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Journal of Asian Public Policy

The Emergence and Contested Growth of Social Enterprise in Thailand

--Manuscript Draft--

Full Title:	The Emergence and Contested Growth of Social Enterprise in Thailand
Manuscript Number:	RAPP-2019-0062R1
Article Type:	Special Issue Article
Keywords:	Social Enterprise: Social Entrepreneur: Private-public policy interventions: Co-optation
Abstract:	<p>This paper investigates the development of the Social Enterprise (SE) sector in Thailand. Emerging from the non-profit sector in the 1970s with the formation of SEs to tackle sex education (Cabbages and Condoms) and poverty alleviation in Northern hill tribes (Mae Fah Luang Foundation). Thailand is now experiencing the development of new state-private policy interventions to stimulate development of SE. These include establishing the new Pracharat Rak Samakkee (PRS) company form of SE and the Social Enterprise Parliament Act in 2018. We combine the work of Kerlin (2017, 2010) on the socio-economic environment with the theories of market creation from economic sociology (Beckert, 2010; Fligstein & Dauter, 2007). We identify for the first time the key institutions, networks and policy initiatives of SE emergence and development in Thailand. Our qualitative research also shows the rising influence of the state and private sector in Thailand and the contested nature of this involvement. We identify a new country type Social Enterprise Semi Strategic Diverse model form, we term an Authoritarian State-Corporate model. This has led to concerns around co-optation of the SE sector in Thailand.</p>
Order of Authors:	Bob Doherty, PhD Pichawadee Kittipanya-ngam, PhD
Response to Reviewers:	<p>Journal of Asian Public Policy: RESPONSE TO EDITOR / REVIEWERS for Special issue on 'Social Entrepreneurship in Context'</p> <p>Ref.: Ms. No. RAPP-2019-0062: 'The Emergence and Contested Growth of Social Enterprise in Thailand'</p> <p>Prof Bob Doherty The York Management School The University of York York UK, YO 10 5GD</p> <p>FAO: Prof. Alex Jingwei He (Editor in Chief) Journal of Asian Public Policy CC: Prof. Yanto Chandra and Prof. Janelle Kerlin</p> <p>12th April, 2020</p> <p>Dear Editor in Chief,</p> <p>Thanks for giving us the opportunity to revise and resubmit our paper titled; 'The Emergence and Contested Growth of Social Enterprise in Thailand' for your special issue on Social Entrepreneurship in Context of Journal of Asian Public Policy.</p> <p>We can declare this work has not been published previously and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. The publication is approved by both authors and tacitly and explicitly by the responsible authorities. Also If accepted the publication will not be published elsewhere, including electronically in the same form, in English or in any other language without the written consent of the copyright holder.</p> <p>The reviewers' comments have been invaluable in helping us to significantly improve our paper (see full response table below). We have found particularly useful the recommendations of reviewer 1 to develop our theoretical contribution to show how Thailand provides an example of a new country model titled, Authoritarian State-Corporate model which the authors identify as a new category of the Strategic Diverse and semi-strategic model in Kerlin's (2017) country typology. Second, we have found very helpful the recommendations by reviewer 2 to deepen our theoretical foundations in the</p>

paper (see strengthened literature review). Third, we have also taken the advice of the reviewers to enhance the findings and discussion section by bringing in more data from our focus groups and interviews. This has enabled a richer theoretical abstraction and we believe the paper is now a very comprehensive review of social enterprise in Thailand. We thank you all for this!

We have also added a new section on research context after the methodology to provide more information on the recent socio-economic context of Thailand. We thank you for giving us the opportunity to revise and resubmit. The word count is now currently 6,939 excluding references.

Yours Sincerely,
Bob Doherty and Pichawadee Kittipanya-ngam
Reviewer 1 - Accept subject to modifications as indicated

Reduce repetitions

We have removed a number of repetitions in this paper including as examples: We mention twice in both the introduction and literature review that social enterprises lead to social change and this has been removed in the literature review now.

We also remove repetition of the following statement in intro and literature review: Kerlin (2010) proposes in Southeast Asia the four key socioeconomic factors that influence the nature of social enterprise model emergence namely, market performance, international aid, state capability and civil society are all weak.

Justify more clearly how the case of SE in Thailand could shed light or draw a meaningful lesson that makes this piece worth reading.

We agree and thanks for helping us to crystalize our contribution. We have now added to our theoretical foundations by using Kerlin's MISE framework and work on institutional theory (2017) along with Jeong's (2017) work on South Korea. By unpacking the Southeast Asian Thailand case we are now able to identify a new country type Semi Strategic Diverse SE model we term an Authoritarian Statist Corporate approach. In addition, we have also combined this historical institutionalism approach with the work in economic sociology (Beckert, 2010; and Fligstein and Dauter, 2007) to provide a more holistic picture of social enterprise development in Thailand. We have also drawn comparisons with SE work from both South Korea and China to illustrate the distinctiveness of Thailand. The abstract, introduction and literature review have been revised to focus on this contribution.

Please provide more insight into the contested growth of SE and the potential for corporate co-optation of SE.

Thank you for this suggestion. We have now provided two examples from our data collection of co-optation by the private sector in Thailand (see section on Corporate and State Interest in Social Enterprise in the findings and discussion section).

Avoid introducing theories captured like they are incorporated into your conceptual framework from the beginning. On the other hand, you should pay more attention to the discussion part at the end to reflect how your findings contribute to the new knowledge. This would be fascinating for the reader.

Thank you for that suggestion and we have now improved both the findings and discussion section coupled with the conclusions to allow the findings to contribute to new knowledge. We have identified a new Authoritarian State-Corporate model which the authors identify as a new category of the Strategic Diverse and semi-strategic model in Kerlin's (2017) country typology. We have also identified in the findings that diffusion of social innovation is also in play via the British Council in Thailand. We agree and have amended the introduction and literature review accordingly.

Reviewer 2 - Accept subject to modifications as indicated

Clarify the narrative approach in the research method.

Thank you very much for this very useful comment. We agree that it is better to represent

our qualitative approach more to show how the themes emerge from the data in a grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). We have also improved our explanation in the methodology section on our research phases.

Misunderstanding about "Institution".

This is a very important point and we thank you for this. We have now strengthened this section in the literature review. To do this we have brought in the work of Kerlin's MISE framework (2017) underpinned by historical institutionalism, Rueschemeyer's (2009) work on meso and micro institutions, Scott's (2008) work on formal and informal institutions. Then we have also brought in the new institutionalism work of Fligstein and Dauter (2007) and Beckert (2010), who criticise the segmentation of approaches and argue there is more to be gained from bringing together the three types of social structures relevant for the explanation of economic outcomes i.e. the main schools of thought namely; institutions (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991), networks (Granovetter, 1985) and performativity (Callon, 2007, 1998). In addition, to the theoretical context the authors have also incorporated a new section on research context (after the methodology) to explain socio-economic context in Thailand by using the work of Eli Elinoff (2019, 2014).

Cognitive Frames" also shown in Figure 1 is expressed "performativity" in Fligstein and Dauter (2007). It is considered paraphrases with little problem, but you should describe the reason for changing the notation here.

Thank you for this important point of clarification. We have now explained in the literature review that Fligstein and Dauter (2007) explain that performativity is the introduction of a representation of the world as well as a shared belief about the behaviours to adapt. Beckert (2010) p: 612 in their diagram of influence of three social forces on market fields (institutions, networks and cognitive frames) explain this as cognitive frames and argues these cognitive frames, also form a social structure in their own right. Social norms, as well as cognitive 'how-to' rules, are part of a socially inscribed meaning structure operating in a market field through which firms and other field actors assess situations and define their responses.

Change Fusion, Nise Corporation, and UnLtd Thailand as shown in the "Social Network" in the same Figure 1 are not explained what they are in the text. Also for other listed associations, public network organizations and university projects, please describe how the quality, quantity, and structure of the social networks -for example, "weak ties" named by Granovetter- they created helped developing Thailand's SEs.

Thank you for pointing this out. We have now introduced a new section in the findings on Networks to explain the role they have played in SE development in Thailand. We have also included some of our data in this new section.

How was the evolutionary theory of Hazenberg et al. (2016) expressed in Figure 1? Moreover, in conclusion, how was the theory useful in explaining the emerging SEs in Thailand?. In addition, how does this evolutionary theory approach differ from Kerlin's approach or the social origin theory on which it is based?

Thank you for this excellent point. Upon reflection we have now reduced our reliance on the evolutionary perspective as we are as you rightly point out not carrying out a country comparison. We have in the revision focused our attention on Kerlin's MISE framework in combination with the work of Fligstein and Dauter (2007) and Beckert (2010) to provide a more holistic approach to explaining the emergence and development of SE in Thailand.

Regarding to reference papers, the papers in the following reference list are not found in the text.

- "Bazeley, P., & Jackson, K. (2013).
- "Bell, B., & Haugh, H. (2014).
- "Gephart, R. P., Jr. (2004).
- "Gillett, A., Doherty, B., Loader, K., & Scott, J. (2016).
- "Hansmann, H. B. (1980).."

- "Low, C. (2006).
- "Thailand Social Enterprise Office (2015).

The following citations are not found in the reference list; Chandra and Wong, 2019; Murphy & Coombes, 2009; Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern, 2006; Maak & Stoetter, 2012; Gephardt, 2004; Bazely & Jackson, 2013.

Thank you very much for taking the time to list these. We have now removed all the references not found in the text from the reference list. In addition we have added all the references in the body but not found in the reference list.

We have also added a series of new references from our improved theoretical underpinning. Chandra and Wong is 2016 and has been amended. The others have now been added and thanks for taking the time to do this exercise it is much appreciated.

Abstract

Key words: Social Enterprise; Social Entrepreneur, Networks, Private-public policy interventions, Co-optation

This paper investigates the development of the Social Enterprise (SE) sector in Thailand. Emerging from the non-profit sector in the 1970s with the formation of SEs to tackle sex education (Cabbages and Condoms) and poverty alleviation in Northern hill tribes (Mae Fah Luang Foundation). Thailand is now experiencing the development of new state-private policy interventions to stimulate development of the SE sector. These include establishing the new Pracharat Rak Samakkee (PRS) company limited form of SE with the aim of corporations carrying out activities that are beneficial to the community and society, with no dividend payment to be made to shareholders. In addition, there have been the approval of the draft bill on Social Enterprises in July 2018 and the *Social Enterprise Parliament Act* in November 2018 by the Thai Government. We combine the work of Kerlin (2017, 2010) on the socio-economic environment with the theories of market creation from economic sociology (Beckert, 2010; Berndt & Boeckler, 2009; Fligstein & Dauter, 2007). We identify for the first time the key institutions, networks, cognitive framings and policy initiatives of SE emergence and development in Thailand. Our research also shows the rising influence of the state and private sector in Thailand and the contested nature of this involvement. We identify a new country type Social Enterprise Semi Strategic Diverse model form, we term an *Authoritarian State-Corporate model*. This has led to concerns around co-optation of the SE sector in Thailand.

The study uses a qualitative methodology in three phases including; an initial focus group, then semi-structured interviews involving social enterprise organisations, policy makers and academics from Thailand and a final focus group to test our findings.

Introduction

The phenomenon of social enterprise has attracted the attention of policy makers and practitioners around the world (Wilson & Post 2013) and the associated rise in scholarly interest is reflected in the growing tally of publications in the academic press about SE as a distinct category of organizations and the activity of social entrepreneurship (Cukier, Trenholme, Carl, & Gekas, 2011; Lepoutre, Justo, Terjesen, & Bosma, 2013; Lumpkin, Moss, Gras, Kato, & Amezcua, 2013). However, there has been a limited number of academic publications specifically on understanding the emergence of social enterprise (SE) in Thailand (Sengupta and Sahay, 2017).

A SE is an organization that trades, not for private gain, but to generate positive social and environmental value (Santos, 2012). The two defining characteristics of SE: the adoption of some form of commercial activity to generate revenue and the pursuit of social goals (Laville & Nyssens, 2001; Mair & Martì, 2006; Peattie & Morley, 2008; Peredo & McLean, 2006). Thus SEs differ from organizations in the private sector that seek to maximise profit for personal gain by prioritising social change above private wealth creation: typical social objectives include reducing poverty, inequality, homelessness, carbon emissions, unemployment etc. (Dart, 2004; Murphy & Coombes, 2009). Hence, SEs are associated with pro-social motivations of wealth giving, cooperation and community development (Lumpkin et al. 2013). Lien Centre for Social Innovation (2014) argue that Thailand and other

Southeast Asia countries display large scale persistent and emerging social problems (growing wealth gap) requiring solutions from social enterprises. This is supported by Kerlin (2010), who argues that these social challenges are not adequately addressed by government welfare programmes but she does point to the recent burgeoning interest in SE in the Southeast Asia and Eastern Asia regions (Chandra and Wong, 2016; Jeong, 2017).

Kerlin (2010) using social origins theory to outline distinct regional differences in how social enterprises have emerged proposes in Southeast Asia the four key socioeconomic factors that influence the nature of social enterprise model emergence namely, market performance, international aid, state capability and civil society are all weak. According to Kerlin (2010), this results in a mixed social enterprise model motivated by the innovative efforts of isolated social enterprises who are working without established networks and stable sources of support. We combine Kerlin's work (2010 & 2017) with both sector creation theory from economic sociology (Beckert, 2010; Berndt and Boeckler, 2009; Fligstein & Dauter, 2007) to provide a rich picture of SE emergence and development in Thailand. This paper demonstrates that the emergence of social enterprise in Thailand is complex with recent significant intervention from both the state and the private sector in partnership creating a new country type SE Semi Strategic Diverse model form we term an *Authoritarian State-Corporate model*. This has led to concerns around co-optation of the SE sector in Thailand.

In this paper, we unpack how the social enterprise sector has emerged in Thailand. The paper makes a novel contribution by combining, social origins theory (Kerlin, 2010) and her Macro-Institutional Social Enterprise Framework (Kerlin, 2017), with work in economic sociology (Beckert, 2010; Fligstein and Dauter, 2007). We identify the unique factors leading

to the emergence, second wave development and the recent tensions between the founding SE members and the public-private partnership (Pracharath) initiated by the current Thailand government.

The paper is laid out as follows. To begin we review the literature on social enterprise and its creation and emergence. This is followed by the explanation of our qualitative methodology and research context. In the findings we present for the first time empirical data to illustrate the key institutions, networks and cognitive framings of SE in Thailand, the timelines of key Thailand government social enterprise development policies coupled with concerns around the growing influence of the state and private sector in partnership on the co-optation of the SE sector. In the conclusions we explain how the analysis contributes to the social enterprise literature by identifying a new SE country model we term an *Authoritarian State-Corporate model*.

Literature Review

Social Enterprise

The prioritization of goals other than revenue growth and profitability distinguishes social enterprise hybrids from organizations in the private sector (Mair & Martí, 2006; Lumpkin et al., 2013). Social goals are broadly construed to include serving the needs of the disadvantaged (Defourny & Nyssens, 2006), unemployed (Pache & Santos, 2013), homeless (Teasdale, 2012) and smallholder farmers (Mason & Doherty, 2016). Environmental objectives include responding to climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution (Vickers &

Lyon, 2013). Hybrids are also recognised for their willingness to collaborate with each other and across sectors (Gillett, Doherty, Loader & Scott, 2018).

To achieve sustainable outcomes in all three domains, social enterprises adopt business models that encompass commercial trading as well as creating social and environmental impacts. This is achieved by blending practices from organizations in the private, public and non-profit sectors (Doherty et al. 2014; Maak & Stoetter, 2012). Although deviation from the institutional conventions anchored in each sector of the economy might appear to be a risk-laden strategy, the outcome has been the development of an increasing global population of social enterprise hybrids (Mair and Marti, 2006).

Social enterprise hybrids are ‘not aligned with the idealized categorical characteristics’ of the private, public or non-profit sectors (Doherty et al., 2014, p.3) and by pursuing the achievement of commercial, social and environmental objectives are thus a classic hybrid organizational form (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Dees & Elias, 1998; Defourny & Nyssens, 2006; Billis 2010). To date, social enterprise research has focused on understanding how tensions resulting from the dual mission are resolved (Doherty et al., 2014; Battilana & Lee, 2014; Smith & Tracey, 2016; Wry & Zhao, 2018). There has been an increasing interest in looking at how SE has emerged in different contexts (Defourny and Nyssens, 2017; Kerlin, 2010 & 2017, Fernández- Laviada et al., 2020). Few studies have looked at its emergence and sector creation in newly industrialized contexts such as Thailand (Chandra and Wong, 2016; Jeong, 2017).

Creation and Emergence of Social Enterprise

To unpack the development of social enterprise in Thailand we take a novel approach by drawing on interdisciplinary theory from economic geography and economic sociology (Beckert, 2010; Berndt & Boeckler, 2009; Fligstein & Dauter, 2007) combined with both Kerlin's (2010) social origins approach and her work on the macro-institutional social enterprise framework (MISE) to provide an in-depth and holistic view of SE sector development in Thailand. Kerlin (2010) explains in Southeast Asia post the 1990s financial crisis there has been a growing interest in SE. Kerlin (2010) argues this has been framed in terms of SE contribution to sustainable development and employment. Kerlin argues the mixed social enterprise model of Southeast Asia is weak on all four socioeconomic factors (see above) and therefore SEs in the region is at an emerging stage motivated by the innovative efforts of isolated social entrepreneurs, who are working without established networks or sources of support. Kerlin (2010) argues that in this emerging stage social enterprises draw resources from wherever they can. Kerlin (2010) in her comparative overview of seven world regions proposes that Southeast Asia is characterised by thus far limited discussions on a SE legal framework, focus and a strategic development base involving international aid, the market and the state.

Kerlin (2017) in her work on the MISE maps out the role of institutions (both formal and informal) in shaping the development of SE in different country contexts. Scott (2008, p49) defines institutions as both formal and informal structures that have achieved a certain level of resilience and are comprised of regulative, informative and cultural cognitive elements that combined with associated activities and resources provide stability and meaning to social life. Scott (2008) explains that formal institutions are structures of codified and explicit rules and

informal institutions are shared meanings and collective understandings in a society. Kerlin (2017) explains that institutions (government, economic or civil society) exist at three societal levels including, macro (national or international level), meso (regional, municipal or network level) and micro (local level). The MISE framework which is grounded in historical institutionalism (Thelen, 1999) also emphasises the importance of underlying power relationships, both in how power is involved in developing institutions and how the created institutions then structure power. Rueschemeyer (2009) outlines how institutions at the meso and micro levels e.g. SEs are highly structured by state institutions and their policies. Kerlin (2017) goes onto identify a series of seven SE country typologies including, *Autonomous Diverse* (civil society e.g. USA), *Dependent Focused* (welfare partnership e.g. Italy), *Emmeshed Focused* (Social Democratic e.g. Sweden), *Semi-Strategic Focused* where the government only supports certain types of SE via legal forms etc. (Statist e.g. China), *Strategic Diverse* where the state is supporting mixed SE model (Statist e.g. South Korea), *Autonomous Mutualism* (Deferred Democracy e.g. Argentina) and *Sustainable Subsistence* (Traditional e.g. Zambia). Kerlin (2017) also pointed out these typologies are dynamic and countries can transition between typologies.

In response to the limited work on SE in Eastern Asia, Jeong (2017) investigated studying SE Development in South Korea. Jeong (2017) highlights that one of the most distinctive features in the East Asian Model is the pro-active involvement of the state. The background to this is the notion in Eastern Asia of the Development State, which is state led economic growth in cooperation with business. South Korea has demonstrated a strategic diverse development statist model of SE with a focus on both civil society and business. However, its emphasis has been on the non-profit sector to lead development of SE sector to provide welfare provision. South Korea is considered to be democratized and developed.

There are criticisms of the formal and informal institutional approach as to reductionist (Beckert, 2010; Fligstein and Dauter, 2007). Those studying the sociology of markets and fields i.e. new institutionalism, criticise the segmentation of approaches and argue there is more to be gained from bringing together the three types of social structures relevant for the explanation of economic outcomes i.e. the main schools of thought namely; institutions (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991), networks (Granovetter, 1985) and performativity (Callon, 1998). According to DiMaggio and Powell (1991) institutionalism focuses on market rules, power and norms. The institutions form an environment that surrounds an organization called an ‘organizational field’, and organizations in the same organizational field (i.e. institutional environment) tend to behave in a similar way. This is achieved by mechanisms such as mimicry and imitation (Beckert, 2010). Network theorists focus more on the relational ties between actors and the role that social networks play (Aspen and Beckert, 2011; Granovetter, 1985). Performativity is the introduction of a representation of the world as well as a shared belief about the behaviours to adapt (Callon, 2007). Beckert (2010) argues these cognitive frames, also form a social structure in their own right. Social norms, as well as cognitive ‘how-to’ rules, are part of a socially inscribed meaning structure operating in a market field through which firms and other field actors assess situations and define their responses. According to Callon (2007) this can spur the proliferation of new social identities.

To avoid the segmentation of these approaches Beckert (2010, p. 612) therefore proposes that market sectors are composed of three distinct, yet interrelated dynamic social components: networks (which establish and support), institutions (which organise and govern the activities) and cognitive frames (that provide structures of values and meanings in which

trade and organizations are embedded). One of the key characteristics of this conceptualisation is that whilst other literatures have treated the individual components of sector creation separately, these are irreducible and mutually interrelated through dynamic interactions: with changes in one component often influencing reconfiguration in others (Beckert, 2010; Berndt & Boeckler, 2011). Furthermore, Berndt and Boeckler (2011) argue that morality is also important in sector creation. This approach from economic sociology has been used to explain the emergence of other social sectors such as fair trade in different national contexts (Doherty, Smith, & Parker, 2015).

In this research we combine these different theoretical perspectives (new and old institutionalism) from economic sociology (Beckert, 2010, Fligstein and Dauter, 2007) and Kerlin's (2017) MISE framework underpinned by historical institutionalism to provide an holistic approach to explaining both the emergence of SE in Thailand and the recent state and private sector interest in this sector.

Methodology

This study emerged from the on-going professional and academic interest of both co-authors in social enterprise, who have combined 32-years of experience of both working and researching social enterprise. It became clear from previous research and training projects working in partnership with both the British Council and Thammasat University that a social enterprise sector is emerging in Thailand. However, we do not understand the factors leading to both its emergence and recent state and private interest. Hence, the methods of enquiry are predominantly qualitative in which inductive logic is used to obtain insights (Garud, Jain, &

Kumaraswamy, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Use of qualitative procedures is appropriate as our aim is to obtain rich contextual understanding and promote exploratory insight of a complex emerging setting (Gephardt, 2004).

Data Collection

We followed Ruef and Scott (1998) in defining our field geographically, collecting our data within the Thailand SE sector a newly industrialized country. The qualitative methodology included three phases – first round of focus group, semi-structured interviews, and second round of focus group

Focus group is often used in pilot studies to develop a list of questions for interviews (Collis and Hussey, 2003). It provides rich data and insights which could be less accessible without the interactions found in a group (Morgan, 1988). Hence, this paper applied a focus group in the initial stage of the research as the pilot study to explore how the SE sector emerged and developed in Thailand. Then, semi-structured interviews were applied with SEs in Thailand to acquire in-depth information regarding SE emergence and development. Finally, the second round of focus group was conducted to verify the findings from the research. This allows the triangulation of data collection sources to ensure the quality and validity of the research.

First, a one day focus group took place with thirty-one participants from the SE sector in Thailand. This workshop involved seventeen social enterprise founders and CEOs, four intermediary organisations, four private sector organizations working with SE, two charities and four academics. The SEs represented a range of sectors including; organic agriculture,

social care (e.g. disability support), media, e-commerce, publishing, textiles and fashion. In addition, there was a good representation of both start-up and established SEs. The focus group involved two-sets of group discussions, firstly around the key factors impacting on the emergence of social enterprise in Thailand and the key challenges.

Second phase, we conducted twenty six in-depth semi structured interviews with senior key informants in SEs (managers and founders), intermediaries, government departments, NGOs, International Development Agencies within Thailand (see table 1). These individuals represented key stakeholders in the social enterprise sector and the interviews were conducted in person and were recorded on a digital audio device and transcribed. All interviews took place between May 2017 - October 2018. These interviews focused on some of the emerging themes from the initial workshop focused on SE sector development and associated key factors. Final phase included a second focus group with twenty-five participants (fourteen SE CEOs/founders, three corporate representatives, three academics, two policy representatives, five intermediary organizations) to test out the key themes emerging from the first two phases. Running through all these 3 phases was the collection of secondary documentation. Our aim here was to triangulate key emerging themes. This final focus group involved both feeding back and testing the key themes emerging from the twenty-seven semi-structured.

Insert Table 1 here

Data Analysis

Guided by the principles of grounded theory, we set aside existing categories of SE country development and treated them as unknown (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Accordingly the workshop reports and interviews transcripts were analysed using inductive qualitative techniques (Paroutis & Heracleous, 2013) that allowed findings to emerge from the data. Both authors analysed the interview transcripts independently. This was first carried out manually to stay close to the empirical data during coding. We then used the Nvivo software package (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013) to scrutinise the veracity of our coding and theorizing.

To begin, the authors independently open coded both the focus group data and interview transcripts as soon as each was transcribed. The aims were to highlight all references related to SE country development and inform the questions in the subsequent interviews. During open coding specific attention was given to the development of SE in Thailand. After all the transcripts from interviews and focus group had been analysed, the extracts were scrutinized and grouped into empirical themes. Then, after further interrogation of the empirical data and in consultation with the social enterprise development literature, were condensed to five empirical themes (see findings and discussion section). Then working closely with the SE development literature, we abstracted a new SE country development model. In the findings and discussion section we present our empirical themes and present illustrative quotes from our interviews.

The analysis of the interview and focus group data was also combined with our historical overview/literature review derived from secondary and grey literature. The approach to the data analysis was inductive and iterative, as whilst we were aware of some of the literature

(academic, historical and grey) surrounding social enterprise we did not set out to test any predetermined theories but instead used the data gathered to develop our theoretical understanding of how social enterprise development took place in Thailand. The key themes from the data are discussed in the findings and discussion section.

Research Context

Using some of the characteristics included in Kerlin's typology of SE country models Thailand is a collectivist in culture (Hofstede Insights, 2020), is 60th in the world for government effectiveness (World Bank, 2020), and according to the World Economic Forum is 40th in the world in terms of its economic competitiveness (World Economic Forum, 2018). The financial crisis of 1997 brought in new governance measures for business with the Thai Securities Exchange and the Stock Exchange Thailand (SET) establishing a Good Governance Subcommittee. Since 2006, Thailand has experienced significant disagreements over democracy with two coups, two constitutions, three 'judicial coups,' four general elections, five cycles of both pro- and anti-democratic urban occupations, seven different prime ministers and two periods of authoritarian rule, one of which is ongoing (Elinoff, 2019). Central to this volatility and the recent turnaway from democracy are interlocking disagreements about the meaning of citizenship, the value of democracy, the rule of law and the question of sovereignty (Elinoff, 2014).

Findings and Discussion– Social Enterprise Development in Thailand

Early Stage Development of Social Enterprise in Thailand

The first key theme identified was the mixed model emergence of SE in Thailand from the 1970s to the 1990s. Our research shows the model of using business activities to generate social impact existed in Thailand before the term “social enterprise” was popularized. The origins displayed different SE mixed forms. First, the self-sufficiency economic philosophy of the late King Rama 9 and the late Mother of the King Rama 9 led to the set-up of community ventures in the Northern region to create alternative income sources such as coffee, macadamia nuts, textiles for communities living in poverty. This royal project called the Mae Fah Luang Foundation (MFLF), founded in 1972 provides jobs and capability development for ethnic groups in the upland communities of Doi Tung as well as generating income to finance community development activities.

“The Mother of the King said, don't let the people buy out of pity, let them buy because the product is good and the people are building livelihoods”. (Informant, Founding Social Enterprise)

The non-profit Population and Community Development Association (PDA) founded in 1974 by Mechai Viravaidya set-up a popular restaurant in the heart of Bangkok called Cabbages and Condoms and the earned income from the restaurant is then invested in PDA programmes such as sexual health education and education for disadvantaged young people (Bamboo Schools).

In addition, a number of cooperative social enterprises emerged such as the Lemon Farm organic wholefood food retailer in Bangkok with around fifteen retail stores set-up in 1999. Lemon Farm emerged from the organic agriculture movement and works closely with smallholder organic cooperatives, who also have representatives that sit on the Lemon Farm board. The initial Lemon Farm stores were in fact incubated in petrol stations by the gasoline company called Bangchak, which had a policy of supporting cooperatives. In 1999, Dairy Home, an organic dairy producer, was set up to manufacture dairy fresh milk, butter, yoghurt, and other dairy products in Thai market. Dairy Home has been working closely with dairy farmers to transform their farms into organic ones and pay them a premium price.

However, until recently the concept of SE remained unknown to development practitioners and the public. More recently, there has been a growing demand in Thailand for innovative developmental solutions due to rising inequality, ongoing political instability and increasingly complex social and environmental problems compounded by the financial crisis in the 1990s in Southeast Asia. Secondly, some foundations, multinational companies and international NGOs have reduced significantly their financial and technical support to local development agencies in the past decade. This has forced the existing social sector organizations and emerging new players to look for more self-sustainable enterprise models to support their work i.e. SE.

International Impact

The second theme identified in our data was the macro-institutional impact from the international political environment, particularly from the UK Government. Encouraged by the international success of SE, the Thai government set up the National Social Enterprise

Committee in 2009 to increase awareness of SE to the public and develop supporting infrastructures that would enable the SE movement to grow in Thailand.

The Democratic Government at the time led by the Prime Minister Abhisit, who had been born and educated in the UK, began to look at different measures that could grow the economy but deliver social inclusion. One of our informants explains the role of the British Council (BC):

“The British Council was very instrumental in the development of social enterprise in Thailand, because they organised policy trips to the UK for Abhisit’s policy team”. (Informant, Social Enterprise Agency).

This is supported by a senior informant from the British Council in Bangkok who explains:

“There was keen interest in SE in the Thai government and a real openness to learn from the UK. So I coordinated policy maker trips to the UK. I was close to the Advisor to the Prime Minister at the time on such matters who then was influential in setting up the Thailand Social Enterprise Office (TSEO) in the Thai government. I believed that BC was well positioned to create meaningful change at the highest level, which would lead to more SEs being set up and more collaboration with the UK. I was also motivated by the opportunity to bring in UK universities and social entrepreneurs so we worked with Srinakarinwirot University in Bangkok, which had a very pro-active President in terms of SE advancement, and we brought over academics from UK universities to take part in meetings and SE teaching. In terms of raising awareness of SE in Thailand, we sent Channel 3 - a Thai TV channel - with

one delegation to the UK to cover the trip and it appeared as a series on prime time TV here”. (Informant, British Council, Thailand).

To support the development of the Thai SE sector ten universities in Thailand participate in the knowledge development and incubation program networking activities supported by TSEO and the British Council. This has led to a growing interest from Thai academic institutions to play a more active role in the sector. It is clear that international influence is an institutional factor in SE development in Thailand. The role played by the BC draws similarities to the pivotal role they played in the development of SE in China described as a diffusion of innovation (Cui and Kerlin, 2017). Rogers (1995, p.5) defines diffusion of innovation as ‘the process by which innovation is communicated through certain channels over time amongst member of a social system’.

National Government Involvement and Legal Frameworks

A third theme was the growing influence of the National political context in Thailand on the SE sector. After the set-up of the National Social Enterprise Committee in 2009 (mentioned above) the Thailand government developed a range of SE policies (see table 2 for timeline of key social enterprise development policies). The five-year National Social Enterprise Master plan (2010 – 2014) was developed by the Committee in 2010 which led to the establishment of the Thai Social Enterprise Office (TSEO) in 2010 (see table 2 below) as a government agency to support SEs. An informant who was involved in setting-up the TSEO explains:

“Thai Social Enterprise Office was set-up to work on multiple initiatives including, in the universities again with the British Council to work on multiple activities and of

course at the policy level. We also focused on incubating a few specific enterprises and growing the social investment structure to support them. Our focus was mostly on social enterprises that are new enterprises. Mostly coming from the younger generation”. (Informant, former TSEO staff member).

TSEO then worked to encourage policy support and buy-in from relevant government agencies and politicians leading to the development of a *Social Enterprise Promotion Act*. The draft of the SE Promotions Act included, tax incentives for investors (investment and procurement), social taxation for SEs, a SE start-up grant program, soft loans for SEs, social procurement and SE certification. Again this shows the macro-institutional influence of National government in Thailand.

Since 2013, the TSEO has set up an online self-registration system for SEs. Both TSEO and the National Social Enterprise Committee established specific criteria in 2014 to endorse registered organizations as SEs. The five criteria consist of (1) clear social objective, (2) financial sustainability, (3) fairness to society and the environment, (4) reinvest to achieve social goal, and (5) good governance. Regarding the first criteria, the registered SE needs to have one of the following social objectives – (1) employing the disadvantaged, (2) promoting better society or environment through their core business activities, (3) owned or governed by the disadvantaged, or (4) allocate most of their profit to their social cause or reinvest in their SE. Regarding financial sustainability, the SE has to have over half of their revenue from trading activities and cannot allocate more than 30% on dividend. Finally, the SE has to maintain good governance with a minimum requirement to; register as an organization (could be in the form of foundation, association, company, etc.), submit an annual report to their respective regulatory body and make their information publicly available.

From 2010, a second wave of SE development took place of new start-up integrated social business type model particularly, in sustainable tourism, agriculture and working with the disabled. For example Local Alike in tourism has a mission of ‘*good traveling, social impact*’ and designs tourist experiences with local Thai communities to appeal to a range of traveling types. The Cube, run by NISE Corporation, based in Bangkok makes a range of products (baking and stationary) by people with disability. Those visually impaired are able to bind notebooks often better than most people due to their enhanced physical senses. Autistic individuals can perform repetitive such as the kneading of bread dough very effectively. A number of these new SEs are also adept at trading and selling their goods to the private sector e.g. Muser coffee providing the on-board coffee for airline Air Asia.

Networks

The fourth key theme emerging from the research is the importance of networks in SE development in Thailand. Some of the key networks identified in the data include; Change Fusion, Nise Corporation, Ashoka and more recently the Social Enterprise Thailand Association (see Table 2). One of our informants explains:

“A key progressive non-profit organisation network in SE in Thailand is Change Fusion. It was set-up by the ex-Deputy Prime Minister who had been working with civil society and he was very progressive. The second sector is the worker integration network involving the disabled called Nise Corporation who have set-up a network of SEs working with the disabled in Bangkok”. (Informant, Government Office)

First, ChangeFusion Group which is a non-profit organisation which has brought together a network of social venture, capital investment, crowdfunding and incubating social enterprises into their network. The network pools resources and has created a network of experts to serve each other. ChangeFusion Group has been able to raise funds for social good through its partners e.g. crowdfunding for COVID-19 to help provide surgical masks and support for the vulnerable. Second, Nise Corporation, which is an intermediary body, was set up initially due to the launch of PWD (People with Disability) Act in 2007 to build PWD capability and empower the disabled by developing their skills and opportunities. Nise Corporation, is a social network company, with the aim of linking PWD with private sector organizations to support compliance with the PWD 2007 Act (see table 2). In addition, the company also serves as a social impact training organization. The importance of networks identified here appears to support the work on the importance of relational ties (Granovetter, 1985).

Corporate and State Interest in Social Enterprise

A fifth key theme identified in the data is the strong influence of the collaboration between the state and big business. In 2012, the Stock Exchange of Thailand launched incentives for companies to shift their CSR approach towards SE (see table 2 below). Furthermore, the public-private partnership (Pracharath) initiated by the current authoritarian government (Elinoff, 2019) launched in 2016 encourages corporations to create SEs. Thai Beverage Group CEO announced in April 2016 the establishment of Pracharath Raksamakkee, an umbrella organization to set-up SEs nationwide. The model aims to strengthen Thailand's economy at the local level empowering communities and enterprises. To do so the Government envisions public-private- civil society nexus acting in the interests of sustainable

development through the execution of 4 major strategies; good governance, innovation and productivity, developing products and services from rural communities.

Pracharath or ‘people state policy’ works across 77 provinces in Thailand with a national board and provincial boards. There is also financial funding in terms of a credit guarantee scheme providing 100m baht to encourage banks to lend to SEs. Critics accuse this as a way of pouring money into rural communities to win votes and a re-branding of Pracha Niyom or populist policies. Registered corporate SEs will be able to seek promotional privileges and income tax exemption. For private sector organizations who invest in registered SE, their investment or donation can be regarded as expenses and help with the corporate tax deduction as long as the total annual expenses do not exceed 2% of the annual net profit. These key political developments are outlined in table 2 below, which shows the increasing influence of the market and state working together in the Thailand SE sector.

In response, the original SE founders e.g. MFLF and Cabbages and Condoms set-up in 2019 the Social Enterprise Thailand Association (see table 2). An informant, who is a member of the association explains:

“The government and TSEO have not really addressed the right issues for mission led SEs in Thailand. The public-private partnership (Pracharath) really prioritises private sector interests. We have set-up the association to provide much needed support to SEs. We have decided to focus our efforts on mentoring young social entrepreneurs, empowering them, and linking them up with our existing networks. The aim is to be a true incubator for genuine SE in Thailand”. (Informant, member of Social Enterprise Thailand Association)

Insert Table 2 here Timeline of Social Enterprise Development Policies in Thailand

(authors own)

In addition, the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) has been actively promoting SE by hosting events, seminars and discussions to educate business leaders and CSR professionals on the potential of SE to drive social change. SET are encouraging listed companies to integrate social investment with their business operations and activities. In 2015, SET established the “Social Enterprise Investment Awards” for listed companies who strategically contribute their financial and in-kind support to SEs. In April 2016, SET has launched the “SET for Future” portal as an online database for companies who are looking for an SE partner. Furthermore, the G-Lab, Social Innovation Lab at the School of Global Studies at Thammasat University, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, has developed a corporate pro-bono initiative to support SE capacity building. Secondly, Thai Health Promotion Foundation has granted Ashoka Thailand to manage a capacity building program for their grantees. Intermediaries such as Ashoka Thailand and Change Ventures integrate capacity building support as part of their venture investment.

Due to new regulatory mechanisms in Thailand, corporations are increasingly viewing SE as a strategic opportunity. This is leading to a both a growing interest and increasing awareness of SE which is positive. However, on a cautionary note we found in our interviews and focus groups, some reports of Thai private sector corporations using the SE Promotion bill to their financial advantage. An informant explains:

“One major food company are holding discussions to convert their loss making subsidiaries to SE to avoid paying corporate tax.” (Informant, NGO representative)

Another informant from one of the SE agencies reports:

“One of the large Thai conglomerates who owns a large coffee chain is converting a portion of its coffee shops to SE to gain tax incentives”. (Informant, Social Enterprise Agency).

Doherty et al., (2013) warn that uncritical engagement with mainstream business can risk co-optation, dilution and reputational damage. There appears to be genuine concerns about the potential for corporate co-optation of social enterprise in Thailand. Another informant goes further:

“I think the Government and the large corporates have mistreated the concept of social enterprise. I am not sure whether you have the same feeling or not, but that's how I feel. If SE is taking over by large business then social enterprise will be just another term”. (Informant, Social Entrepreneur)

Co-optation is a phenomenon associated with the co-optation of leaders of political movements to conform to established frameworks and procedures to create social change, only partially achieving their goals (Jaffee, 2010). In effect, co-optation could lead to mainstream partners absorbing the more convenient elements of social enterprise at the expense of its more transformative impact.

Jaffee and Howard (2010) focuses on the subversion of policy making to explain co-optation. However, in organisational management terms this could be associated with Mintzberg's (1989) concept of 'assimilation', where in reaching out with an ideology to divergent social groups, the original organisations' ideal becomes compromised. Jaffee (2010) uses of the term regulatory capture, where regulatory bodies are influenced by certain actors to make regulatory decisions in the commercial interest of those actors rather than the overall social good. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) also explain if organizations are able to associate the new with the old in some way that eases adoption. One way in which this is done is through mimicry, part of the success of mimicry in creating new institutional structures so that the juxtaposition of the old and new templates can simultaneously make the new structure understandable and accessible.

In summary, we have used our rich data to adapt the sector creation model of Beckert (2010) to show the key institutions, networks and cognitive framings responsible for the creation of the SE sector in Thailand (see Figure 1). Combining this with the social origins and MISE theory approach of Kerlin, (2010, 2017) we can see the important role played by a series of institutions from civil society (meso and micro institutional levels), the international political environment e.g. UK Government (macro level), the state and the market (macro level) and a series of networks e.g. Change Fusion. Unique to Thailand we can see the important role played by the Monarchy in the early SE development, the influence of the state and private sector in combination (Pracharath) and the role played by the British Council to facilitate policy interaction between the UK and Thailand via a process of diffusion.

Insert Figure 1 here Creation of Social Enterprise Sector in Thailand

A unique element to SE development in Thailand has been the collaboration between both the state and the private sector demonstrated by the development of legal frameworks to incentivise the private sector to go beyond CSR and set-up SEs. This is in contrast to South Korea, where a partnership with the non-profit sector was preferred. The current authoritarian government in Thailand has preferred a model prioritizing the role of business called Pracharath. Hence, using Kerlin's MISE framework, Thailand demonstrates an example of an *Authoritarian State-Corporate model*, which the authors identify as a new category of the Strategic Diverse and semi-strategic model in Kerlin's (2017) country typology.

Conclusions

The authors have taken a systematic approach to unpack the dynamic emergence and development of social enterprise in Thailand. This research has identified five key themes. First, the early emergence (1970s-1990s) driven by a mixed SE model involving; the monarchy in the form of MFLLF working to empower Northern Thai ethnic groups, PDA from the non-profit sector setting up Cabbages and Condoms and Lemon Farm, a cooperative from the organic movement. Second, from 2009 the growing macro-institutional influence from the UK Government on SE development in Thailand via its agency the British Council. This finding shows similarities with the role played by the British Council in the development of social enterprise in China, through a process of diffusion of innovation (Cui and Kerlin, 2017). Third theme identified is the growing influence of the Thailand government in developing new policies and legal frameworks for SE (see table 2). Fourth theme, is the emergence of key networks such as ChangeFusion to develop shared resources and expertise for SE. Fifth, is the recent growing interest from both the state and private sector in the form of the public-private partnership (Pracharath) initiated by the current authoritarian

government in 2016. Pracharath along with the new Social Enterprise Promotion Bill (2018) encourages corporations to create SEs and appears to be incentivised by tax relief for corporations. This is leading to fears of co-optation of SE in Thailand and its associated reputational risk. In response, the SE founders have set-up the Social Enterprise Thailand Association and we appear to be entering a contested phase over the future of SE in Thailand. The founders view the association as a mechanism to maintain the more transformative aspects of SE and maintain the sectors heterogeneity.

By combining three different theoretical approaches we have been able to unpack the creation and development of the SE sector in Thailand (Beckert, 2010, Fligstein and Dauter, 2007; Kerlin, 2010 & 2017) see figure 1. In addition, we identify the key policy initiatives and growing state and market influence in table 2 (Kerlin, 2010, 2017). By identifying the growing institutional influence of the state and private sector collaboration in Thai SE development, we have unveiled growing concerns of SE co-optation by the corporate sector. This could be an example of institutional mimicry (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Combining these three very useful theoretical perspectives as facilitated a systematic approach to unpacking social enterprise sector development in Thailand. Using Kerlin's MISE framework, our data shows that Thailand demonstrates an example of an *Authoritarian State-Corporate model*, which the authors identify as a new category of the Strategic Diverse and semi-strategic model in Kerlin's (2017) country typology. This is in contrast to South Korea where the Government has prioritised the non-profit sector as its key partner in stimulating SE Growth (Jeong, 2017).

It is clear the situation in Thailand for SE is very dynamic. Future research, should investigate further the private sector motivations and their potential to deliver social innovation and impact at scale versus the concerns regarding co-optation. There is also limited research in Thailand on the management of social enterprise in this context, which could be valuable to inform both future government policy and the work of the Social Enterprise Thailand Association.

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Table 1 List of Social Enterprise Informants in Thailand

Name	Surname	Position	Name of Organization	Type of Organization
Sunit	Shrestha	Founder	ChangeFusion Group	A Non-profit organization allows social venture and capital investment, crowdfunding, incubating social innovations
Sinee	Chakthranont	Director	Ashoka Thailand	Innovators for the public
Nuttaphong	Jaruwvannaphong	Director	Thai Social Enterprise Office (TSEO)	Government Office
Benjamaporn	Limpisathian	Director ThaiHealth Centre	Thai Health Promotion Foundation	An autonomous state agency established by Health Promotion Foundation Act (2001)
Sakulthip	Keeratiphantawong	Managing Director	NISECorp S.E. Co.,Ltd	Social Enterprise as an intermediary body to facilitate between SEs, minority groups, and private sector. Social Impact Training centre and assurance.
Pattakorn	Thanasanaksorn	Co-founder	Once Again Hostel	Social Enterprise (community development)
M.L. Dispanadda	Diskul	Chief Development Officer	Mae Fah Luang Foundation Under Royal Patronage, Doi Tung (Chang Rai)	Social enterprise (education, fair trade foods and drinks, enterprise development, environment, health, rural development)
Bordin	Unakul	Senior Executive Vice President, Head of Sustainable Development Division	Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET)	Stock Exchange for Private Sector
Pin	Kasemsiri	Founder	Career Visa Thailand	Social Enterprise (youth)

Arch	Wongchindawest	Founder	Socialgiver	Social Enterprise Support (Sector: Lifestyle, Technology, and Financial Innovation)
Mechai	Viravaidya	Founder	Cabbages & Condom Resort and Restaurant (C&C)-- Population and Community Development Association: PDA	Non-governmental Organization (restaurants, hotels, schools for the poor)
Preekamol	Chantaranijakorn	Founder	Ma: D (Club for Better Society)	Social Enterprise (community and capacity building)
Pawel	Gorski	Head of Partnership Development	iCare Benefits Thailand	Social Enterprise
Jitra	Cotchadet	Coordinator	Try Arm	"Try Arm" Underwear "Fair Trade Fashion"
Achiraya	Thamparipattra	CEO & Co- Founder	Hivesters	Social enterprise (a hub for real Thai travel experiences)
Chalat	Wongsanguan	Managing Director	SCG Skills Development Co., Ltd.	Private company
Manop	Iam-Saard	Manager The Social Enterprise Development Centre	1479 Call Center, The Redemptorist Foundation for People with Disabilities	Call Center - The Redemptorist Foundation for People with Disabilities is a public benefit organization.
Jantima	Pipitsunthorn	Founder	Begreening	Social Enterprise (environment)
Ayu	Chuepa	Founder	Akha Ama Coffee (Chang Mai)	Social enterprise (sustainable agriculture)
Christine	Gent	Executive Director	World Fair Trade Organization (Chiang Mai)	Social Enterprise
Aphrat	Kosayothi	CEO	Lemon Farm	Organic wholefood Social Enterprise

Prutti	Kerdchuchuen	Founder and CEO	Dairy Home	Organic Dairy Social Enterprise
Pongsatorn	Dhanabordeepeat	COO	Refinn Internaitonal	Social Enterprise online refinance platform
Areerat	Goo	Director	Learn Education	Social Enterprise e-learning solutions for disadvantaged schools
Neil	Dejkraisak	Founder and CEO	Siam Organic	Social Enterprise for Organic Rice
Yujares	Sommana	Co-founder	Etinica	Social Enterprise for handicrafts from hill tribes and minorities

Table 2 **Timeline of Social Development Policies in Thailand (authors own)**

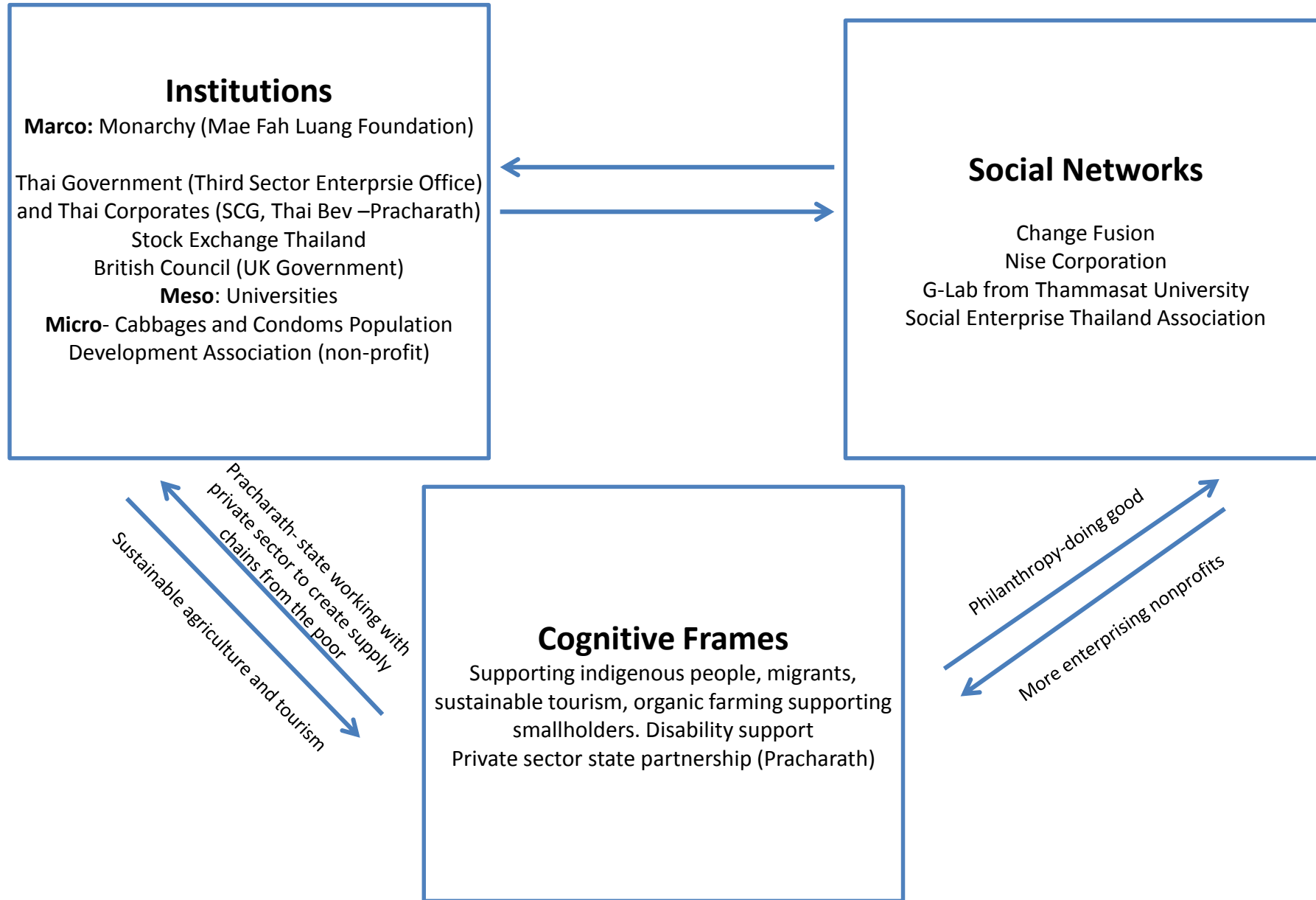
Time	Act	Summary
2007	People With Disabilities (PWD) Promotion Act	The Act is to turn the private sector's profits to help supporting PWDs. In the private sector, every 100 staff the company hires, there must be 1 staff on top of 100 that is a registered disabled person or a penalty has to be paid approximately 100K baht/1 PWD needed.
2010	TSEO (Thailand Social Enterprise Office) was set up, under the prime minister's office, to promote social enterprises and develop a network in Thailand	However, it was terminated in 2016 and is reopened in June 2019 as a temporary unit as Office of Social Enterprise under the ministry of social development and human security, before moving on to be TSEO (Thailand Social Enterprise Office) under PM's office
2012	Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) announced the guidance documents for listed companies on Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) and Sustainability Guidelines.	Since then, all listed companies need to comply with the disclosure of the documents and CSR activities in their annual reports.
2016	Establishment of Pracharath Rak Samakkee Co., Ltd.	The Company's revenue comes from a share of the community's income, gained through

	<p>Pracharath Rak Samakkee Co., Ltd., a Social Enterprise, has been established with the aim of carrying out activities that are beneficial to the community and society, with no dividend payment to be made to shareholders.</p>	<p>the company's supported activities, as a retention funding to support further activities beneficial to the community.</p> <p>Pracharath Rak Samakkee Co., Ltd., is a new structure that facilitates representatives from 5 sectors: Civil Servants/State sector, Private sector, Academic sector, Civil society sector and citizen sector to work together smoothly with flexible management under the legal framework and good governance, as with other general companies.</p>
<p>2018</p>	<p>SE Promotion Draft Bill</p> <p>The Cabinet approved a new draft bill in July 2018 on Social Enterprise Promotion to encourage businesses to conduct more activities for the benefit of society, which will help develop communities and ease environmental problems. The new bill aims to help SE survive and encourage the private sector to shift their CSR approach towards long-term development and to</p>	<p>The new bill requires SE to reinvest at least 70% of their profits for the benefits of the underprivileged, the disabled, farmers or other schemes prescribed by the finance minister. Registered SE will be able to seek promotional privileges and income tax exemption. For private sector who invests in registered SE, their investment or donation can be regarded as expenses and help with the corporate tax deduction as long as the total annual expenses do not exceed 2% of the annual net profit.</p>

	<p>reform the public-service system.</p> <p>The objective of the bill is to “turn profits into public interests”.</p>	
2019	<p>SEC (The Securities and Exchange Commission) of Thailand announces the exemption of application and registration fees for all Green Bonds, Social Bonds, and Sustainability Bonds.</p>	<p>Approximately 10,000 – 30,000 baht, effective from 17 May 2019 until 31 May 2020</p>
2019	<p>Set-up of Social Enterprise Thailand Association involving original SE founders.</p>	<p>Social Enterprise Thailand Association is set up to help supporting SE from several aspects including social entrepreneurs’ capability improvement, encouraging the markets and purchases of social products and services.</p>

Figure 1 Social Enterprise Sector Creation-Thailand

Social Enterprise Sector Creation Thailand



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4 **The Emergence and Contested Growth of Social Enterprise in Thailand**
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9
10 **Bob Doherty**

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12 **The York Management School**

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16 **University of York**

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18
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22 **YO10 5GD**

23
24
25
26 **Tel 0044 1904 325038**

27
28
29 **Email bob.doherty@york.ac.uk**

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33
34
35 **Pichawadee Kittipanya-ngam**

36
37
38 **Thammasat Business School, Thammasat University**

39
40
41 **2 Prachan road, Pranakorn, Bangkok Thailand 10200**

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45 **Tel 0066 2696 5967**

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48 **Email pichawadee@tbs.tu.ac.th**

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4 **Abstract**
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10 **Key words:** Social Enterprise; Social Entrepreneur, Networks, Private-public policy
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12 interventions, Co-optation
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15
16 This paper investigates the development of the Social Enterprise (SE) sector in Thailand.
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18 Emerging from the non-profit sector in the 1970s with the formation of SEs to tackle sex
19 education (Cabbages and Condoms) and poverty alleviation in Northern hill tribes (Mae Fah
20 Luang Foundation). Thailand is now experiencing the development of new state-private
21 policy interventions to stimulate development of the SE sector. These include establishing the
22
23 new Pracharat Rak Samakkee (PRS) company limited form of SE with the aim of
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25 corporations carrying out activities that are beneficial to the community and society, with no
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27 dividend payment to be made to shareholders. In addition, there have been the approval of the
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29 draft bill on Social Enterprises in July 2018 and the *Social Enterprise Parliament Act* in
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31 November 2018 by the Thai Government. We combine the work of Kerlin (2017, 2010) on
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33 the socio-economic environment with the theories of market creation from economic
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35 sociology (Beckert, 2010; Berndt & Boeckler, 2009; Fligstein & Dauter, 2007). We identify
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37 for the first time the key institutions, networks, cognitive framings and policy initiatives of
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39 SE emergence and development in Thailand. Our research also shows the rising influence of
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41 the state and private sector in Thailand and the contested nature of this involvement. We
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43 identify a new country type Social Enterprise Semi Strategic Diverse model form, we term an
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45 *Authoritarian State-Corporate model*. This has led to concerns around co-optation of the SE
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47 sector in Thailand.
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4 The study uses a qualitative methodology in three phases including; an initial focus group,
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6 then semi-structured interviews involving social enterprise organisations, policy makers and
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8 academics from Thailand and a final focus group to test our findings.
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10 11 12 13 14 15 **Introduction** 16

17
18 The phenomenon of social enterprise has attracted the attention of policy makers and
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20 practitioners around the world (Wilson & Post 2013) and the associated rise in scholarly
21
22 interest is reflected in the growing tally of publications in the academic press about SE as a
23
24 distinct category of organizations and the activity of social entrepreneurship (Cukier,
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26 Trenholme, Carl, & Gekas, 2011; Lepoutre, Justo, Terjesen, & Bosma, 2013; Lumpkin,
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28 Moss, Gras, Kato, & Amezcua, 2013). However, there has been a limited number of
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30 academic publications specifically on understanding the emergence of social enterprise (SE)
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32 in Thailand (Sengupta and Sahay, 2017).
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41 A SE is an organization that trades, not for private gain, but to generate positive social and
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43 environmental value (Santos, 2012). The two defining characteristics of SE: the adoption of
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45 some form of commercial activity to generate revenue and the pursuit of social goals (Laville
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47 & Nyssens, 2001; Mair & Marti, 2006; Peattie & Morley, 2008; Peredo & McLean, 2006).
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51 Thus SEs differ from organizations in the private sector that seek to maximise profit for
52
53 personal gain by prioritising social change above private wealth creation: typical social
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55 objectives include reducing poverty, inequality, homelessness, carbon emissions,
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57 unemployment etc. (Dart, 2004; Murphy & Coombes, 2009). Hence, SEs are associated with
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59 pro-social motivations of wealth giving, cooperation and community development (Lumpkin
60
61 et al. 2013). Lien Centre for Social Innovation (2014) argue that Thailand and other
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4 Southeast Asia countries display large scale persistent and emerging social problems
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6 (growing wealth gap) requiring solutions from social enterprises. This is supported by Kerlin
7
8 (2010), who argues that these social challenges are not adequately addressed by government
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10 welfare programmes but she does point to the recent burgeoning interest in SE in the
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12 Southeast Asia and Eastern Asia regions (Chandra and Wong, 2016; Jeong, 2017).
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20 Kerlin (2010) using social origins theory to outline distinct regional differences in how social
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22 enterprises have emerged proposes in Southeast Asia the four key socioeconomic factors that
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24 influence the nature of social enterprise model emergence namely, market performance,
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26 international aid, state capability and civil society are all weak. According to Kerlin (2010),
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28 this results in a mixed social enterprise model motivated by the innovative efforts of isolated
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30 social enterprises who are working without established networks and stable sources of
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32 support. We combine Kerlin's work (2010 & 2017) with both sector creation theory from
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34 economic sociology (Beckert, 2010; Berndt and Boeckler, 2009; Fligstein & Dauter, 2007) to
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36 provide a rich picture of SE emergence and development in Thailand. This paper
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38 demonstrates that the emergence of social enterprise in Thailand is complex with recent
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40 significant intervention from both the state and the private sector in partnership creating a
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42 new country type SE Semi Strategic Diverse model form we term an *Authoritarian State-*
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44 *Corporate model*. This has led to concerns around co-optation of the SE sector in Thailand.
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56 In this paper, we unpack how the social enterprise sector has emerged in Thailand. The paper
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58 makes a novel contribution by combining, social origins theory (Kerlin, 2010) and her
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60 Macro-Institutional Social Enterprise Framework (Kerlin, 2017), with work in economic
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62 sociology (Beckert, 2010; Fligstein and Dauter, 2007). We identify the unique factors leading
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4 to the emergence, second wave development and the recent tensions between the founding SE
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6 members and the public-private partnership (Pracharath) initiated by the current Thailand
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8 government.
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15 The paper is laid out as follows. To begin we review the literature on social enterprise and its
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17 creation and emergence. This is followed by the explanation of our qualitative methodology
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19 and research context. In the findings we present for the first time empirical data to illustrate
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21 the key institutions, networks and cognitive framings of SE in Thailand, the timelines of key
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23 Thailand government social enterprise development policies coupled with concerns around
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25 the growing influence of the state and private sector in partnership on the co-optation of the
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27 SE sector. In the conclusions we explain how the analysis contributes to the social enterprise
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29 literature by identifying a new SE country model we term an *Authoritarian State-Corporate*
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31 *model*.
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41 **Literature Review**

42 **Social Enterprise**

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50 The prioritization of goals other than revenue growth and profitability distinguishes social
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52 enterprise hybrids from organizations in the private sector (Mair & Martí, 2006; Lumpkin et
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54 al., 2013). Social goals are broadly construed to include serving the needs of the
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56 disadvantaged (Defourny & Nyssens, 2006), unemployed (Pache & Santos, 2013), homeless
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58 (Teasdale, 2012) and smallholder farmers (Mason & Doherty, 2016). Environmental
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60 objectives include responding to climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution (Vickers &
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4 Lyon, 2013). Hybrids are also recognised for their willingness to collaborate with each other
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6 and across sectors (Gillett, Doherty, Loader & Scott, 2018).
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12 To achieve sustainable outcomes in all three domains, social enterprises adopt business
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14 models that encompass commercial trading as well as creating social and environmental
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16 impacts. This is achieved by blending practices from organizations in the private, public and
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18 non-profit sectors (Doherty et al. 2014; Maak & Stoetter, 2012). Although deviation from the
19
20 institutional conventions anchored in each sector of the economy might appear to be a risk-
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22 laden strategy, the outcome has been the development of an increasing global population of
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24 social enterprise hybrids (Mair and Marti, 2006).
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33 Social enterprise hybrids are ‘not aligned with the idealized categorical characteristics’ of the
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35 private, public or non-profit sectors (Doherty et al., 2014, p.3) and by pursuing the
36
37 achievement of commercial, social and environmental objectives are thus a classic hybrid
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39 organizational form (Battilana & Lee, 2014; Dees & Elias, 1998; Defourny & Nyssens, 2006;
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41 Billis 2010). To date, social enterprise research has focused on understanding how tensions
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43 resulting from the dual mission are resolved (Doherty et al., 2014; Battilana & Lee, 2014;
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45 Smith & Tracey, 2016; Wry & Zhao, 2018). There has been an increasing interest in looking
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47 at how SE has emerged in different contexts (Defourny and Nyssens, 2017; Kerlin, 2010 &
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49 2017, Fernández- Laviada et al., 2020). Few studies have looked at its emergence and sector
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51 creation in newly industrialized contexts such as Thailand (Chandra and Wong, 2016; Jeong,
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53 2017).
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4 ***Creation and Emergence of Social Enterprise***
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8 To unpack the development of social enterprise in Thailand we take a novel approach by
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10 drawing on interdisciplinary theory from economic geography and economic sociology
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12 (Beckert, 2010; Berndt & Boeckler, 2009; Fligstein & Dauter, 2007) combined with both
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14 Kerlin's (2010) social origins approach and her work on the macro-institutional social
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16 enterprise framework (MISE) to provide an in-depth and holistic view of SE sector
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18 development in Thailand. Kerlin (2010) explains in Southeast Asia post the 1990s financial
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20 crisis there has been a growing interest in SE. Kerlin (2010) argues this has been framed in
21
22 terms of SE contribution to sustainable development and employment. Kerlin argues the
23
24 mixed social enterprise model of Southeast Asia is weak on all four socioeconomic factors
25
26 (see above) and therefore SEs in the region is at an emerging stage motivated by the
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28 innovative efforts of isolated social entrepreneurs, who are working without established
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30 networks or sources of support. Kerlin (2010) argues that in this emerging stage social
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32 enterprises draw resources from wherever they can. Kerlin (2010) in her comparative
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34 overview of seven world regions proposes that Southeast Asia is characterised by thus far
35
36 limited discussions on a SE legal framework, focus and a strategic development base
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38 involving international aid, the market and the state.
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50 Kerlin (2017) in her work on the MISE maps out the role of institutions (both formal and
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52 informal) in shaping the development of SE in different country contexts. Scott (2008, p49)
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54 defines institutions as both formal and informal structures that have achieved a certain level
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56 of resilience and are comprised of regulative, informative and cultural cognitive elements that
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58 combined with associated activities and resources provide stability and meaning to social life.
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60 Scott (2008) explains that formal institutions are structures of codified and explicit rules and
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4 informal institutions are shared meanings and collective understandings in a society. Kerlin
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6 (2017) explains that institutions (government, economic or civil society) exist at three
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8 societal levels including, macro (national or international level), meso (regional, municipal or
9
10 network level) and micro (local level). The MISE framework which is grounded in historical
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12 institutionalism (Thelen, 1999) also emphasises the importance of underlying power
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14 relationships, both in how power is involved in developing institutions and how the created
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16 institutions then structure power. Rueschemeyer (2009) outlines how institutions at the meso
17
18 and micro levels e.g. SEs are highly structured by state institutions and their policies. Kerlin
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20 (2017) goes onto identify a series of seven SE country typologies including, *Autonomous*
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22 *Diverse* (civil society e.g. USA), *Dependent Focused* (welfare partnership e.g. Italy),
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24 *Emmeshed Focused* (Social Democratic e.g. Sweden), *Semi-Strategic Focused* where the
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26 government only supports certain types of SE via legal forms etc. (Statist e.g. China),
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28 *Strategic Diverse* where the state is supporting mixed SE model (Statist e.g. South Korea),
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30 *Autonomous Mutualism* (Deferred Democracy e.g. Argentina) and *Sustainable Subsistence*
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32 (Traditional e.g. Zambia). Kerlin (2017) also pointed out these typologies are dynamic and
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34 countries can transition between typologies.
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47 In response to the limited work on SE in Eastern Asia, Jeong (2017) investigated studying SE
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49 Development in South Korea. Jeong (2017) highlights that one of the most distinctive
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51 features in the East Asian Model is the pro-active involvement of the state. The background
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53 to this is the notion in Eastern Asia of the Development State, which is state led economic
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55 growth in cooperation with business. South Korea has demonstrated a strategic diverse
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57 development statist model of SE with a focus on both civil society and business. However, its
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59 emphasis has been on the non-profit sector to lead development of SE sector to provide
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61 welfare provision. South Korea is considered to be democratized and developed.
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8 There are criticisms of the formal and informal institutional approach as to reductionist
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10 (Beckert, 2010; Fligstein and Dauter, 2007). Those studying the sociology of markets and
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12 fields i.e. new institutionalism, criticise the segmentation of approaches and argue there is
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14 more to be gained from bringing together the three types of social structures relevant for the
15
16 explanation of economic outcomes i.e. the main schools of thought namely; institutions
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18 (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991), networks (Granovetter, 1985) and performativity (Callon,
19
20 1998). According to DiMaggio and Powell (1991) institutionalism focuses on market rules,
21
22 power and norms. The institutions form an environment that surrounds an organization called
23
24 an ‘organizational field’, and organizations in the same organizational field (i.e. institutional
25
26 environment) tend to behave in a similar way. This is achieved by mechanisms such as
27
28 mimicry and imitation (Beckert, 2010). Network theorists focus more on the relational ties
29
30 between actors and the role that social networks play (Aspen and Beckert, 2011; Granovetter,
31
32 1985). Performativity is the introduction of a representation of the world as well as a shared
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34 belief about the behaviours to adapt (Callon, 2007). Beckert (2010) argues these cognitive
35
36 frames, also form a social structure in their own right. Social norms, as well as cognitive
37
38 ‘how-to’ rules, are part of a socially inscribed meaning structure operating in a market field
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40 through which firms and other field actors assess situations and define their responses.
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42 According to Callon (2007) this can spur the proliferation of new social identities.
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55 To avoid the segmentation of these approaches Beckert (2010, p. 612) therefore proposes that
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57 market sectors are composed of three distinct, yet interrelated dynamic social components:
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59 networks (which establish and support), institutions (which organise and govern the
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61 activities) and cognitive frames (that provide structures of values and meanings in which
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4 trade and organizations are embedded). One of the key characteristics of this
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6 conceptualisation is that whilst other literatures have treated the individual components of
7
8 sector creation separately, these are irreducible and mutually interrelated through dynamic
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10 interactions: with changes in one component often influencing reconfiguration in others
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12 (Beckert, 2010; Berndt & Boeckler, 2011). Furthermore, Berndt and Boeckler (2011) argue
13
14 that morality is also important in sector creation. This approach from economic sociology has
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16 been used to explain the emergence of other social sectors such as fair trade in different
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18 national contexts (Doherty, Smith, & Parker, 2015).
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28 In this research we combine these different theoretical perspectives (new and old
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30 institutionalism) from economic sociology (Beckert, 2010, Fligstein and Dauter, 2007) and
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32 Kerlin's (2017) MISE framework underpinned by historical institutionalism to provide an
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34 holistic approach to explaining both the emergence of SE in Thailand and the recent state
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36 and private sector interest in this sector.
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42 ***Methodology***

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48 This study emerged from the on-going professional and academic interest of both co-authors
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50 in social enterprise, who have combined 32-years of experience of both working and
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52 researching social enterprise. It became clear from previous research and training projects
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54 working in partnership with both the British Council and Thammasat University that a social
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56 enterprise sector is emerging in Thailand. However, we do not understand the factors leading
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58 to both its emergence and recent state and private interest. Hence, the methods of enquiry are
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60 predominantly qualitative in which inductive logic is used to obtain insights (Garud, Jain, &
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4 Kumaraswamy, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Use of qualitative procedures is appropriate as
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6 our aim is to obtain rich contextual understanding and promote exploratory insight of a
7
8 complex emerging setting (Gephardt, 2004).
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10 11 12 13 14 *Data Collection* 15

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18 We followed Ruef and Scott (1998) in defining our field geographically, collecting our data
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20 within the Thailand SE sector a newly industrialized country. The qualitative methodology
21
22 included three phases – first round of focus group, semi-structured interviews, and second
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24 round of focus group
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30 Focus group is often used in pilot studies to develop a list of questions for interviews (Collis
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32 and Hussey, 2003). It provides rich data and insights which could be less accessible without
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34 the interactions found in a group (Morgan, 1988). Hence, this paper applied a focus group in
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36 the initial stage of the research as the pilot study to explore how the SE sector emerged and
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38 developed in Thailand. Then, semi-structured interviews were applied with SEs in Thailand
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40 to acquire in-depth information regarding SE emergence and development. Finally, the
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42 second round of focus group was conducted to verify the findings from the research. This
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44 allows the triangulation of data collection sources to ensure the quality and validity of the
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46 research.
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54 First, a one day focus group took place with thirty-one participants from the SE sector in
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56 Thailand. This workshop involved seventeen social enterprise founders and CEOs, four
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58 intermediary organisations, four private sector organizations working with SE, two charities
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60 and four academics. The SEs represented a range of sectors including; organic agriculture,
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4 social care (e.g. disability support), media, e-commerce, publishing, textiles and fashion. In
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6 addition, there was a good representation of both start-up and established SEs. The focus
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8 group involved two-sets of group discussions, firstly around the key factors impacting on the
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10 emergence of social enterprise in Thailand and the key challenges.
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16 Second phase, we conducted twenty six in-depth semi structured interviews with senior key
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18 informants in SEs (managers and founders), intermediaries, government departments, NGOs,
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20 International Development Agencies within Thailand (see table 1). These individuals
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22 represented key stakeholders in the social enterprise sector and the interviews were conducted
23
24 in person and were recorded on a digital audio device and transcribed. All interviews took
25
26 place between May 2017 - October 2018. These interviews focused on some of the emerging
27
28 themes from the initial workshop focused on SE sector development and associated key
29
30 factors. Final phase included a second focus group with twenty-five participants (fourteen SE
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32 CEOs/founders, three corporate representatives, three academics, two policy representatives,
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34 five intermediary organizations) to test out the key themes emerging from the first two
35
36 phases. Running through all these 3 phases was the collection of secondary documentation.
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38 Our aim here was to triangulate key emerging themes. This final focus group involved both
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40 feeding back and testing the key themes emerging from the twenty-seven semi-structured.
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Data Analysis

Guided by the principles of grounded theory, we set aside existing categories of SE country development and treated them as unknown (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Accordingly the workshop reports and interviews transcripts were analysed using inductive qualitative techniques (Paroutis & Heracleous, 2013) that allowed findings to emerge from the data. Both authors analysed the interview transcripts independently. This was first carried out manually to stay close to the empirical data during coding. We then used the Nvivo software package (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013) to scrutinise the veracity of our coding and theorizing.

To begin, the authors independently open coded both the focus group data and interview transcripts as soon as each was transcribed. The aims were to highlight all references related to SE country development and inform the questions in the subsequent interviews. During open coding specific attention was given to the development of SE in Thailand. After all the transcripts from interviews and focus group had been analysed, the extracts were scrutinized and grouped into empirical themes. Then, after further interrogation of the empirical data and in consultation with the social enterprise development literature, were condensed to five empirical themes (see findings and discussion section). Then working closely with the SE development literature, we abstracted a new SE country development model. In the findings and discussion section we present our empirical themes and present illustrative quotes from our interviews.

The analysis of the interview and focus group data was also combined with our historical overview/literature review derived from secondary and grey literature. The approach to the data analysis was inductive and iterative, as whilst we were aware of some of the literature

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4 (academic, historical and grey) surrounding social enterprise we did not set out to test any
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7 predetermined theories but instead used the data gathered to develop our theoretical
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9 understanding of how social enterprise development took place in Thailand. The key themes
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11 from the data are discussed in the findings and discussion section.
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15 16 ***Research Context*** 17 18 19 20

21 Using some of the characteristics included in Kerlin’s typology of SE country models
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23 Thailand is a collectivist in culture (Hofstede Insights, 2020), is 60th in the world for
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25 government effectiveness (World Bank, 2020), and according to the World Economic Forum
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27 is 40th in the world in terms of its economic competitiveness (World Economic Forum, 2018).
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29 The financial crisis of 1997 brought in new governance measures for business with the Thai
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31 Securities Exchange and the Stock Exchange Thailand (SET) establishing a Good
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33 Governance Subcommittee. Since 2006, Thailand has experienced significant disagreements
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35 over democracy with two coups, two constitutions, three ‘judicial coups,’ four general
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37 elections, five cycles of both pro- and anti-democratic urban occupations, seven different
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39 prime ministers and two periods of authoritarian rule, one of which is ongoing (Elinoff,
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41 2019). Central to this volatility and the recent turnaway from democracy are interlocking
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43 disagreements about the meaning of citizenship, the value of democracy, the rule of law and
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45 the question of sovereignty (Elinoff, 2014).
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4 **Findings and Discussion– Social Enterprise Development in Thailand**
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9 *Early Stage Development of Social Enterprise in Thailand*
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14 The first key theme identified was the mixed model emergence of SE in Thailand from the
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16 1970s to the 1990s. Our research shows the model of using business activities to generate
17
18 social impact existed in Thailand before the term “social enterprise” was popularized. The
19
20 origins displayed different SE mixed forms. First, the self-sufficiency economic philosophy
21
22 of the late King Rama 9 and the late Mother of the King Rama 9 led to the set-up of
23
24 community ventures in the Northern region to create alternative income sources such as
25
26 coffee, macadamia nuts, textiles for communities living in poverty. This royal project called
27
28 the Mae Fah Luang Foundation (MFLF), founded in 1972 provides jobs and capability
29
30 development for ethnic groups in the upland communities of Doi Tung as well as generating
31
32 income to finance community development activities.
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41 *“The Mother of the King said, don't let the people buy out of pity, let them buy*
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43 *because the product is good and the people are building livelihoods”.* (Informant,
44
45 Founding Social Enterprise)
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51 The non-profit Population and Community Development Association (PDA) founded in 1974
52
53 by Mechai Viravaidya set-up a popular restaurant in the heart of Bangkok called Cabbages
54
55 and Condoms and the earned income from the restaurant is then invested in PDA
56
57 programmes such as sexual health education and education for disadvantaged young people
58
59 (Bamboo Schools).
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4 In addition, a number of cooperative social enterprises emerged such as the Lemon Farm
5
6 organic wholefood food retailer in Bangkok with around fifteen retail stores set-up in 1999.
7
8 Lemon Farm emerged from the organic agriculture movement and works closely with
9
10 smallholder organic cooperatives, who also have representatives that sit on the Lemon Farm
11
12 board. The initial Lemon Farm stores were in fact incubated in petrol stations by the gasoline
13
14 company called Bangchak, which had a policy of supporting cooperatives. In 1999, Dairy
15
16 Home, an organic dairy producer, was set up to manufacture dairy fresh milk, butter, yoghurt,
17
18 and other dairy products in Thai market. Dairy Home has been working closely with dairy
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20 farmers to transform their farms into organic ones and pay them a premium price.
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29 However, until recently the concept of SE remained unknown to development practitioners
30
31 and the public. More recently, there has been a growing demand in Thailand for innovative
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33 developmental solutions due to rising inequality, ongoing political instability and
34
35 increasingly complex social and environmental problems compounded by the financial crisis
36
37 in the 1990s in Southeast Asia. Secondly, some foundations, multinational companies and
38
39 international NGOs have reduced significantly their financial and technical support to local
40
41 development agencies in the past decade. This has forced the existing social sector
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43 organizations and emerging new players to look for more self-sustainable enterprise models
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45 to support their work i.e. SE.
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53 ***International Impact***

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58 The second theme identified in our data was the macro-institutional impact from the
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60 international political environment, particularly from the UK Government. Encouraged by the
61
62 international success of SE, the Thai government set up the National Social Enterprise
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4 Committee in 2009 to increase awareness of SE to the public and develop supporting
5
6 infrastructures that would enable the SE movement to grow in Thailand.
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8
9 The Democratic Government at the time led by the Prime Minister Abhisit, who had been
10
11 born and educated in the UK, began to look at different measures that could grow the
12
13 economy but deliver social inclusion. One of our informants explains the role of the British
14
15 Council (BC):
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21 *“The British Council was very instrumental in the development of social*
22
23 *enterprise in Thailand, because they organised policy trips to the UK for Abhisit’s*
24
25 *policy team”*. (Informant, Social Enterprise Agency).
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31 This is supported by a senior informant from the British Council in Bangkok who explains:
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36 *“There was keen interest in SE in the Thai government and a real openness to*
37
38 *learn from the UK. So I coordinated policy maker trips to the UK. I was close to the*
39
40 *Advisor to the Prime Minister at the time on such matters who then was influential in*
41
42 *setting up the Thailand Social Enterprise Office (TSEO) in the Thai government. I*
43
44 *believed that BC was well positioned to create meaningful change at the highest level,*
45
46 *which would lead to more SEs being set up and more collaboration with the UK. I*
47
48 *was also motivated by the opportunity to bring in UK universities and social*
49
50 *entrepreneurs so we worked with Srinakarinwirot University in Bangkok, which had a*
51
52 *very pro-active President in terms of SE advancement, and we brought over*
53
54 *academics from UK universities to take part in meetings and SE teaching. In terms of*
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56 *raising awareness of SE in Thailand, we sent Channel 3 - a Thai TV channel - with*
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4 *one delegation to the UK to cover the trip and it appeared as a series on prime time*
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7 *TV here”*. (Informant, British Council, Thailand).
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11 To support the development of the Thai SE sector ten universities in Thailand participate in
12 the knowledge development and incubation program networking activities supported by
13 TSEO and the British Council. This has led to a growing interest from Thai academic
14 institutions to play a more active role in the sector. It is clear that international influence is an
15 institutional factor in SE development in Thailand. The role played by the BC draws
16 similarities to the pivotal role they played in the development of SE in China described as a
17 diffusion of innovation (Cui and Kerlin, 2017). Rogers (1995, p.5) defines diffusion of
18 innovation as ‘the process by which innovation is communicated through certain channels
19 over time amongst member of a social system’.
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36 ***National Government Involvement and Legal Frameworks***

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41 A third theme was the growing influence of the National political context in Thailand on the
42 SE sector. After the set-up of the National Social Enterprise Committee in 2009 (mentioned
43 above) the Thailand government developed a range of SE policies (see table 2 for timeline of
44 key social enterprise development policies). The five-year National Social Enterprise Master
45 plan (2010 – 2014) was developed by the Committee in 2010 which led to the establishment
46 of the Thai Social Enterprise Office (TSEO) in 2010 (see table 2 below) as a government
47 agency to support SEs. An informant who was involved in setting-up the TSEO explains:
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60 *“Thai Social Enterprise Office was set-up to work on multiple initiatives including, in*
61 *the universities again with the British Council to work on multiple activities and of*
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4 *course at the policy level. We also focused on incubating a few specific enterprises*
5
6 *and growing the social investment structure to support them. Our focus was mostly on*
7
8 *social enterprises that are new enterprises. Mostly coming from the younger*
9
10 *generation”.* (Informant, former TSEO staff member).
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16 TSEO then worked to encourage policy support and buy-in from relevant government
17 agencies and politicians leading to the development of a *Social Enterprise Promotion Act*.
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19

20 The draft of the SE Promotions Act included, tax incentives for investors (investment and
21 procurement), social taxation for SEs, a SE start-up grant program, soft loans for SEs, social
22 procurement and SE certification. Again this shows the macro-institutional influence of
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33 Since 2013, the TSEO has set up an online self-registration system for SEs. Both TSEO and
34 the National Social Enterprise Committee established specific criteria in 2014 to endorse
35 registered organizations as SEs. The five criteria consist of (1) clear social objective, (2)
36 financial sustainability, (3) fairness to society and the environment, (4) reinvest to achieve
37 social goal, and (5) good governance. Regarding the first criteria, the registered SE needs to
38 have one of the following social objectives – (1) employing the disadvantaged, (2) promoting
39 better society or environment through their core business activities, (3) owned or governed by
40 the disadvantaged, or (4) allocate most of their profit to their social cause or reinvest in their
41 SE. Regarding financial sustainability, the SE has to have over half of their revenue from
42 trading activities and cannot allocate more than 30% on dividend. Finally, the SE has to
43 maintain good governance with a minimum requirement to; register as an organization (could
44 be in the form of foundation, association, company, etc.), submit an annual report to their
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7 From 2010, a second wave of SE development took place of new start-up integrated social
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9 business type model particularly, in sustainable tourism, agriculture and working with the
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11 disabled. For example Local Alike in tourism has a mission of ‘*good traveling, social impact*’
12
13 and designs tourist experiences with local Thai communities to appeal to a range of traveling
14
15 types. The Cube, run by NISE Corporation, based in Bangkok makes a range of products
16
17 (baking and stationary) by people with disability. Those visually impaired are able to bind
18
19 notebooks often better than most people due to their enhanced physical senses. Autistic
20
21 individuals can perform repetitive such as the kneading of bread dough very effectively. A
22
23 number of these new SEs are also adept at trading and selling their goods to the private sector
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25 e.g. Muser coffee providing the on-board coffee for airline Air Asia.
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33 *Networks*

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38 The fourth key theme emerging from the research is the importance of networks in SE
39
40 development in Thailand. Some of the key networks identified in the data include; Change
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42 Fusion, Nise Corporation, Ashoka and more recently the Social Enterprise Thailand
43
44 Association (see Table 2). One of our informants explains:
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51 *“A key progressive non-profit organisation network in SE in Thailand is Change*
52
53 *Fusion. It was set-up by the ex-Deputy Prime Minister who had been working with*
54
55 *civil society and he was very progressive. The second sector is the worker integration*
56
57 *network involving the disabled called Nise Corporation who have set-up a network of*
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59 *SEs working with the disabled in Bangkok”.* (Informant, Government Office)
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4 First, ChangeFusion Group which is a non-profit organisation which has brought together a
5
6 network of social venture, capital investment, crowdfunding and incubating social enterprises
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8 into their network. The network pools resources and has created a network of experts to serve
9
10 each other. ChangeFusion Group has been able to raise funds for social good through its
11
12 partners e.g. crowdfunding for COVID-19 to help provide surgical masks and support for the
13
14 vulnerable. Second, Nise Corporation, which is an intermediary body, was set up initially due
15
16 to the launch of PWD (People with Disability) Act in 2007 to build PWD capability and
17
18 empower the disabled by developing their skills and opportunities. Nise Corporation, is a
19
20 social network company, with the aim of linking PWD with private sector organizations to
21
22 support compliance with the PWD 2007 Act (see table 2). In addition, the company also
23
24 serves as a social impact training organization. The importance of networks identified here
25
26 appears to support the work on the importance of relational ties (Granovetter, 1985).
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36 *Corporate and State Interest in Social Enterprise*

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41 A fifth key theme identified in the data is the strong influence of the collaboration between
42
43 the state and big business. In 2012, the Stock Exchange of Thailand launched incentives for
44
45 companies to shift their CSR approach towards SE (see table 2 below). Furthermore, the
46
47 public-private partnership (Pracharath) initiated by the current authoritarian government
48
49 (Elinoff, 2019) launched in 2016 encourages corporations to create SEs. Thai Beverage
50
51 Group CEO announced in April 2016 the establishment of Pracharath Raksamakkee, an
52
53 umbrella organization to set-up SEs nationwide. The model aims to strengthen Thailand's
54
55 economy at the local level empowering communities and enterprises. To do so the
56
57 Government envisions public-private- civil society nexus acting in the interests of sustainable
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4 development through the execution of 4 major strategies; good governance, innovation and
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6 productivity, developing products and services from rural communities.
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11 Pracharath or ‘people state policy’ works across 77 provinces in Thailand with a national
12
13 board and provincial boards. There is also financial funding in terms of a credit guarantee
14
15 scheme providing 100m baht to encourage banks to lend to SEs. Critics accuse this as a way
16
17 of pouring money into rural communities to win votes and a re-branding of Pracha Niyom or
18
19 populist policies. Registered corporate SEs will be able to seek promotional privileges and
20
21 income tax exemption. For private sector organizations who invest in registered SE, their
22
23 investment or donation can be regarded as expenses and help with the corporate tax deduction
24
25 as long as the total annual expenses do not exceed 2% of the annual net profit. These key
26
27 political developments are outlined in table 2 below, which shows the increasing influence of
28
29 the market and state working together in the Thailand SE sector.
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38 In response, the original SE founders e.g. MFLF and Cabbages and Condoms set-up in 2019
39
40 the Social Enterprise Thailand Association (see table 2). An informant, who is a member of
41
42 the association explains:
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48 *“The government and TSEO have not really addressed the right issues for mission led*
49
50 *SEs in Thailand. The public-private partnership (Pracharath) really prioritises*
51
52 *private sector interests. We have set-up the association to provide much needed*
53
54 *support to SEs. We have decided to focus our efforts on mentoring young social*
55
56 *entrepreneurs, empowering them, and linking them up with our existing networks. The*
57
58 *aim is to be a true incubator for genuine SE in Thailand”*. (Informant, member of
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63 Social Enterprise Thailand Association)
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7 **Insert Table 2 here Timeline of Social Enterprise Development Policies in Thailand**

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9 **(authors own)**

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14 In addition, the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) has been actively promoting SE by
15
16 hosting events, seminars and discussions to educate business leaders and CSR professionals
17
18 on the potential of SE to drive social change. SET are encouraging listed companies to
19
20 integrate social investment with their business operations and activities. In 2015, SET
21
22 established the “Social Enterprise Investment Awards” for listed companies who strategically
23
24 contribute their financial and in-kind support to SEs. In April 2016, SET has launched the
25
26 “SET for Future” portal as an online database for companies who are looking for an SE
27
28 partner. Furthermore, the G-Lab, Social Innovation Lab at the School of Global Studies at
29
30 Thammasat University, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, has developed a corporate
31
32 pro-bono initiative to support SE capacity building. Secondly, Thai Health Promotion
33
34 Foundation has granted Ashoka Thailand to manage a capacity building program for their
35
36 grantees. Intermediaries such as Ashoka Thailand and Change Ventures integrate capacity
37
38 building support as part of their venture investment.
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48 Due to new regulatory mechanisms in Thailand, corporations are increasingly viewing SE as
49
50 a strategic opportunity. This is leading to a both a growing interest and increasing awareness
51
52 of SE which is positive. However, on a cautionary note we found in our interviews and focus
53
54 groups, some reports of Thai private sector corporations using the SE Promotion bill to their
55
56 financial advantage. An informant explains:
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4 *“One major food company are holding discussions to convert their loss making*
5 *subsidiaries to SE to avoid paying corporate tax.”* (Informant, NGO representative)
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10
11 Another informant from one of the SE agencies reports:
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16 *“One of the large Thai conglomerates who owns a large coffee chain is converting a*
17 *portion of its coffee shops to SE to gain tax incentives”.* (Informant, Social Enterprise
18 Agency).
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26 Doherty et al., (2013) warn that uncritical engagement with mainstream business can risk co-
27
28 optation, dilution and reputational damage. There appears to be genuine concerns about the
29
30 potential for corporate co-optation of social enterprise in Thailand. Another informant goes
31
32 further:
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38 *“I think the Government and the large corporates have mistreated the concept of*
39 *social enterprise. I am not sure whether you have the same feeling or not, but that's*
40 *how I feel. If SE is taking over by large business then social enterprise will be just*
41 *another term”.* (Informant, Social Entrepreneur)
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51 Co-optation is a phenomenon associated with the co-optation of leaders of political
52
53 movements to conform to established frameworks and procedures to create social change,
54
55 only partially achieving their goals (Jaffee, 2010). In effect, co-optation could lead to
56
57 mainstream partners absorbing the more convenient elements of social enterprise at the
58
59 expense of its more transformative impact.
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4 Jaffee and Howard (2010) focuses on the subversion of policy making to explain co-optation.
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6
7 However, in organisational management terms this could be associated with Mintzberg's
8
9 (1989) concept of 'assimilation', where in reaching out with an ideology to divergent social
10
11 groups, the original organisations' ideal becomes compromised. Jaffee (2010) uses of the
12
13 term regulatory capture, where regulatory bodies are influenced by certain actors to make
14
15 regulatory decisions in the commercial interest of those actors rather than the overall social
16
17 good. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) also explain if organizations are able to associate the
18
19 new with the old in some way that eases adoption. One way in which this is done is through
20
21 mimicry, part of the success of mimicry in creating new institutional structures so that the
22
23 juxtaposition of the old and new templates can simultaneously make the new structure
24
25 understandable and accessible.
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34 In summary, we have used our rich data to adapt the sector creation model of Beckert (2010)
35
36 to show the key institutions, networks and cognitive framings responsible for the creation of
37
38 the SE sector in Thailand (see Figure 1). Combining this with the social origins and MISE
39
40 theory approach of Kerlin, (2010, 2017) we can see the important role played by a series of
41
42 institutions from civil society (meso and micro institutional levels), the international political
43
44 environment e.g. UK Government (macro level), the state and the market (macro level) and a
45
46 series of networks e.g. Change Fusion. Unique to Thailand we can see the important role
47
48 played by the Monarchy in the early SE development, the influence of the state and private
49
50 sector in combination (Pracharath) and the role played by the British Council to facilitate
51
52 policy interaction between the UK and Thailand via a process of diffusion.
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60 **Insert Figure 1 here Creation of Social Enterprise Sector in Thailand**
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4 A unique element to SE development in Thailand has been the collaboration between both the
5
6 state and the private sector demonstrated by the development of legal frameworks to
7
8 incentivise the private sector to go beyond CSR and set-up SEs. This is in contrast to South
9
10 Korea, where a partnership with the non-profit sector was preferred. The current authoritarian
11
12 government in Thailand has preferred a model prioritizing the role of business called
13
14 Pracharath. Hence, using Kerlin's MISE framework, Thailand demonstrates an example of an
15
16 *Authoritarian State-Corporate model*, which the authors identify as a new category of the
17
18 Strategic Diverse and semi-strategic model in Kerlin's (2017) country typology.
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26 **Conclusions**

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31 The authors have taken a systematic approach to unpack the dynamic emergence and
32
33 development of social enterprise in Thailand. This research has identified five key themes.
34
35 First, the early emergence (1970s-1990s) driven by a mixed SE model involving; the
36
37 monarchy in the form of MFLLF working to empower Northern Thai ethnic groups, PDA
38
39 from the non-profit sector setting up Cabbages and Condoms and Lemon Farm, a cooperative
40
41 from the organic movement. Second, from 2009 the growing macro-institutional influence
42
43 from the UK Government on SE development in Thailand via its agency the British Council.
44
45 This finding shows similarities with the role played by the British Council in the development
46
47 of social enterprise in China, through a process of diffusion of innovation (Cui and Kerlin,
48
49 2017). Third theme identified is the growing influence of the Thailand government in
50
51 developing new policies and legal frameworks for SE (see table 2). Fourth theme, is the
52
53 emergence of key networks such as ChangeFusion to develop shared resources and expertise
54
55 for SE. Fifth, is the recent growing interest from both the state and private sector in the form
56
57 of the public-private partnership (Pracharath) initiated by the current authoritarian
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4 government in 2016. Pracharath along with the new Social Enterprise Promotion Bill (2018)
5 encourages corporations to create SEs and appears to be incentivised by tax relief for
6 corporations. This is leading to fears of co-optation of SE in Thailand and its associated
7 reputational risk. In response, the SE founders have set-up the Social Enterprise Thailand
8 Association and we appear to be entering a contested phase over the future of SE in Thailand.
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10 The founders view the association as a mechanism to maintain the more transformative
11 aspects of SE and maintain the sectors heterogeneity.
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26 By combining three different theoretical approaches we have been able to unpack the creation
27 and development of the SE sector in Thailand (Beckert, 2010, Fligstein and Dauter, 2007;
28 Kerlin, 2010 & 2017) see figure 1. In addition, we identify the key policy initiatives and
29 growing state and market influence in table 2 (Kerlin, 2010, 2017). By identifying the
30 growing institutional influence of the state and private sector collaboration in Thai SE
31 development, we have unveiled growing concerns of SE co-optation by the corporate sector.
32 This could be an example of institutional mimicry (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006).
33
34 Combining these three very useful theoretical perspectives as facilitated a systematic
35 approach to unpacking social enterprise sector development in Thailand. Using Kerlin's
36 MISE framework, our data shows that Thailand demonstrates an example of an *Authoritarian*
37 *State-Corporate model*, which the authors identify as a new category of the Strategic Diverse
38 and semi-strategic model in Kerlin's (2017) country typology. This is in contrast to South
39 Korea where the Government has prioritised the non-profit sector as its key partner in
40 stimulating SE Growth (Jeong, 2017).
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4 It is clear the situation in Thailand for SE is very dynamic. Future research, should
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6 investigate further the private sector motivations and their potential to deliver social
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8 innovation and impact at scale versus the concerns regarding co-optation. There is also
9
10 limited research in Thailand on the management of social enterprise in this context, which
11
12 could be valuable to inform both future government policy and the work of the Social
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14 Enterprise Thailand Association.
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