not solely driven by traditional motivational factors but is deeply rooted in the social and ethical context of the organisation. The development of employee attachment within social enterprises is a complex interplay of social norms, individual virtues, employees' meaning-making processes, and meaningful interactions. The conditions necessary for sustaining employee attachment are closely linked to employees' favourable life conditions and the intertwining of their relationships and motivations. Sustained employee attachment must be developed under the circumstances that employees have favourable life conditions and developed based on the intertwining of healthy relationships and intrinsic motivation. These findings highlight the importance of social enterprises and their leaders being mindful of employee well-being and addressing motivational and relational aspects (e.g. a sense of purpose, personal fulfilment, ethical alignment with the organisation's mission, and the quality of relationships within the workplace). These aspects encompass employees' feelings of being valued, respected, and connected to their colleagues and leaders. By understanding and fostering these factors, social enterprises can cultivate a dedicated and motivated workforce committed to the organisation.

5.4.3 Research Question 3

Revisiting the literature gap: This study revisited retention literature and found that traditional retention theories may not be fully applicable in the context of social enterprise. The retention factors in social enterprises are complex and closely tied to the social values upheld by their employees, which vary based on cultural perceptions of motivation, beliefs, and values (Doherty et al., 2009; Thomas & Peterson, 2016). Moreover, when social enterprises operate with a dual mission, balancing both social and financial goals, their approach to retention differs significantly from traditional organisations that prioritise profit maximisation

(Doherty et al., 2009; Moses & Sharma, 2020; Black, 2021; Dorado et al., 2022). Social enterprises give equal importance to their social mission and financial sustainability rather than focusing solely on profit. Consequently, retention strategies that rely heavily on traditional factors such as rewards, compensation, and financial incentives may not be as effective in social enterprises.

The literature review led to the discovery of the Job Embeddedness theory (Mitchell et al., 2001), which is well-suited for studying retention within social enterprises. However, the theory lacks an explanation regarding the dimensions of employee attachment. While the theory's constructs, such as 'Links' and 'Fit', are comparable to the relationships and motivations of employees that can become employee attachments, the constructs cannot explain how such employee attachment develops. Therefore, this study incorporates social capital and human capital theories to fill this gap. Recognising that relationships and motivation play crucial roles in developing employee attachment, social capital is employed to explore relationships and human capital is used to examine motivation. Therefore, the terms "organisational relationship tie" and "motivation tie" were developed.

Initially, the study viewed social capital and human capital separately, creating two distinct types of ties to study employee attachment. However, the findings indicated an intertwining of social capital and human capital. As a result, the discussion will not separate these concepts to answer this final research question. Below is the response to:

Research Question 3: How do social enterprises develop social and human capital to retain their employees while upholding both social and commercial missions?

The findings, particularly from Area 1, offer valuable insights into people management and retention in social enterprises. They highlight that people management and retention strategies in social enterprises differ significantly from those in traditional organisations. Specifically, social enterprises are driven by the

values upheld by their leaders. When leaders prioritise employees' well-being and capability development, retention strategies shift from traditional approaches focused on reducing turnover rates and calculating efficiency to a more holistic approach centred on caring for and supporting employees' well-being and capability building. This shift results in the creation of people management practices and organisational cultures that inherently support employees' well-being and capability development, forming an unintentional yet effective retention system. Findings suggest that retention in social enterprises is more about supporting individual development and well-being, allowing the natural course of attachment to emerge organically. These insights provide a fundamental understanding of how social capital and human capital are utilised in relation to retention within social enterprises.

In the context of social capital and human capital studies, the findings suggest that social enterprises manage these resources to foster employee attachment while balancing their social and commercial missions through **three key elements**: social norms, the individual's meaning-making process, and the individual's virtue. Meaningful interactions have been identified as **a crucial mechanism** that supports the complex interplay among these elements, facilitating a naturally sustained employee attachment.

Regarding **social norms**, social enterprises cultivate an organisational culture that embodies values such as trust, reciprocity, and cooperation. This culture creates a supportive environment where employees feel valued and motivated to contribute to the organisation. Social norms are important as they influence and shape individuals' minds and behaviours. They are embedded in the way individuals perceive things, their thinking process, their way of taking action, their development of relationships, decision-making, and their conception of meaningfulness. Based on findings, Thai social norms such as ***Bunkhun***, ***Kreng Jai***, and ***Jing Jai*** play crucial roles. ***Bunkhun*** emphasises gratitude and the reciprocal nature of relationships, ***Kreng Jai*** involves consideration and deference to others, and ***Jing Jai*** signifies sincerity and genuine interest in moral actions. These norms foster strong interpersonal relationships and a

cohesive work environment. Social norms, particularly those emphasising reciprocity and mutual support, are reinforced through daily interactions and organisational practices, fostering a sense of belonging and commitment among employees. By integrating these cultural elements into their operations, social enterprises not only enhance employee attachment but also ensure that their mission and values are consistently reflected in their workforce. This alignment between organisational culture and social norms is vital for sustaining employee engagement and retention. In this regard, social enterprises develop human and social capital through social norms by cultivating an organisational culture and environment that embodies values such as trust, reciprocity, and cooperation.

According to the **individual's meaning-making process**, this element highlights the importance of social enterprises paying attention to the environmental factors that potentially influence how employees perceive meaningfulness. Social enterprises can shape this process by creating supportive environments that enhance employees' capacity to reflect and find purpose in their work. This process is closely related to supporting the employees' capability building and well-being, as both factors affect how they reflect on and understand their surroundings, including what they find meaningful. The findings about the 'life viability concept,' which emphasises ensuring employees' favourable life conditions, underscore the importance of this meaning-making process as it directly relates to employee well-being. Social enterprises that recognise the importance of this element will invest in the personal and professional development of their employees. For example, they may prioritise initiatives that address work-life balance, mental health, and overall job satisfaction, thereby making employees feel more capable and valued. By fostering a culture of reflection and effectively communicating how employees' work contributes to both social impact and business success, these organisations reinforce the meaning-making process and potentially strengthen the sense of purpose and belonging among their employees.

Supporting the individual's meaning-making process is essential for social enterprises as it helps create an environment where employees can thrive both personally and professionally, potentially leading to natural employee attachment. However, it is important to note that supporting the individuals' meaning-making process does not always result in sustained and resilient motivation to stay with a specific social enterprise. Employees may realise that their sense of meaningfulness is not necessarily tied to their current role, as what they find meaningful can change with new experiences, evolving life conditions, changing interests, and shifting perceptions. Nevertheless, supporting individuals in their meaning-making processes is vital for social enterprises. It aligns with the nature of social enterprise operation, upholding both social and commercial missions by contributing to the development of people's capabilities—a significant social contribution. By fostering this process, social enterprises not only enhance their human capital but also strengthen their social capital, creating a nurturing environment that naturally retains employees and potentially develops people's capability for their society. In this regard, social enterprises recognise the importance of employees' meaning-making process and manage human and social capital via supporting employees' well-being and capability development and fostering a culture of reflection and effective communication on how employees' work contributes to social contribution and the organisation's success. This awareness can reinforce the meaning-making process, and employees can potentially make meaning in their role in the organisation.

Findings regarding **the individual's virtue** enhance the understanding that positive relationships are fostered through the ethical behaviours of individuals working in social enterprises. These behaviours potentially lead to sustained employee attachment as they build a foundation of trust and mutual respect. When people sense the goodwill and genuine kindness of others, they typically engage in reciprocal interactions, continuing to develop positive relationships that can lead to strong employee attachment. Social enterprises develop social and human capital by prioritising ethical leadership and cultivating an environment where individual virtues are recognised and rewarded. Leaders and founders serve as role models, demonstrating these virtues through their actions and decisions. This fosters a culture

of integrity and trust, encouraging employees to adopt similar behaviours and attitudes, which can result in the development of commonly shared values. These shared values create strong ties and connections, leading to the development of employee attachment. Moreover, this attachment can evolve into a unique form of employee attachment that persists even after the employee leaves the organisation. This insight underscores the importance of integrating ethical practices and nurturing virtues such as sincerity and genuine interest in moral actions within the organisational culture, facilitating the natural growth of employee attachment. In this regard, social enterprise develops human and social capital by demonstrating and fostering the ethical behaviours of individuals within social enterprises and cultivating an environment where individuals' virtue is recognised, rewarded, and valued.

Lastly, **meaningful interactions** are crucial for building strong employee relationships and attachments as they play an important role in recognising individual virtue, adding context to the reflection process of individuals, and fostering a sense of community within the organisation. Social enterprises can enhance and develop social and human capital in this aspect by encouraging regular, open communication and collaboration among employees, leaders, and stakeholders. These interactions help employees align their personal values with the organisation's mission, recognise the meaningfulness of their work, and enhance their sense of purpose. By creating an environment that promotes meaningful interactions, social enterprises can facilitate the natural development of strong and sustained employee attachment, ultimately supporting their dual mission of social impact and financial sustainability.

In conclusion, social enterprises develop their social and human capital to naturally foster employee attachment while upholding both social and commercial missions by integrating social norms and organisational culture, supporting employee development and well-being to enhance positive outcomes of their meaning-making process, promoting individual virtues and altruistic motives, integrating ethical practices into the organisational culture, and fostering meaningful interactions.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the key contributions and conclusions drawn from this research on employee attachment within social enterprises. It begins by detailing the empirical and theoretical contributions, methodological, and practical contributions made by this study, highlighting its impact on existing literature and practices in the field. Following this, the chapter addresses the limitations encountered during the research process, reflecting critically on the study's scope and constraints. The key conclusions summarise the main findings, underscoring how they address the initial research aims and questions. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion on reflexivity in research, reflecting on the researcher's role and the potential influences on the study.

6.2 Research Contributions

The research presented in this study makes significant contributions across several key areas, including human capital, social capital, and the Job Embeddedness Theory. By integrating insights from these domains, the study provides a comprehensive framework for understanding employee attachment within social enterprises. This research addresses the unique challenges faced by social enterprises, which operate with dual missions of social impact and financial sustainability, highlighting the critical factors that foster strong and sustained employee attachment. Below, the specific contributions of this research are detailed, offering valuable insights for both theory and practice.

6.2.1 Empirical Contributions

For a comprehensive understanding, the empirical contributions are detailed under the following subheadings.

The Key Factors in Employee Attachment

One of the primary empirical contributions is the identification of the key factors that contribute to the development of employee attachment within social enterprises. The research highlights the critical roles of social norms, individual virtues, the individuals' meaning-making process, and meaningful interactions in fostering strong and sustained employee attachment. By analysing these elements, the study provides a detailed understanding of how these factors interplay to create a supportive and engaging work environment. This insight is particularly valuable for social enterprise leaders and others who aim to enhance employee retention and commitment while upholding both social and commercial missions.

The Impact of Cultural and Societal Norms

The study also sheds light on the significant impact of cultural and societal norms on employee attachment. Specifically, it reveals how Thai social norms such as *Bunkhun*, *Kreng Jai*, and *Jing Jai* influence the development of positive relationships and a cohesive work environment. These norms, which emphasise gratitude, reciprocity, collective and consideration, and sincerity, are shown to be crucial in shaping the behaviours and attitudes of employees, potentially strengthening their attachment to the organisation. This empirical evidence underscores the importance of the social-cultural context and integrating cultural awareness into people management practices within social enterprises.

The Validation of the 'Life Viability' Concept

Another notable empirical contribution is introducing and validating the 'life viability' concept. This concept emphasises the importance of ensuring favourable life conditions for employees, including adequate remuneration, manageable

workloads, and support for personal health and well-being. The findings demonstrate that these life conditions are essential for sustaining employee motivation and attachment, highlighting the interconnectedness of personal well-being and professional commitment. By empirically validating the life viability concept, this study provides a practical framework for social enterprises to enhance their retention strategies by considering it.

The Role of Individual Virtues

The research further empirically explores the role of individual virtues in developing and sustaining employee attachment. It shows that ethical behaviours and genuine interest in moral actions, such as helping or expressing goodwill to others, are fundamental to building trust and high-quality relationships within social enterprises. Employees who perceive their colleagues and leaders as virtuous are more likely to develop strong reciprocal relationships, which in turn lead to deeper organisational attachment. This empirical insight supports the need to foster a culture of integrity and ethical behaviours within social enterprises.

The Meaningful Interactions

Lastly, the study identifies meaningful interactions as a crucial mechanism that supports the development of employee attachment. By encouraging regular, open communication and collaboration among employees, leaders, and stakeholders, social enterprises can facilitate the alignment of employees' personal values with the organisations, enhance the sense of purpose, strengthen employee commitment, and support employee development in both personal and professional growth. The empirical evidence highlights that meaningful interactions are not only essential for recognising individual virtues but also for reinforcing the meaning-making process and fostering a sense of community within the organisation.

6.2.2 Theoretical Contributions

This research makes several significant theoretical contributions by integrating and extending three established theories, Job Embeddedness, Social Capital, and Human Capital, into a cohesive framework that explains employee attachment within social enterprises. In doing this, it offers a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamic factors influencing employee retention and attachment, particularly in the unique setting of social enterprises. The following sections begin by outlining the combined theoretical contributions arising from the intersection of these three theories. Afterwards, the individual theoretical contributions are explored in greater detail, specifically focusing on how each theory and concept is extended and applied to this research context. These contributions are further discussed under the subsequent subheadings.

Combined Theoretical Contributions

This study makes significant theoretical contributions by integrating Job Embeddedness, Social Capital, and Human Capital theories into a cohesive framework that deepens our understanding of employee attachment in social enterprises. While each of these theories has traditionally been studied in isolation, potentially providing the specific aspects of employee retention, their combined application offers a more comprehensive view of the complexities involved in mission-driven organisations.

By merging these perspectives, this research captures how workplace relationships and intrinsic motivations foster employee attachment. Social Capital Theory highlights the role of interpersonal relationships, social norms, and organisational values in shaping strong, sustainable attachment. Unique Thai cultural values such as *Bunkhun*, *Kreng-jai*, and *Jing-jai* further strengthen this attachment, often transcending traditional employment terms. These norms create a social fabric within the organisation that binds employees beyond formal contracts. Human capital

theory, viewed from a social perspective, adds depth by showing that attachment is not merely about aligning with organisational values but also stems from intrinsic motivation. This intrinsic motivation is intricate in the development of individual meaningfulness, fostered by unique social norms, and potentially plays a critical role in aligning personal and organisational goals and reinforcing employee attachment. Job Embeddedness Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how social ties, personal motivations, and alignment with values interact to foster employee retention. This theory explains how the combination of social capital and human capital influences an employee's decision to remain in the organisation, particularly within mission-driven contexts like social enterprises.

This research offers a holistic understanding of employee attachment in social enterprises. It contributes to retention theory by showing how social relationships, personal growth, and intrinsic motivation collectively enhance attachment. It also adds to the broader literature on social enterprises by demonstrating how these organisations can cultivate a committed workforce by leveraging social and human capital. This integrated approach introduces a multifaceted view of employee attachment, offering new insights into both theory and practice in people management in the social enterprise context.

Extending Job Embeddedness Theory

This study extends the Job Embeddedness theory by introducing and elaborating on the concept of employee attachment. While Job Embeddedness focuses on constructs such as 'Links' and 'Fit' to explain why employees stay, it lacks an in-depth exploration of how these constructs evolve into attachment. This research fills this gap by demonstrating how relationships (Links) and alignment (Fit) transform into strong, sustained attachments through the interplay of social norms, the importance of individuals' virtues and meaning-making processes, and meaningful interactions within organisations. Doing so not only enhances the explanatory power of Job Embeddedness theory but also provides a more nuanced understanding of employee

retention dynamics in social enterprises. Therefore, when implementing Job Embeddedness theory, it is essential to identify socio-cultural elements such as values and cultural norms within the study context. Additionally, considering employees' experiences and learning processes will provide a more comprehensive understanding of why employees leave or stay.

Integration of Social Capital and Human Capital Theories

Integrating social capital and human capital theories into the study of employee attachment offers a novel perspective on how these forms of capital interact and reinforce each other within the unique context of social enterprises. This research introduces the concepts of 'organisational relationship tie' and 'motivation tie,' which respectively draw from social capital and human capital. It reveals that these ties are not independent but intertwined, suggesting that effective retention strategies must simultaneously foster strong interpersonal relationships and intrinsic motivation. This dual focus broadens the theoretical framework and highlights the necessity of a holistic approach to understanding employee retention. This theoretical contribution lays the groundwork for further research into the interconnectedness of social and human capital.

Employee Motivation as Human Capital

Another significant theoretical contribution of this study pertains to human capital theory, specifically the recognition of employee motivation as a form of human capital. While not many studies have delved into this area, this research provides compelling evidence that employee motivation could be viewed and valued as a critical component of human capital. The findings underscore that motivation is not just an intrinsic personal attribute but a valuable asset that organisations and social enterprises can cultivate and leverage. Social enterprises can enhance their overall human capital by investing in employee well-being and capability development, including fostering a supportive environment, encouraging personal and professional growth, and aligning individual values with organisational goals. This perspective

shifts the traditional understanding of human capital to include motivational factors, highlighting their importance in achieving sustainable organisational success. This study invites further research into the integration of motivation within human capital theory, advocating for a more holistic approach to people management that acknowledges and nurtures the motivational aspects of employees.

The Discovery of Unique Employee Attachment

Moreover, discovering unique employee attachment as a distinct form of commitment that extends beyond traditional employment boundaries contributes a new dimension to existing retention theories. This form of employee attachment, driven by intrinsic motivation and a continued desire to support the social enterprise even after employment ends, challenges conventional views on employee turnover and loyalty. It underscores the importance of aligning employees' personal values with the organisation's social mission, thus providing a theoretical foundation for future studies on long-term employee engagement in mission-driven organisations.

The Importance of Meaning-Making Process

Additionally, this research underscores the importance of the individual's meaning-making process in developing and sustaining employee attachment. By incorporating this element into the theoretical framework, the study highlights attachment's psychological and emotional dimensions, which may be overlooked in traditional retention theories. This inclusion emphasises that understanding employees' personal experiences and how they derive meaning from their work is crucial for fostering deep and lasting commitment.

The Ethical Leadership Within Organisational Culture

The study highlights the role of ethical leadership and the integration of virtue into organisational culture as critical factors in fostering employee attachment. This expands existing theories, particularly Job Embeddedness, social capital, and human

capital theories, by emphasising the importance of ethical behaviours and virtues, such as sincerity and genuine interest in moral actions, creating a supportive and trusting work environment. Integrating ethical practices into organisational culture provides a new perspective on leadership and organisational dynamics, highlighting how these elements contribute to developing strong and sustained employee attachment.

The Holistic People Management Approach

Furthermore, the research highlights a holistic people management approach that shifts from traditional retention strategies to emphasising employee well-being and capability development, allowing employee attachment to grow naturally. This approach integrates the importance of a supportive environment that nurtures employees' personal and professional growth, thereby expanding existing theories to include a more employee-centric perspective on retention. Future studies on retention theories, particularly in the context of social enterprises, can consider alternative perspectives that move beyond traditional focuses on turnover or strategic retention, aiming instead to foster genuine attachment and commitment through holistic people management practices.

The Social Capital Formation

According to social capital theory, this study elaborates on how individual virtues and social norms play an important role in social capital formation. These findings contribute to the ongoing discussion of social capital antecedents and the mechanisms through which social capital is built. The study highlights that ethical behaviour and individual virtues foster the development process, while social norms act as drivers, with varying social norms influencing the strength of social capital differently. The research details how social capital is built within the context of social enterprises (Chapter 5, Section 5.2.5.6 The Social Capital Within Social Enterprise and Unique Form of Employee Attachment). These insights significantly contribute to the field, inviting further exploration regarding social capital formation.

In summary, this research enriches the theoretical landscape by integrating and extending existing theories of Job Embeddedness, Social Capital, and Human Capital. It provides a comprehensive framework that captures the complex interplay of social norms, the importance of individuals' virtues and meaning-making process, and meaningful interactions in the development of employee attachment within social enterprises. This expanded framework offers valuable insights for academic research and practical application in managing people in social enterprise.

6.2.3 Methodological Contributions

This study marks a significant deviation from the conventional structural approach to analysing social capital found in earlier research. The literature reveals that many existing studies are done based on a structural approach, which may limit ways to capture the quality of relationships and networks at a deep level (Bull et al., 2019). To capture the formation of social capital, this research uses the contextual approach to analyse its process and formation, together with the narrative inquiry approach. Narrative Inquiry allows the researcher to identify the quality of social capital and track its formation via the participants' storytelling regarding how their relationships grow. This enables research to capture aspects like trust, norms, and value in relation to their social capital development process. Analysing and comparing the diverse backgrounds of participants enhances comprehension of the formation process. Indeed, an essential component of this research has been incorporated into the interview questions and procedure. This study incorporates explicit guidelines for participants to discern and articulate five specific relationships that influence their inclination to either depart from or remain with the social enterprises in which they are employed. Furthermore, participants are encouraged to recount the narratives detailing the development of these relationships. Despite the time investment, storytelling enables researchers to get valuable information encompassing the teller's experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values. This approach also allows the researcher to identify patterns in the emergence and development of high-quality social capital. The findings of this thesis potentially demonstrate that narrative inquiry is a

potentially effective methodology approach utilised to examine the development of social capital, particularly through a contextual approach and analysis. Furthermore, based on the social capital analysis, the empirical findings of this study demonstrate that the different types of social capital, such as bonding, bridging, and linking, may be modified and converted from one form to another. Hence, researchers engaging in the analysis of social capital, particularly those examining different forms of social capital, should take note of this aspect.

6.2.4 Practical Contributions

This research provides several practical contributions that can significantly enhance people management and retention of social enterprises. One of the primary insights is the importance of a holistic approach to people management. Social enterprises can leverage social and human capital to organically cultivate strong employee attachment by prioritising employee well-being and capability development. This approach diverges from traditional retention strategies that rely heavily on financial incentives and turnover metrics, advocating instead for creating a supportive environment that fosters personal and professional growth.

Moreover, the research highlights the importance of integrating social norms and ethical practices into the organisational culture. Social enterprises can leverage social and human capital to enhance employee engagement and commitment by embedding values such as trust, reciprocity, and cooperation into daily interactions and organisational practices. The findings suggest that fostering a culture of integrity and trust, where individual virtues are recognised and rewarded, can lead to the development of strong interpersonal relationships and a cohesive work environment. Leaders and founders who act as role models reinforce these values by demonstrating them in their actions. This encourages employees to adopt the same behaviours and attitudes, helping to create a sustainable and supportive organisational culture.

The study also underscores the critical role of meaningful interactions in developing and sustaining employee attachment. Social enterprises can leverage social and human capital by encouraging regular, open communication and collaboration among employees, leaders, and stakeholders to foster a sense of community and belonging and support individuals' meaning-making process. These interactions can help employees align their personal values with the organisation's mission, recognise the meaningfulness of their work, enhance their sense of purpose, and develop their capabilities. Practical strategies such as team-building activities, transparent communication channels, and inclusive decision-making processes, including deep talk and reflection sessions, can facilitate these interactions.

Another practical contribution is recognising employee motivation as a vital component of human capital. Social enterprises can leverage social and human capital by investing in programmes that enhance employee well-being and capability development to stir their motivations. These programmes might include providing opportunities for skill development, creating clear career pathways, aligning employees' roles with their personal values and goals, ensuring that employees' basic needs are met, and addressing health support and other related needs. By doing so, they potentially create a stable and supportive environment where employees can feel valued and are more likely to remain committed to the organisation. This approach not only boosts individual capability but also strengthens the overall human capital of the organisation, upholding both the social and commercial missions of social enterprises.

Based on the practical contributions, the following actionable points have been developed from insights gained from the study.

The Practical Actionable Points for Social Enterprise Leaders/Founders:

- Prioritise the well-being of employees in both their professional and personal lives. This could include offering flexible working arrangements, providing mental health support, or ensuring healthy workloads.

- Support employees in their meaning-making process to help them discover their own sense of meaningfulness. This can be achieved by, for example, allocating time for self-reflection, promoting personal reflection practices, facilitating group discussions for sharing experiences and insights, or implementing mentorship or coaching programmes where employees can delve into their professional and personal goals.
- Promote strong personal interactions beyond transactional relationships and facilitate an environment where employees can form meaningful connections to foster long-term relationships based on trust, mutual respect, and emotional engagement.
- Create platforms and opportunities for employees to share knowledge and collaborate on projects.
- Foster an organisational culture where trust, respect, and ethical behaviour are the norm. For instance, create a safe space for employees to voice concerns, which include issues not limited to work but also their personal matters.
- Support continued engagement with alumni or employees who move on. For instance, establish a system that maintains recognition with them. This could involve alumni networks or collaborative projects, recognising that former employees can still contribute significantly to social enterprise and society.
- Model the desired behaviours by demonstrating ethical behaviours in their actions and decision-making. Their behaviour can significantly influence the rest of the staff, which is the most powerful way to influence organisational culture and employee behaviour.
- Organise regular meetings or workshops where employees can reflect on ethical dilemmas and discuss how to apply ethical values in their work. This

can encourage a culture of open dialogue about ethics and reinforce the importance of ethical behaviour in the workplace.

- Create a system to recognise and reward ethical behaviour. For instance, it can be through formal awards, acknowledgement in team meetings, or other forms of recognition highlighting the importance of ethical conduct and virtue.
- Provide a training programme or workshop focused on ethical values and leadership. Be aware that different workforce groups may require content tailored to their specific needs. For example, a group of former inmate workers and young individuals who are passionate about societal contributions might need training delivered in different contexts and methods.

6.2.5 A Short Summary of Contributions

This research primarily contributes to the social enterprise management literature regarding employee retention in the context of social enterprises. It provides valuable insights into the unique factors that foster strong and sustained employee attachment, addressing the dual missions of social impact and financial sustainability.

First, it contributes to the theoretical framework of employee attachment development, which can explain how social and human capital can be developed to retain employees in social enterprises. Second, the research contributes to the conversations on social capital formation literature. It provides empirical evidence on the role of social norms and individual virtues in building and sustaining high-quality social capital, emphasising the importance of trust and meaningful interactions. Third, it contributes to the human capital literature by highlighting that employee motivation is a form of capital worth investing in. The study underscores that motivation is not just an intrinsic personal attribute but a valuable asset that can be cultivated and leveraged to enhance overall human capital within social enterprises.

Fourth, regarding methodological contributions, this research demonstrates the potential effectiveness of using narrative inquiry to analyse social capital formation within a contextual approach. It highlights the value of storytelling in capturing the dynamic processes of relationship-building and trust development, offering a potentially robust methodological framework for future research. Fifth, the research offers practical contributions with actionable points that can significantly enhance people management and retention strategies within social enterprises. These guidelines can potentially help social enterprise leaders create supportive environments that nurture the organic development of employee attachment.

Last, this research, conducted in Thailand, adds valuable knowledge to the field of social enterprise management by demonstrating how findings from one cultural context can potentially inform and enhance practices in other contexts. Examining the specific dynamics within Thailand reveals how Thai social norms such as *Bunkhun*, *Kreng Jai*, and *Jing Jai* influence the development of positive relationships and a cohesive work environment. These cultural insights are crucial for integrating socio-cultural awareness into people management within social enterprises, providing a deeper understanding of how societal values impact employee attachment and overall people management. By addressing the diversified context of social enterprises, this study underscores the importance of considering the socio-cultural dimension when studying people management. Additionally, this research offers a framework for employee attachment development consisting of four core elements: social norms, individual virtues, the meaning-making process, and meaningful interactions. While this framework explains how social enterprises develop social and human capital to retain their employees, it can also be used to study how employee attachment develops in specific social enterprise contexts. For example, social enterprises in other contexts can examine which social norms and virtues drive attachment development, what factors are related to employees' meaning-making processes, and how meaningful interactions can be fostered in their context. By adopting this approach, social enterprises in various contexts may potentially develop tailored strategies to promote employee attachment organically.

In summary, this study advances theoretical understanding and offers practical strategies and methodological approaches that can be applied to study employee retention and attachment within social enterprises. It highlights the interconnectedness of social and human capital, the importance of cultural and societal norms, and the need for a holistic approach to people management, making significant contributions across multiple domains.

6.3 Research Limitations and Future Studies

This study employs a qualitative methodology utilising a narrative inquiry approach. In addition to the inherent limitations of qualitative research, such as the challenge of generalising data and results to a larger population and the potential for bias due to subjectivity in data interpretation and presentation, the underlying philosophy of this research also presents some limitations. This includes the reliance on constructed realities and the subjective perceptions and interpretations of participants and researchers, which may overlook external factors and impact the comprehensiveness of the study's findings (Creswell, 2007, 2014; Saunders et al., 2019). Furthermore, the narrative inquiry also imposes unique constraints on the investigation (Kim, 2016). This approach depends on the participant's inclination and capacity to convey and elucidate their experiences, which can be affected by their recollections, self-awareness, and communication aptitude. In addition, the researcher's capacity to comprehend the significance is also impacted by their own cultural origins and perspectives.

According to the research findings, particularly on people management and retention strategies in the context of social enterprises, insights indicate that employee retention extends beyond organisational boundaries. Emphasising employee well-being and capability development naturally fosters the development of employee attachment. Although the outcomes reveal this perspective, existing studies on employee retention in social enterprises are still limited, and this research has been conducted in Thailand, where the social enterprise industry is still in its early stages

of development. Therefore, it may be premature to make conclusive inferences at this stage. This underscores the need for future research to expand on this topic. For instance, studying it in other countries or regions where the social enterprise sector is well established or in areas with different cultural settings and natural backgrounds from Thailand could provide a more nuanced understanding and enrich the literature and knowledge in the field.

Moreover, this study's limitations also stem from potential biases in the research sample. These biases include the size and types of social enterprises, as well as the business industries in which these enterprises operate. Although the researcher ensured a diverse sample of social enterprises, the largest size represented in the sample is approximately 600 employees. However, larger social enterprises do exist in Thailand, but they were not included due to limitations in accessing participants from those enterprises. Similar challenges were faced, including a variety of types and business industries. For instance, this study does not include social enterprises in the financial industry, as they appear nonexistent in Thailand. Additionally, while cooperative social enterprises do exist in Thailand, they were not included in the sample due to difficulties in accessing participants associated with those enterprises. The diversification of social enterprises and participants in the sample potentially adds a more nuanced understanding and enriches the literature in the field.

According to the findings related to human capital within social enterprises, understanding employee motivation, supporting their well-being and capability development, and facilitating their meaning-making processes can contribute not only to the development of employee attachment but also to the organisation's overall human capital development. While this research concludes that these factors are instrumental, results may vary in different contexts. Future studies are encouraged to explore this area further to deepen the understanding and broaden the scope of human capital literature. Moreover, this study explores human capital development from a social rather than an economic perspective, with results suggesting that employee motivation can evolve into employee attachment, thereby

benefiting social enterprises. However, measuring this relationship is challenging. Future research could focus on the employee motivation aspect of human capital from both social and economic perspectives or develop methods to evaluate human capital from a social perspective. Additionally, further studies could examine other elements of human capital. These research directions can enhance the understanding of human capital in social enterprises and add context to the mainstream human capital literature.

According to the findings on social capital, this study explains the formation of social capital and identifies key components such as trust, reciprocity, and multiple interactions. Social norms and individual virtues appear to be antecedents in this development process. Additionally, elements like shared values and the process of value absorption are integral to the formation process. However, these results focus on social capital formation from the perspective of employee attachment, where relationships begin developing within an organisation. To enhance and expand our understanding and contribute more context to the literature, future research should consider other perspectives on social capital. For example, exploring social capital formation within specific groups, outside organisational settings, in different types of organisations, or within various cultural contexts can provide deeper insights. Such research can add detail and elevate the understanding of social capital theory. In doing so, the outcomes of the social capital formation process may vary from this study, and the antecedents of its formation may not always be individual virtues and social norms. Even if they are similarly identified, the perceived virtues and characteristics of social norms may also differ due to different cultural contexts. For instance, the moral quality of virtues or the specific characteristics of social norms that act as antecedents could differ from those identified in this research. Moreover, regarding social capital formation, the research findings indicate that trust and shared values play significant roles in social capital formation in the context of social enterprise. However, this study does not fully explain the complexities of how this process unfolds. There are instances where shared values precede trust and cases where trust develops before shared values. Therefore, further exploration of the interplay between trust and shared values in social capital formation is essential to

deepen our understanding and contribute to the existing body of knowledge in social capital literature.

Lastly, the findings regarding the development of employee attachment suggest that the process consists of social norms, individual virtues, meaning-making processes, and meaningful interactions. The research indicates that social enterprises and leaders can adopt this framework to manage and retain their employees in unique ways. However, these outcomes are primarily derived from an inductive approach. Future research could explore how social enterprises can adapt this framework to develop people management practices and retain their employees, examining its practical application in reality. The results from this approach could refine the framework and enhance knowledge and literature on employee attachment and retention in social enterprises, both academically and practically. Additionally, the development of employee attachment is subject to change. While this research uses a narrative inquiry approach to capture potential changes and growth through participants' storytelling, the cross-sectional design limits data collection to a specific time period. Future research could adopt longitudinal approaches, which may provide more precise results and valuable insights for the field.

6.4 Key Conclusions of the Research

In conclusion, this thesis has comprehensively explored the multifaceted landscape of people management within social enterprises in Thailand. The research aims have been addressed through an in-depth examination of how social enterprises manage their employees, the motivations that drive individuals to work in these organisations, and the development of employee attachment, alongside leveraging social and human capital for retention purposes. The findings and insights from this study have been derived by rigorously following the research objectives and addressing the research questions. This section summarises the key conclusions of the research and illustrates how the study's aims, objectives, and questions have been fulfilled.

The first research objective explored how social enterprises manage their employees while balancing their social and commercial missions. The findings revealed that social enterprises in Thailand adopt a holistic approach to people management. They prioritise employee well-being and capability development, creating an environment that supports both personal and professional growth. This approach diverges significantly from traditional retention strategies, focusing primarily on financial incentives and turnover rates. Instead, social enterprises foster an organisational culture that embodies social norms such as trust, reciprocity, and cooperation, ensuring their dual missions are upheld effectively. By doing so, they manage to create a supportive and engaging work environment that naturally cultivates strong employee attachment and retention. Insights gained from exploring this first research objective respond directly to the first research question: How do social enterprises manage and retain their employees?

The second research objective sought to understand the motivations of individuals working in social enterprises, particularly regarding their decisions to join, stay, or leave. The study identified key motivational drivers, including the recognition of skills and career progress, the sense of meaningful contribution to the organisation, and the recognition of social contribution. These motivations are closely linked to the employees' intrinsic values and the meaningfulness they derive from their work. The research highlighted the critical role of the meaning-making process, wherein employees align their personal values and roles with the organisation, thereby enhancing their sense of purpose and commitment. Additionally, the study emphasised the importance of interpersonal interactions among employees, leaders, colleagues, partners, and beneficiaries. These interactions can elevate employee motivation into a more intrinsic, mature, and resilient form. This holistic understanding of motivations frames the fundamental comprehension of employee motivation within social enterprises, which is essential for furthering the understanding of the development of employee attachment in this context.

The third research objective focused on understanding the development of employee attachment within the dynamic environment of social enterprises. The findings underscored the significant roles of social norms, individual virtues, the meaning-making process, and meaningful interactions in fostering strong and sustained employee attachment. These insights address the second research question: How does employee attachment develop within social enterprises? Additionally, the research elucidates the intertwining of social and human capital, detailing how social enterprises can leverage these through four identified elements to retain employees while maintaining their dual mission. By critically analysing the development of employee attachment, the study provides answers to the third research question: How do social enterprises develop social and human capital to retain their employees while upholding both social and commercial missions? Social enterprises achieve this by; first, integrating social norms into the organisational culture to foster trust, reciprocity, and cooperation; second, supporting employee well-being and capability development to enhance positive outcomes in their employees' meaning-making processes; third, promoting individual virtues and altruistic motives by embedding ethical practices into organisational culture; and lastly, fostering meaningful interactions among employees, partners, and beneficiaries.

Additional valuable insights gained from the study include the concept of unique employee attachment, which extends beyond traditional employment boundaries and persists even after employees leave the organisation. This insight challenges conventional views on employee turnover and loyalty, offering a new dimension to existing retention theories. Furthermore, the study's findings on human capital open new avenues for recognising employee motivation as a form of human capital worth investing in for organisations like social enterprises. Additionally, the insights into the development of employee attachment contribute to the literature on social capital formation, highlighting that individual virtues and social norms are antecedents in the social capital formation process.

In summary, this thesis has successfully achieved its research aims, objectives, and questions, providing a comprehensive understanding of how social enterprises manage their employees, how employee attachment develops, and how social enterprises develop social and human capital to retain their employees while upholding dual missions. By integrating and expanding existing theories (i.e., Job Embeddedness, Social Capital, and Human Capital), the study offers valuable theoretical and practical contributions, enriching the knowledge base on people management in social enterprises. The findings underscore the importance of a holistic and value-driven approach to people management, highlighting the critical role of social norms, individual virtues, and meaningful interactions in fostering strong and sustained employee attachment and addressing potential approaches to develop social and human capital to retain employees. This research addresses gaps in the literature and provides actionable insights for social enterprises and leaders, guiding them in creating supportive environments that nurture employee commitment and retention organically.

6.5 Reflexivity in Research

Reflexivity is an essential aspect of qualitative research that entails the researcher's introspection on their assumptions, expectations, decisions, and behaviours during the study process (Finlay & Gough, 2003; Morse et al., 2002). Reflexivity enables researchers to situate themselves within the research, cultivate an understanding of their personal stance, and recognise the factors that impact research results. This practice ensures that researchers remain actively involved in the research process with an awareness of their own biases and the impact of their insider and outsider perspectives on the research process and its outcomes (Palaganas et al., 2017; Luttrell, 2019; Braun & Clarke, 2022).

I consider myself an outsider to the social enterprise sector, bringing an external perspective to this research. My professional experience in the non-profit and voluntary sectors has provided me with some insight into mission-driven

organisations. However, my tenure in the third sector was brief, and I eventually transitioned to corporate and academic fields, which differ significantly from the social enterprise context. Despite my outsider status regarding social enterprises, I am an insider in the context of Thai culture. As a Thai individual, I possess a deep understanding of the values, cultural norms, and social dynamics that influence the behaviour and thoughts of Thai participants. This dual positionality allows me to approach the research with a blend of external objectivity and internal cultural insight.

My outsider perspective on social enterprises provided a degree of objectivity in data collection, allowing me to ask questions without preconceived notions based on direct experience in social enterprises. However, my background in NGOs and voluntary work helped me relate to participants' experiences in mission-driven work environments. Nevertheless, I acknowledged that I sometimes adopted too much objectivity, viewing employees in social enterprises as similar to those in other organisations. Initially, I expected to find strategies to retain employees for social enterprises based on my outsider perspective driven by literature, theories, and personal expectations. I approached the research with a management-oriented mindset, but my participants, as insiders, prioritised social value, viewing employee retention differently. They emphasised that sustaining social enterprises often involves different priorities than those in conventional organisations. For instance, while traditional organisations might focus on retention strategies to reduce turnover costs, social enterprises prioritise employee well-being and capability development, and employee retention seems not to be prioritised by those who are insiders.

With this perspective, during the time I collected and familiarised myself with my data, I found myself questioning my research again and wondering what I should aim to achieve when one of my initial aims seemed to be challenged by the reality and my data. This discovery reshaped my understanding and drove me to reveal that retention in the social enterprise context may not be the same as in conventional organisations. This shift in focus means that retention in social enterprises is not just

about keeping employees for longer periods but about supporting them holistically in their personal and professional development. As a result, the concept of employee retention in social enterprises extends beyond standard practices to encompass a broader, more integrated approach to employee support. Therefore, the outcome of this study highlights that employee retention in social enterprises is not comparable to that in other organisations. When they prioritise employee well-being and capability, retention shifts away from merely retaining people to supporting their overall well-being.

Therefore, as an outsider, I had to reconcile my initial expectations with the participants' insights. I realised that in social enterprises, the value system plays a crucial role in all management decisions. While their approach to managing employees seemed less strategically formalised compared to my previous corporate experiences, I recognised that social enterprises strategically balance their missions, which are complex and challenging. It is not that they lack strategy; rather, their strategies are tailored to their unique context. For example, they might face retention issues but choose to let people go once their social aim is achieved instead of enforcing retention through contracts, which is common in for-profit sectors. This reflexive thinking led me to question my assumptions. I imagined that if the pressures of the commercial mission became too intense, would social enterprises adopt more conventional retention strategies? Or if the social enterprises developed and grew bigger like a corporate organisation, would they adopt more traditional retention strategies? With this realisation, I can see the limitations of my findings.

Moreover, I also questioned myself: if I were in their position, would I make similar decisions? This taught me that I can never fully understand their decisions without experiencing their exact circumstances. Even if I experienced it myself, different times, places, contexts, experiences, and values could lead to different results. Decisions depend on various factors, including the situation and context, despite our values and ideologies. I acknowledged that my research is just a part of the broader understanding. I believe my findings may be provisional, and their application is

subject to change based on time, place, and context. While my insights and recommendations may be relevant now or in certain societies, they may not be universally or permanently applicable. Over time, as circumstances evolve and new knowledge emerges, what works today may not work tomorrow. Nonetheless, I appreciate that embarking on my research contributes to the literature on social enterprises, even if only in a small way. It adds a modest but hopefully valuable perspective to the ongoing dialogue about social enterprise management and retention.

My insider knowledge of Thai culture played a significant role in building rapport with participants. Understanding the cultural and social nuances enabled me to design interview questions that were culturally appropriate and to interpret responses within the correct cultural context. This cultural understanding also helped establish trust with participants, leading to more open and candid conversations. However, I found that being an insider sometimes blinded me to certain insights. As a Thai, I was deeply embedded in the culture and did not fully realise the significant impact that social norms in Thai society have on individuals' thinking and behaviour. For instance, I did not initially notice the crucial role these norms play in developing relationships and fostering individuals' motivation until my supervisors suggested that I should try to view things from an external perspective.

As an insider, some aspects were unclear to me because I was deeply immersed in them. When my supervisors asked whether certain phenomena were attributable to the value system or social norms since all I had mentioned were about them, their questions prompted me to step back and gradually gain a clearer perspective. Initially, I struggled to understand and did not know how to adopt an external view. However, through the reflexive process and documenting my inquiries along the way, I began to gain clarity. During this process, I also had opportunities to discuss my research with other researchers in my research group and those I met at conferences. I believe these meetings and discussions helped me reflect on my understanding and how I viewed the findings and outcomes. I learned that talking to other people,

including supervisors and researchers from different cultures, can provide new perspectives that enhance how I perceive, conceive, and understand my data. However, it is not just about gaining a clear perspective right after these talks; this process took a long period of time. It is an accumulative process. Writing this part of the research also helped me reflect on myself and think back about how the process went through and how I came to see and interpret things the way I did. I believe writing the reflexivity part not only enhances the rigour and transparency of the study but also ultimately contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the worldview, the way we conduct research, and how we think broadly with open eyes and an open mind about something different and unfamiliar to us.

I discovered that reflexivity plays an essential role throughout the research process. What surprised me was how my roles as an insider or outsider were not always clear-cut and often interplayed, shaping how I conducted my research. While I was aware of my insider status, there were times when I realised that I was actually an outsider and vice versa. This became particularly evident during data analysis and while writing the results and implications. A significant example of this was in understanding what drives people to work for social enterprises and their sense of meaningfulness. As an outsider to working in social enterprises, I initially assumed that those who work in this sector are primarily driven by social impact, which contributes to their sense of meaningfulness. Being an outsider allowed me to openly ask questions and learn from my participants, who were happy to share their experiences, thoughts, and complex feelings.

As a Thai, I was an insider in terms of understanding the cultural context. This enabled me to communicate effectively and grasp how participants felt and thought within the framework of Thai society and culture. However, I realised that my dual roles were influencing my understanding in unexpected ways. For instance, not all individuals in social enterprises are driven by social values. While some find meaning in social contributions, others find it in a simple and peaceful life unrelated to social impact. This revelation highlighted the subjective nature of meaningfulness,

often influenced by social norms regarding my findings. For example, individuals who have faced extreme hardship, such as poverty, sickness, or debt, might find meaning in stability and gratitude rather than in social contributions. The concept of '*bunkhun*' (a deep sense of gratitude and obligation) plays a significant role here. Although I understood this as an insider to Thai culture, I was an outsider to the specific hardships these individuals faced.

Initially, I struggled to understand how someone could feel content working under a sense of indebtedness in the goodness of someone. However, I realised that if I had experienced their struggles, I might also have found meaning in a peaceful, stable life, free from worry about social impact. This understanding made me appreciate that meaningfulness is subjective and context-dependent. Even in social enterprises, where one might expect a focus on social impact, meaningfulness can arise from different sources. In writing about these findings, I played the role of an insider, capturing and representing my participants' voices. However, I also adopted an outsider perspective by acknowledging that factors beyond social norms influence individuals' sense of meaningfulness. This realisation makes me understand that social norms can also shift and change due to various factors, including new experiences and changing perceptions. I recognised that reflexivity occurred at every stage of my research process, influencing all interpretations and contributions to the research. As I mentioned, my findings may be provisional and context-specific, reflecting the unique circumstances of my study. While they add to the literature on social enterprises, they are not universally applicable.

During my research process, my external perspective on social enterprises helped maintain a critical distance, reducing the risk of bias that might arise from being too close to the subject matter. At the same time, my insider knowledge of Thai culture supported accurate data interpretation, particularly in understanding the behaviours of participants. I acknowledged the propensity to over-identify with participants or make assumptions based on our shared cultural background. However, maintaining a

reflective journal to document my thoughts and potential biases throughout the research process helped balance my perspectives.

In summary, the entire research process was shaped by various factors, including the impact of my insider and outsider roles. I learned that as a researcher, I must be aware of potential biases that can occur from the beginning to the end of the research process: choosing a research topic, understanding the literature, selecting the methodology, data collection, data analysis, interpreting results, synthesising insights, and writing the thesis. Although I strive to balance objective and subjective stances and avoid biases, they are inherent in qualitative research, where the researcher's values, beliefs, and perceptions shape the study. It cannot be a value-free endeavour. I cannot claim that the outcomes and results are devoid of personal influence since I am the one interpreting the data. I realised that in research, as in life, certainty is elusive. Even when we believe we fully understand something, there is always more to learn. Each step of the research process offers new insights and opportunities for further learning. I acknowledge that this research has its limitations, but I value the learning journey it represents. I have gained a better understanding of research methodology, recognised my philosophical stance, learned from my participants, and broadened my worldview. This experience has taught me that every step of conducting research contributes to personal and academic growth.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: List of the questions in the Qualtrics link

Note: The list of questions is the result of adjustments made after the pilot study

1. Would you like to participate in this project? [คุณยินดีเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้หรือไม่]
 - a. Yes [ยินดีเข้าร่วมแน่นอน]
 - b. Not Sure [ขอพิจารณาก่อน]
2. Which of the following roles is the one you are considering taking part in this project? [You can select more than one role] [คุณจะเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยนี้เพื่อให้ความเห็นและมุมมองในฐานะของบุคคลใดต่อไปนี้ คุณสามารถเลือกได้มากกว่าหนึ่งข้อ]
 - a. Employee in a social enterprise [พนักงานในกิจการเพื่อสังคม]
 - b. HR professional in a social enterprise [เจ้าหน้าที่ฝ่ายบุคคลในกิจการเพื่อสังคม]
 - c. Social enterprise founder [เจ้าของกิจการเพื่อสังคม]
3. Please provide your name [กรุณากรอกชื่อของคุณ]
4. Please provide your organisation name [กรุณากรอกชื่อกิจการเพื่อสังคม]
5. Please provide your age [กรุณาระบุอายุของคุณ]
6. How long have you been working for the social enterprise(s)? [คุณทำงานในกิจการเพื่อสังคมมานานเพียงใด]
7. How long has your organisation been established? [กิจการเพื่อสังคมที่คุณทำงานอยู่นั้นดำเนินงานมาเป็นระยะเวลาปีโดยประมาณ]
8. Please provide your e-mail address [กรุณากรอกอีเมลที่สะดวกต่อการติดต่อกลับ]
9. Please provide your Line ID, if you prefer to be contacted via Line Application [หากต้องการให้ติดต่อกลับผ่านช่องทางไลน์ กรุณากรอกไลน์ไอดีของคุณ]

Appendix B: Interview Guide and Protocol

B1: Interview guide for the group of employee participants

The researcher will introduce the name, start with a rapport talk, thank the participant for agreeing to participate in the research project, and address a pseudonym to use for the study. The researcher will confirm the project procedure, information in PIS (Participant Information Sheet), and research aims and objectives again.

Script:

My name is Naraporn Thammadee. Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. The purpose of my research is to explore and understand people management in social enterprises, the employees' motivation, and people relationships in the formation of employee attachment. **Specifically, this study will focus on your experiences in relation to the evolution of motivation and relationships that tighten you to your work and organisation.**

All information will be kept anonymous and confidential (pseudonymisation), and I will refer to you by your chosen pseudonym if you prefer.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time.

The compensation can be in any voluntary form, depending on your request and preference. However, the voluntary that you request must be legal and ethical.

May I ask again for confirmation that you are willing to participate in this study?

Before proceeding to the interview session, the researcher will ask the participant for permission to record the interview. Then, the researcher will inform the participant about the interview questions.

Script:

I will refer to you by your chosen pseudonym if you prefer... [making an agreement with the participant regarding the name or how they prefer to be referred to by the researcher during the interview]

With your permission, our conversation will be recorded for transcribing purposes, and a copy of the transcript will be sent to you afterwards if you prefer... [once the participant allows the researcher to do so, the researcher continues informing about the interview format]

The questions will be divided into three parts. First, we'll talk about your background, then we'll move on to questions related to your motivation, and lastly, we'll discuss your personal relationships. The interview will not last more than 2 hours. However, if you need to finish the interview earlier, please feel free to let me know.

Then, the researcher moves to the list of interview questions:

List of interview questions for the group of employee participants

Background	
1.	Would you briefly tell me about yourself, your job, and the social enterprise you are currently working?
2.	Please share your photographs and tell me about your photos to show your working environment and daily life.
3.	Please tell me about how you get involved with your current job
4.	Please think about the time you were applying for this job. How was your feeling at that time? And please share why you decided to apply for a job in social enterprise.
Motivation and Factors Related to the Decision to Leave or Stay.	
1.	What are the things that you enjoy doing the most for your job, please tell me about it
2.	From your reflection, what is your motivation and has your motivation to continue working changed from the first day you started working compared to today? [Would you share your opinion, if it changes, how was it changed]
3.	Have you ever met an event or feeling that demotivated you to work in your organisation? Would you mind sharing your experiences?
4.	Please share your thoughts of what is the most valuable thing that makes you love your job/ your organisation
5.	Please share your thought what/how you think about the salary and benefits of working at your organisation
6.	How do you think about your career plan or your career advancement? Would you mind sharing your career goals and stories [the researcher will create a conversation, such as whether it changed from the first day that you started working, whether you followed your plan, and what you will be in the next five years. It is to probe that career goals possibly make the participants leave/stay with the job/organisation.
7.	Please describe your experience(s) when you have a feeling of accomplishment/ Please share the stories of your accomplishment. [create conversation to seek whether what the participants told can be a motivation or the things that attach them to the organisation]
8.	What are the potential challenges that make you think about leaving your current job? Please share your experiences. [tell the participants that their answers can be any factor in life which may not relate to the job]
9.	If you decide to leave your job, what will be the reason for driving your decision, please share your experiences/thoughts
10.	Please describe the most enjoyable workplace and environment that affect your decision to leave or stay at your organisation.

Personal Relationships and Network	
1.	Please describe your feelings on the first day of your work and the feelings and relationships of the first few months of working in the organisation and compare them to your feelings and relationships recently, or at least a year or a few years later. Is it different from the first few months of working here? How?
2.	Please address at least five persons you are closely working with or you are trustfully talking to, please tell who they are and how you know them, and please share your stories (you may give pseudonyms or abbreviations for their names) [the researcher will seek to the quality relationships by asking if those people can make them attach to the organisation and seek how those relationships evolve]
3.	Have you ever gotten any job offers/recommendations from your friends, colleagues, or acquaintances? Would you mind telling me about your experiences with your decisions and how the relationship between you and the person who recommended you for the job emerged?
4.	Do you think a good relationship and social network in the organisation can defer you from leaving your job? Is it possible, what do you think about how it can happen, please share your thoughts
5.	From your stories, do you think those good relationships and social networks you are having emerge from your intention or the atmosphere and environment in the organisation? Would you mind sharing your story?
6.	In your opinion, does a good network and relationship need to be retained? How do you normally retain, do you think it needed to plan overhead in how to maintain your good relationship and network, or do you normally let it go on its flow
7.	Imagine if you decide to leave your organisation. Which relationship and with whom will you think of as it is lamentable for you to leave? [the researcher will see if this person is one of the persons that participants mentioned before, if not, the researcher will ask; please describe how you know this person(s), and please tell your story of how that good relationship has emerged. [If the researcher still can't figure out the answer to the second question in this part, the researcher will ask this one.]

Appendix B: Interview Guide and Protocol

B2: Interview guide for the group of founder/leader participants

The researcher will introduce the name, thank the participant for agreeing to participate in the research project, and address a pseudonym to use for the study. The researcher will confirm the project procedure, information in PIS (Participant Information Sheet), and research aims and objectives again.

Script:

My name is Naraporn Thammadee. Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. The purpose of my research is to explore and understand people management in social enterprises, the employees' motivation, and people relationships in the formation of employee attachment. **Specifically, this study will focus on your experiences in relation to people management and how you retain employees in social enterprises.**

All information will be kept anonymous and confidential (pseudonymisation), and I will refer to you by your chosen pseudonym if you prefer.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time.

The compensation can be in any voluntary form, depending on your request and preference. However, the voluntary that you request must be legal and ethical.

May I ask again for confirmation that you are willing to participate in this study?

Before proceeding to the interview session, the researcher will ask the participant for permission to record the interview. Then, the researcher will inform the participant about the interview questions.

Script:

I will refer to you by your chosen pseudonym if you prefer... [making an agreement with the participant regarding the name or how they prefer to be referred to by the researcher during the interview]

With your permission, our conversation will be recorded for transcribing purposes, and a copy of the transcript will be sent to you afterwards if you prefer... [once the participant allows the researcher to do so, the researcher continues informing about the interview format]

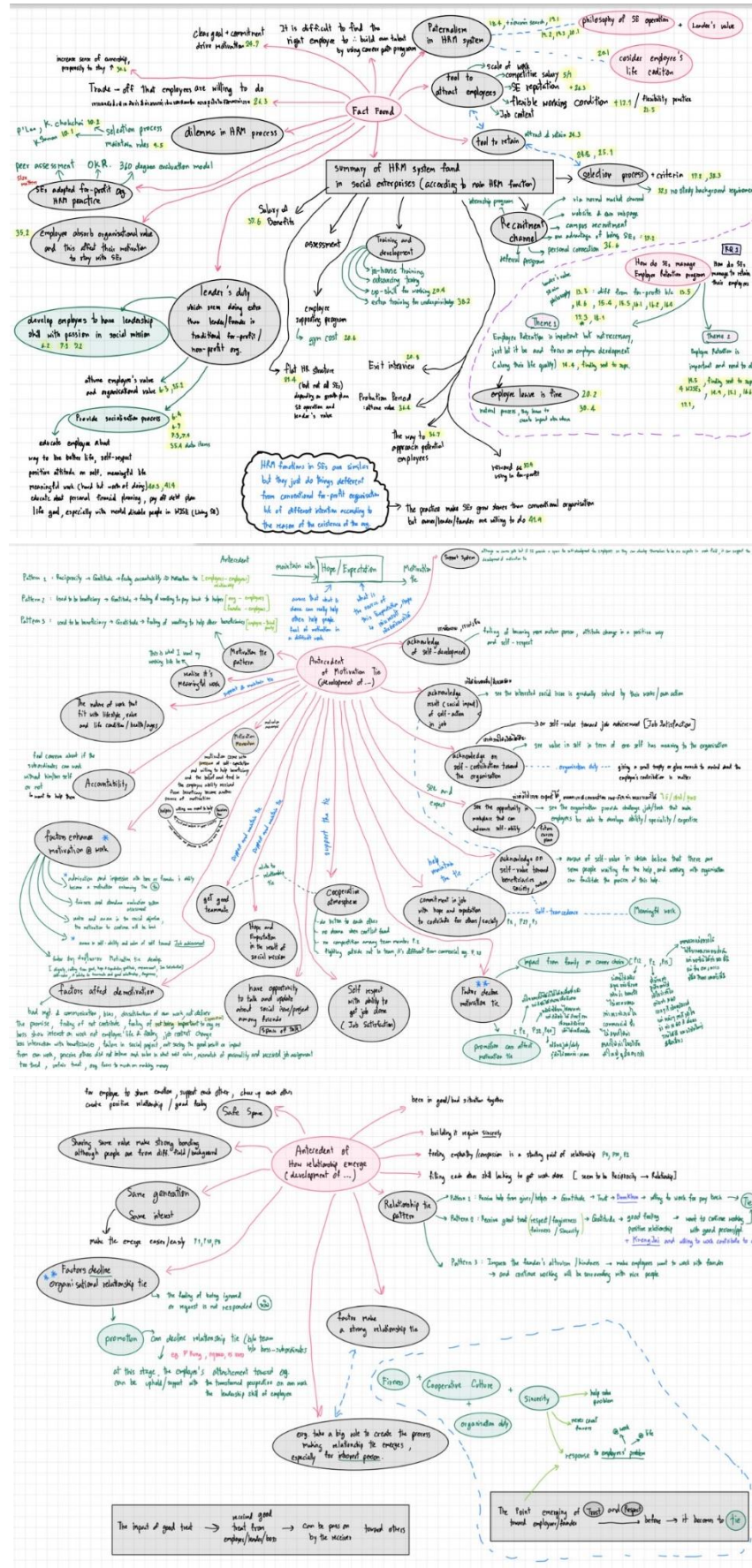
The questions will be divided into two parts. There will be questions about your background, and then we'll move on to questions related to people management and employee retention in your organisation. The interview will not last more than 90 minutes. However, if you need to finish the interview earlier, please feel free to let me know.

Then, the researcher moves to the list of interview questions:

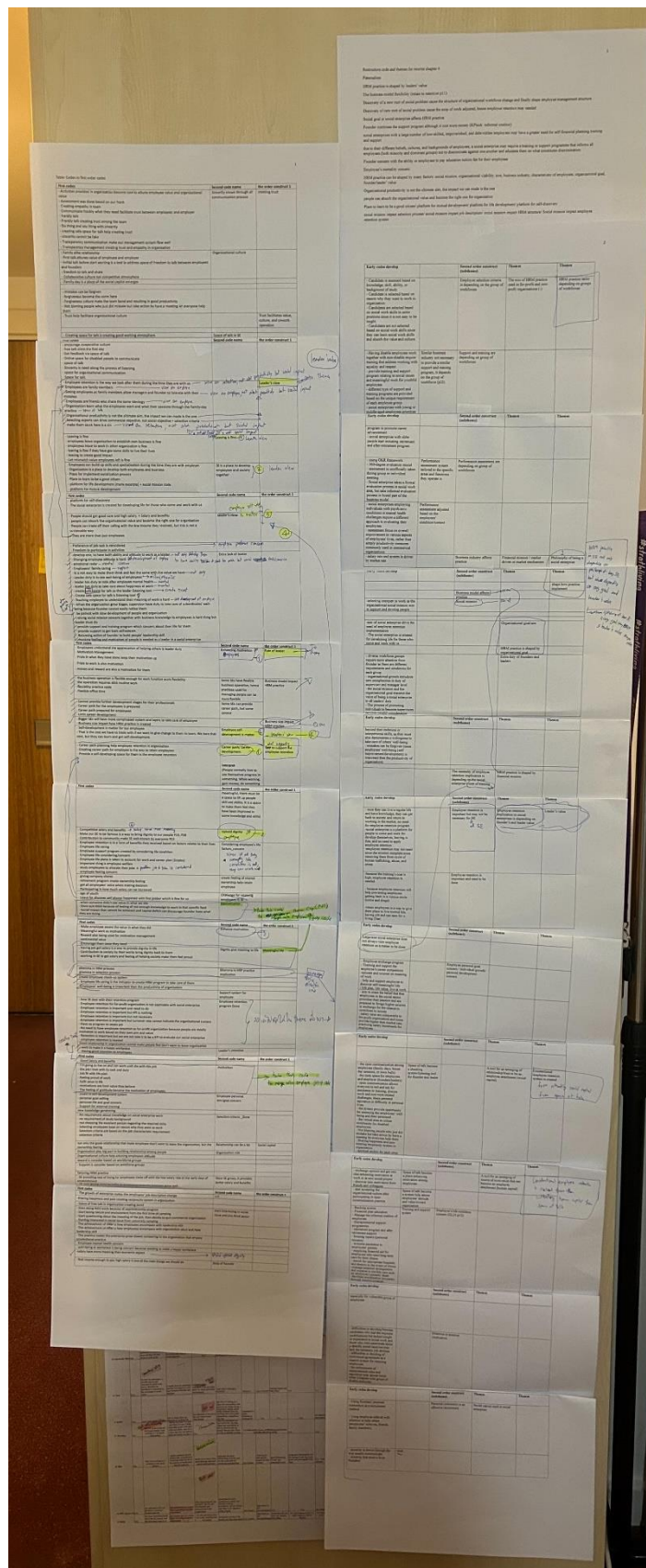
List of interview questions for the group of founder/leader participants

Background	
1.	Would you briefly tell me about yourself, your job, and the social enterprise you are currently working?
2.	Please share your photographs and tell me about your photos to show your working environment and daily life.
People Management in Social Enterprise	
1.	Please tell me about the current people management of your organisation. How you recruit, select, and train employees in social enterprise. How does the performance assessment go with employees in your organisation?
2.	What do you think about the compensation, salaries, and benefits of working here? when comparing with the other organisations that you know
3.	From your experiences/ as far as you know... how did people management in your organisation change, what did it change, when, and why?
4.	From your experience, what motivation(s) drive the employees to keep doing their job, and what motivation makes them attach to your organisation
5.	What is/are the people management practice or the organisational value/culture that you admire, and why do you admire...
6.	From your experiences, when people come to you and want to leave the organisation, what are the reasons they tell you, and what do you think? Would you mind sharing a story?
7.	In your opinion, what are the things that can make your employees/teammates/people stay with your organisation? How and why?
8.	Do you agree that “social enterprise needs to have a strategy to retain the employee”? Why, please share your thoughts/experiences
9.	Please share your thoughts about how your social enterprise can retain employees

Appendix C: Examples of Initial Thematic Maps



Appendix D: Reviewing Codes, Themes, and Subthemes by Using Thematic Tables



Appendix E: The Participants' Excerpt and People Management Practices

The Participants' Excerpts and People Management Practices

The participants' excerpts	People management practice
"...We set up a small bank within our enterprise and financial education course, just for our employees. They learn how to save and invest their money. They can borrow money and pay low interest, and then the person who does not want to borrow can deposit the money, too. At the same time, deposits here are given higher interest rates than commercial banks, and people who want to borrow and cannot go to the bank can do so at lower loan rates here, and it provides a good rate. It is better than going to the informal loans... illegal loans... [P23]."	Banking system and personal financial training course
"It is just a small training and acknowledgement for them, but everyone needs to know that it is our main priority because we have employees with diverse family backgrounds and ethnicities. Half of us are from minority groups in Thailand. We're also very careful to avoid discrimination. We take it seriously because it is about people's fundamental rights and social development [P18]."	Workplace discrimination training
"We also have what we call The Academy platform, which serves as one of our organisational platforms. It functions as an online school for reskilling and upskilling individuals with disabilities. We're going to teach 2000 disabled people about creating data and AI. The platform also offers various training courses, including communication skills, financial planning, taxation, and tax returns. Do you believe that many of them don't know what welfare is provided by the government they may be entitled to receive...[P37]."	Training for disabled employees
"People who work here are mostly condemned as societal outcasts. Some of them cannot read and write, are in jail, and have health conditions. Some don't trust anyone, not even themselves. They don't believe that they have the ability to live a better life. So, we need to provide this kind of training and support system that can bring back their dignity. Many of the activities and open talks we have here are for this matter [P27]."	Training programmes and support activities to uplift the self-esteem of employees
"It's interesting to observe that our IT professionals, given their tech-focused background, might not have the same deep engagement with social issues as those with a social work background. Considering the youth, their focus often centres on finding meaning in both their professional and personal lives. To help with this, we've put in place certain procedures and practices aimed at helping our employees uncover their own values and purpose while being part of our team. When they can pinpoint what truly makes their work meaningful, whether it aligns with our	Self-discovery procedure as a support system for young people

The participants' excerpts	People management practice
<p>values or not, it has a ripple effect and brings mindfulness to their actions in their day-to-day lives, which can have a good effect on our society [P39].”</p> <p>“The younger generation does care about social issues, but they’re also concerned about their careers and new experiences. We understand this, so we’ve started an employee exchange programme. They can work in other hostels in different countries for three months, and if both sides agree, it can even be extended [P20].”</p>	
<p>“A lot of them are old and in poor health condition. They were already old when they started working here. So, I developed a project to become the retirement programme...It is an agriculture project that extends from the core work of our social enterprise...They don’t think that at their age, they can have a better life in the last part of their lives. So, they will have a job, get money, stay healthy, and those who don’t have a house will get their own accommodation from this project too [P27].”</p> <p>“...instead of retiring at 60 years old, we’re extending our retirement age to 65 years old in my organisation. This is our new regulation...but it was created as a support programme. It is what we can do to help them prepare for their next stage of life. We really want them to have a better quality of life while working with us and afterwards, even though they leave us. So, I developed this plan, it allows them to continue their work, and they will be educated how to be entrepreneurs so they can create jobs and make money in other ways besides the salary they get from us ...[P23].”</p> <p>“When I learned that people who were getting close to retirement age didn’t want to leave the company, I decided to develop a retirement plan that allowed them to continue working with us. For them, retirement meant the end of work and security with money. I also gave some of them new positions because they were getting too old for the ones that they were in. The goal is to locate positions that aligned with their capabilities, avoiding assigning them to physically demanding tasks or labour-intensive work [P22].”</p>	The after-retirement support programme
<p>“People who come to work here do not have much education. We know that education is important. So, we want their children to study at a higher level. In our social enterprises, we provide scholarships for those who qualify...It’s roughly 20,000 Baht per year, which is not a tiny sum, but it is worth it. It allows us to assist them and carry out our mission, cutting off all sources of poverty and difficulty in life [P27].”</p> <p>“Many of our employees cannot finish their education due to financial constraints. We lend money without charging interest. The programme is open to anyone who has children and wants to</p>	Educational support for the children of employees

The participants' excerpts	People management practice
<p>support the children's studies. We also assist folks in our community. We can't give money away for free since we have so many people to look after, but with this help, many of our employees' children will be able to continue their education [P13]."</p>	
<p>"Most of us here are young, under 30. So, when we decide on perks and support for employees, we think about what they want and need at this age. We offer fitness classes (laughs). Right now, we don't have maternity leave since it's not needed for many, but we might in the future (smiles). People have different wants and goals. Some may like fitness perks, while others might choose welfare choices that help their parents. Some who have fewer family responsibilities might choose savings or insurance. We set a budget and offer different perks based on what they want. People can choose what's best for them [P19]."</p>	Rewards and perks
<p>"It was about promoting real equality and fairness while allowing them to learn and grow. They had been immersed in a negative environment for a long time, and as a result, their mindset was shaped around trying to take advantage of being favoured by whoever they perceived as their boss...It's not a healthy attitude for people to have. I wanted to create an environment where this mentality wasn't present... We have many practices and activities to let them learn to have a positive attitude and focus on personal growth...It became a process that cultivates a good attitude for them to be back to our society...[P28]."</p> <p>"We've got two parts to where we work. If it's about the hostel, we mostly do informal evaluations. But for social work, we collaborate with different teams, and that's when things get a bit more official. For this side, we have clear criteria listed for assessment. We use a model called '360-degree evaluation.' We also do assessments from our colleagues' viewpoints. Before we began, we talked about the assessment. During that talk, we decided if everyone agrees with these criteria [P20]."</p> <p>"When assessing staff, we typically consider both the work they accomplish and the manner in which they do it, right? However, here, the approach needs to be different. We cannot apply the usual standards because many of our employees are dealing with mental health conditions. This means understanding their way of working is essential. Their pace may differ from others, but they still achieve their tasks, focusing on quality over speed. It's important for them to recognise their strengths and feel confident in their abilities, which helps in maintaining a stress-free environment. Thus, when evaluating their performance, it's not solely about the quantity of work completed. We place a greater emphasis on their well-being and how they integrate with the team and the overall workplace environment [P42]."</p>	Performance assessment