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THE SUFFICIENCY ECONOMY AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY: A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING ANALYSIS OF A THAI UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) and organizational sustainability within the context of Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University in Thailand. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected via questionnaires from 242 personnel across 33 university departments. A structural equation model (SEM) was employed to analyze the relationships between SEP principles (leadership, human resource management, organizational culture, and other key operational aspects) and dimensions of organizational sustainability (economic, social, and environmental). The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between SEP principles and organizational sustainability, with human resource management and financial management emerging as key mediators. Specifically, integrating SEP strongly influenced environmentally sustainable practices, such as greenhouse gas emission reduction and adherence to environmental regulations. This study underscores the value of the SEP as a framework for enhancing organizational sustainability in Thai universities. It suggests that strategic human resources and financial management play pivotal roles in achieving sustainability goals within this context. The study also incorporates stakeholder suggestions for further developing sustainable practices, offering valuable insights for enhancing organizational performance and contributing to the broader goal of sustainable development within the higher education sector in Thailand.

Keywords: Sufficiency Economy, Organizational Sustainability, Structural Equation Modeling, Higher Education, Thailand

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Introduction

Higher education institutions in Thailand are under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation. They are responsible for developing people to be ready for constantly changing work. They also have a duty to research and develop innovations. They believe educational development will open up opportunities for equal learning, reduce social gaps, improve the quality of life, and create happiness for all Thais. It is an important and challenging mission that will be a driving force in national development. To develop according to the sufficiency economy philosophy leading to stability, prosperity, and sustainability, strengthening the country, stimulating the grassroots economy, building confidence, and enhancing the country's competitiveness on the world stage, both in the short term and long term, in order to operate and achieve the set goals, the management of higher education institutions as organizations that are ready to perform such duties is, therefore, a matter of great importance. In the current situation where Thai higher education institutions are coping with various changes, each organization must adapt according to specific contexts and the impact faced. For instance, threats from foreign universities, especially Chinese ones, population rate change, rapid changes in technology are occurring all the time, and business competition in Thailand is constantly changing along with changing employment needs. Both students and universities have had to adapt significantly. Additionally, conceptual design in education also appears that the main principles of the 9th National Economic and Social Development Plan, which continues to the 12th Plan (2017-2021), are based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and integrated into use. Therefore, it is apparent that the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy has been applied to develop work in Thai educational organizations at all levels. Due to the different organizational contexts such as organizational culture, stakeholders, management policies and strategies, etc., each institution needs to apply it appropriately in order to lead to work efficiency. Therefore, this research aims to explore components that align with the institutional context to facilitate adaptation to these changing circumstances. Beyond external factors, the internal situation within each higher education institution plays a crucial role in ensuring long-term sustainability.

Literature Review

Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP)

Sufficiency Economy Philosophy has been extensively studied and applied across various organizations, both in the public and private sectors. When implemented in organizational management, a key aspect involves assessing whether the organization's operations align with its goals and objectives through performance measurement. Suwannatada (2020), the study on the success factors of sustainable organizations of Rajabhat Universities in the North Eastern region, shows that The factors that influence the sustainable success of the organization of Rajabhat Universities in the North Eastern region consist of 1) Organizational leadership, consisting of 3 indicators: (1.1) Organizational leadership of internal staff (1.2) Organizational leadership of the community (1.3) Organizational leadership of institutional administration 2) Organizational practices consisting of 4 indicators: (2.1) Basic practice (2.2) High-level practice (2.3) Level of factors leading to success in practice (2.4) Level of success in operations 3) Organizational efficiency consisting of 7 indicators: (3.1) Organizational efficiency of institutional leadership (3.2) Organizational efficiency of strategy (3.3) Organizational efficiency of customers (3.4) Organizational efficiency of measurement, analysis and knowledge management (3.5) Organizational efficiency of personnel (3.6) Organizational efficiency of operational processes (3.7) Organizational efficiency of operational results. Waedlom et al. (2022) present a practice model in accordance with the Sufficiency Philosophy or the Sufficiency Principle, which consists of 4 balanced dimensions: economy, society, environment, and culture. It includes steps of the

operational process that are practices leading to sustainable development. Likewise, Thongbunchoo (2014) studied sustainable organizations based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and found that the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy significantly influences the quality of the entire organization. This means that TQM policies and plans align with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, enabling leaders to solve problems and achieve sustainable organizational success. Educational organizations have also applied the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in their operations. Waedlom et al. (2022) present a model of practice in accordance with the Sufficiency Philosophy or the Sufficiency Principle, which consists of 4 balanced dimensions: economy, society, environment, and culture, and has steps in the process of operation that practice leading to sustainable development. However, research conducted by Thonglad et al. (2016) on business organizations studied the causal factors of developing sustainable businesses according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy. The most influential factor was ethics (including patience and honesty), followed by knowledge (comprising business acumen and an understanding of business realities). Moreover, ethics and knowledge indirectly affect business sustainability through reasoning, moderation, and resilience. According to a study by Yamchuti & Wongsritagoon (2014), applying the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in higher education management at Thonburi University was reported to be at a high level overall. The university's administration and instructors in each faculty have effectively integrated this philosophy into their educational practices. When considering specific areas, the result was found that there was significant implementation in three key aspects: curriculum development, teaching and learning management, and creating a conducive environment. The university primarily focused on student-centered learning by integrating the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy into the curriculum, fostering collaboration among educational institutions, communities, and society. This approach instills in students the importance of living according to the principles of the Sufficiency Economy, encouraging habits and behaviors aligned with this philosophy. However, the university's management system, budget management, and supervision and evaluation were implemented at a moderate level. However, they all shared the same goal of developing students with characteristics that align with the Sufficiency Economy. The study also found that the integration of teaching and environmental management according to the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy was strongly related, indicating that creating an appropriate learning environment that considers students' needs, involves hands-on practice, and utilizes modern technology and innovation leads to more effective teaching and learning. This helps students develop observation skills, analytical thinking, synthesis, and problem-solving abilities that they can apply in real life. However, the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy can be implemented at various organizational and operational levels. Regardless of the level, the primary purpose of applying this philosophy within organizations is to achieve sustainability.

Organizations Sustainable

A sustainable organization is often discussed in terms of measuring its performance in three areas (the triple bottom line), as proposed by Elkington (1994). He identified sustainability as comprising economic, social, and environmental dimensions. These three dimensions are the basic concepts that have been used to develop various indicators, including Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) . When an organization faces factors that impact its performance, it is necessary to consider strategies that will enable the organization to adapt and overcome these challenges, ultimately leading to long-term results. Phochanakij (2022) studied factors affecting the development of sustainable quality accounting firms in the Central Region. The research found that in the context of accounting firms, structure was the most important factor, followed by systems, values, and lastly, the management style. According to sustainability policies, responsibility was identified as the most important factor, followed by customer responsiveness and relationships, ethics, and

human resources. In terms of competitive strategy, differentiation was the most critical factor, followed by technology, niche marketing, and cost leadership, which ranked last. Monitoring and evaluation were the most significant factors for driving the organization toward practical implementation, followed by improvement, planning, and execution, which were considered the least important. In terms of service quality factors, confidence in service delivery was deemed the most important, followed by reliability, care, and attention, with physical appearance being the least prioritized factor. Rattanasombat (2014) also researched the development of a strategic management model for sustainable business management for the future of large enterprises. The study found that sustainable business management involves the organization's ability to adapt to external environmental changes. The focus is on the strategic management of key indicators of sustainable business management in large enterprises, including leadership, governance and corporate strategy, environmental management, and corporate social responsibility. Thongbunchoo (2014) studied sustainable organizations based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and found that the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy significantly influences the quality of the entire organization. This means that TQM policies and plans align with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, enabling leaders to solve problems and achieve sustainable organizational success. Considering the causal structure of these strategic indicators, it was found that the direct influencing factors on corporate social responsibility were environmental management, leadership, governance, and corporate strategy, respectively. Viewing corporate social responsibility as the outcome of the research model, it was evident that leadership had the highest overall influence on corporate social responsibility, followed by environmental management, governance, and corporate strategy. Corporate social responsibility is essential for sustainable business management because it relates to stakeholders' acceptance. Large organizations that have strengths in leadership, personnel, and resource readiness, continuous environmental management, and corporate social responsibility can further advance toward sustainable business management by implementing appropriate strategies. In addition to business organizations that prioritize being sustainable organizations, higher education institutions also prioritize organizational sustainability by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), the world's leading higher education ranking and analysis institute has published its sustainability university rankings (QS Sustainability Rankings 2024). This ranking assesses universities based on their contribution to sustainability, focusing on three key pillars: 1) Environmental Impact, 2) Social impact, and 3) Management. This is consistent with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals for Sustainable Development (Sustainable Development Goals-SDGs), 17 UN resolutions aimed at solving the world's current problems. In addition, there is also The UNEP Sustainable University Framework, which defines a sustainable university and creates a global pathway to recognizing and becoming one. It states that higher education has always been at the frontier of new thinking and practice in the world, but with the environmental challenges growing ever steeper, the purpose of universities needs to be reimagined. The UNEP Framework presents a university that is comprised of four core areas. These are: (1) Environment & Climate: water, waste, biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, travel, construction, and energy. (2) Teaching & Research: teaching, research, student engagement. (3) People & Society: diversity, equality, engagement, and participation, assessment, community, health, and wellbeing. (4) Administration & Governance: Leadership, ethics, HR, Business links, Governance, Finance. UNEP has identified a role in supporting the creation of more country and regional networks where best practice is shared, and action plans are implemented per the national context. Universities in Thailand are focusing on being sustainable organizations through the Sustainable University Network of Thailand (SUN-Thailand), which was established in 2016 with the aim of supporting university development by means of sustainable development principles and aims to expand

cooperation to universities nationwide. The participating universities will prepare a sustainability development plan for each university in line with the context of each institution as a guideline for implementation. It was found that many institutions have adopted the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as a guideline for organizational development because the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy has a goal of sustainable development.

Thai universities that have developed for sustainability include Chulalongkorn University (CU), bringing The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to develop the university towards sustainability (Chulalongkorn University, 2023) . CU initiated the Chula SDG: Beyond Leading Change project during the 2022-2023 academic year to address this. In September 2022, Chulalongkorn University made a significant commitment by declaring its intention to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The primary objectives are to achieve "Carbon Neutrality" by 2040 and reach "Net Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions" by 2050. Mahidol University regulates Sustainability Management Strategy with the "Mahidol Eco University and Sustainability Policy" under the concept of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in accordance with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (Sustainable Development Goals: 17 SDGs) established by the United Nations (UN), which are the global goals for sustainable development from 2015-2030. By scheduling environmental and sustainable policies as follows: net zero emission, ecosystem, energy, water, waste, university development, health and well-being, human resources, education, and research. (Mahidol University, n.d.).

Nejati & Nejati (2013) found that a four-dimensional structure for the key factors of a sustainable university from the perspective of students was identified, including 1) community outreach, 2) sustainability commitment and monitoring, 3) waste and energy, and 4) land use and planning. Leal et al. (2024) study the perceptions of sustainability held by teachers at Portuguese public higher education institutions. The results show that while most faculty believe that higher education institutions promote the integration of sustainability into their activities, only 16% believe that sustainable development is holistically integrated into the various activities of the institutions. About 30% of teachers say that they integrate sustainable development into their curriculum units to a great extent, but only 20% of them say that higher education institutions provide regular or systematic training in sustainable development. Teachers prefer to improve their students' education on sustainable development through conferences, seminars, or research projects. Almost 90% of teachers are concerned about climate change or the environment, but only 40% or less engage in activities related to sustainable development.

Conceptual Framework

The literature review based on Kantabutra (2011) developed ten indicators for evaluating business organizations based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, which includes (1) Leadership, (2) People Management, (3) Organizational Culture, (4) Marketing Management, (5) Technology and Innovation Management (6) Knowledge Management (7) Financial Management (8) Operations and Resources Management (9) Environmental Development (10) Social Development and Elkington (1994) identified sustainability as comprising economic, social, and environmental dimensions, develop to conceptual framework.

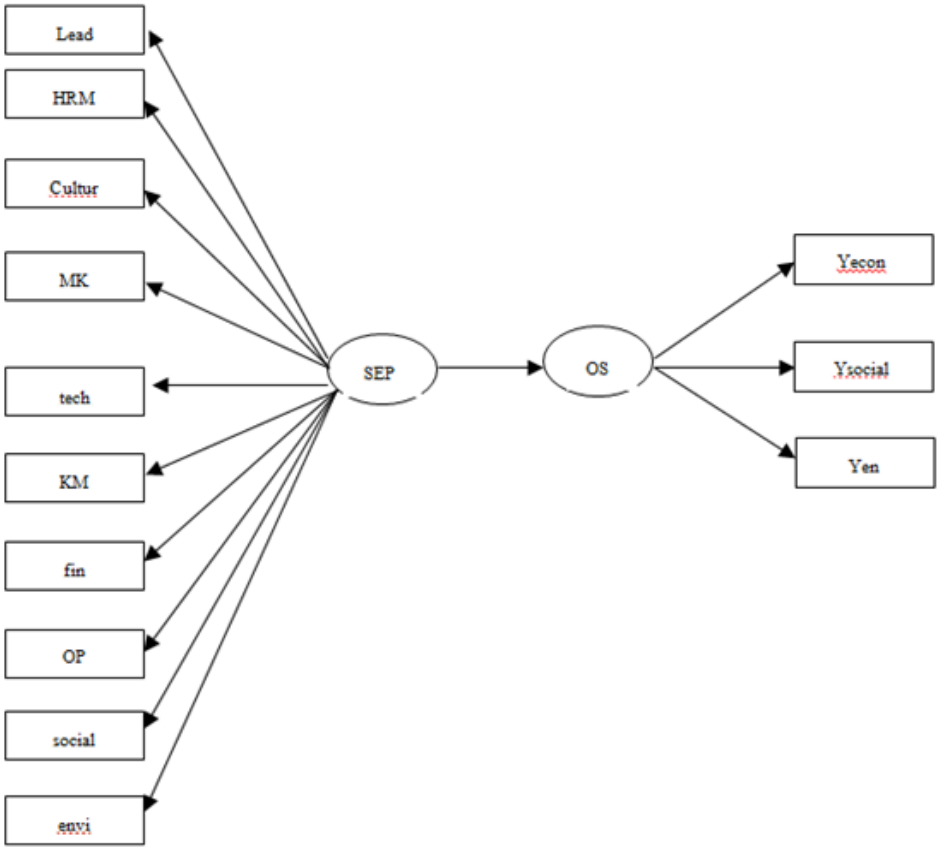

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework leading to the research questions: What are the organization sustainability (OS) components based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) that are consistent with the context of Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University?

Methodology

This study is quantitative. The research sample consisted of 286 people. The document review results were made by the Human Research Ethics Committee, who made recommendations to the researcher. The researcher selected the sample group based on the characteristics of the activity performed by the participants. In accordance with the recommendations of the Human Research Ethics Committee, which suggested that opinions should be sought from all departments of the university and that both support staff and academic staff should have an equal opportunity to be sampled, thus the sample was divided into two categories: academic staff and support staff, with 50% of the sample drawn from each group. This resulted in 143 academic staff and 143 support staff being selected. Data were collected from 281 respondents. When collecting the research data, the data collectors provided all respondents with voluntary declaration forms for social science research projects, in which they explained the confidentiality of the data collection in accordance with the ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. After checking the respondents' data, they must have worked at Maha Sarakham Rajabhat University for at least 3 years. The questionnaire is divided into 4 sections as follows.

Section 1 Work information of the respondents.

Section 2 Factors related to the sufficiency economy philosophy of Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University.

Section 3 Factors related to the sustainable organization of Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University.

Section 4 What are your suggestions for developing the organization into a sustainable organization in terms of the sufficiency economy philosophy? (Open-ended).
It was stated that 242 valid questionnaires were used in the statistical analysis process. To develop a research tool based on studying relevant concepts and theories. The questionnaire was developed based on the ideas of Kantabutra (2010) and Elkington (1994) and incorporated feedback from three experts. The feedback was used to analyze and adjust the wording of the questions for clarity and alignment with the definitions of the variables. According to data analysis, Suwannatada (2020) presented a process of analyzing research results, which was developed from the ideas of Kline (2011), Marcoulides & Schumacker (2001), and Schumacker & Lomax (2010). The data analysis process is adapted from the concepts of Kline (2011) in Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling.

Research Result

Examination of Construct Validity

To test construct validity, CR (Constructed Reliability) and AVE (Average Variance Extraction) indicate the ability to be a component. The preliminary data were examined by considering CR > 0.7 and AVE > 0.5 values. The data presented in Table 1 showed that CR values were between 0.905 and 0.977 and AVE values were between 0.673 and 0.860, which indicates that the variables are appropriate to be components.

Table 1 Details of Factors Used in the Analysis

Variable	Mean	SD	CR	AVE
Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP)				
1) Leader organization (lead)	0.699	13	0.938	0.725
2) Human Resource Management (HRM)	0.706	9	0.951	0.736
3) Organizational Culture (Culture)	0.288	6	0.905	0.673
4) Marketing Management (MK)	0.201	6	0.934	0.780
5) Technology and Innovation Management (tech)	0.566	10	0.965	0.848
6) Knowledge Management (KM)	0.745	11	0.953	0.774
7) Financial Management (fin)	0.576	7	0.964	0.845
8) Operations and Resources Management (OP)	0.569	5	0.961	0.860
9) Environmental Development (envi)	0.771	7	0.960	0.775
10) Social Development (social)	0.604	6	0.959	0.854
Organization Sustainability (OS)				
1) Economy (Yecon)	0.733	14	0.976	0.787
2) Social (Ysocial)	0.607	16	0.967	0.811
3) Environment (Yen)	0.826	19	0.977	0.814

Examination of Autocorrelation and Multicollinearity Issues

The examination of autocorrelation (the correlation between error terms) was conducted to assess the independence of the error terms ei and ej, or cov(ei,ej) = 0.916, using the Durbin-Watson test, a value close to 2, indicating that the error terms ei and ej are independent. The data analysis revealed a tendency toward multicollinearity issues, as some pairs of variables showed values close to 1 (greater than 0.85 but less than 1). The variables have a relationship between 0.413-0.853. However, these values do not indicate a significant multicollinearity problem. Additionally, the examination of homoscedasticity (the assumption of equal variance of errors) showed no issues, similar to the examination of autocorrelation, which also indicated no problems. Due to the relatively high level of correlation, EFA and CFA analyses were performed to obtain variables that met the SEM conditions.

Model Identification: EFA CFA

The examination of construct validity, or theoretical validity, is a process of measuring the alignment with the characteristics intended to be measured using theoretical construct variables.

1) Main Variables Based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP): From the number of questions for each variable in Table 1 , the data was imported into a ready-made computer program to perform the Construct Validity test. The test results were as follows.

1.1) The 10 variables that were imported into the analysis process. Construct Validity. The results of the first-order analysis for the main variables based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) are as follows.

1.1.1) According to the statistical results: Chi-Square = 0.000, CMIN/df = 2.651, RMR = 0.048, GFI = 0.806, AGFI = 0.767, CFI = 0.918, NFI = 0.876, IFI = 0.191, RMSEA = 0.083 which the statistical value is not within the acceptable criteria Therefore, the model was adjusted by eliminating variables by considering modification values, leading to the model of First-Order Analysis.

1.1.2) First-order analysis of the Main Variables of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP): According to the statistical results: Chi-Square = 0.076, CMIN/df = 1.523, RMR = 0.011, GFI = 0.973, AGFI = 0.943, CFI = 0.994, NFI = 0.982, IFI = 0.994, RMSEA = 0.047 which the statistical value is acceptable criteria.

1.1.3) Second-order analysis of the Main Variables of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP): Based on the statistical results, Chi-Square = 0.076, CMIN/df = 1.523, RMR = 0.011, GFI = 0.973, AGFI = 0.943, CFI = 0.994, NFI = 0.982, IFI = 0.994, RMSEA = 0.047 the second-order analysis of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and its related variables indicates varying degrees of influence.

Table 2 First-Order Analysis and Second-Order Analysis of SEP

Indices	Criteria	First order				Second order	
		Pre adjustment		Post adjustment		Index value	Result
		Index value	Result	Index value	Result		
Chi-Square	≥ .05	0.000	Inconsistent	0.076	Consistent	0.076	Consistent
CMIN/df	< 2.00	2.651	Inconsistent	1.523	Consistent	1.523	Consistent
RMR	< 0.05	0.048	Consistent	0.011	Consistent	0.011	Consistent
GFI	> 0.95	0.806	Inconsistent	0.973	Consistent	0.973	Consistent
AGFI	> 0.90	0.767	Inconsistent	0.943	Consistent	0.943	Consistent
CFI	> 0.95	0.918	Inconsistent	0.994	Consistent	0.994	Consistent
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.876	Inconsistent	0.982	Consistent	0.982	Consistent
IFI	≥ 0.90	0.191	Inconsistent	0.994	Consistent	0.994	Consistent
RMSEA	< .05	0.083	Inconsistent	0.047	Consistent	0.047	Consistent

1.2) Organizational Sustainability (OS): According to the statistical results: Chi-Square = 0.000, CMIN/df = 3.545, RMR = 0.015, GFI = 0.738, AGFI = 0.694, CFI = 0.905, NFI = 0.87, IFI = 0.906, RMSEA = 0.103 which the statistical value is not within the acceptable criteria Therefore, the model was adjusted by eliminating variables by considering Modification values, leading to the model of First-Order Analysis.

1.2.1) First-order analysis of Organizational Sustainability (OS): According to the statistical results: Chi-Square = 0.131, CMIN/df = 1.327, RMR = 0.007, GFI = 0.971, AGFI = 0.946, CFI = 0.996, NFI = 0.986, IFI = 0.996, RMSEA = 0.037 which the statistical value is acceptable criteria.

1.2.2) Second-Order Analysis of Organizational Sustainability (OS): The statistical analysis results are: Chi-Square = 0.131, CMIN/df = 1.327, RMR = 0.007, GFI = 0.971, AGFI = 0.946, CFI = 0.996, NFI = 0.986, IFI = 0.996, RMSEA = 0.037 the second-order analysis of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy and its related variables indicates varying degrees of influence.

Table 3 First-Order Analysis and Second-Order Analysis of OS

Indices	Criteria	First order				Second order	
		Pre adjustment		Post adjustment		Index value	Result
		Index value	Result	Index value	Result		
Chi-Square	≥ .05	0.000	Inconsistent	0.131	Consistent	0.131	Consistent
CMIN/df	< 2.00	3.545	Inconsistent	1.327	Consistent	1.327	Consistent
RMR	< 0.05	0.015	Consistent	0.007	Consistent	0.007	Consistent
GFI	> 0.95	0.738	Inconsistent	0.971	Consistent	0.971	Consistent
AGFI	> 0.90	0.694	Inconsistent	0.946	Consistent	0.946	Consistent
CFI	> 0.95	0.905	Inconsistent	0.996	Consistent	0.996	Consistent
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.873	Inconsistent	0.986	Consistent	0.986	Consistent
IFI	≥ 0.90	0.906	Consistent	0.996	Consistent	0.996	Consistent
RMSEA	< .05	0.103	Inconsistent	0.037	Consistent	0.037	Consistent

Results of Structural Equation Model

The structural equation model analysis factors of organizational sustainability based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University context, the statistical analysis results are: Chi-Square = 0.183, CMIN/DF = 1.362, IFI = 0.997, RMR = 0.008, CFI = 0.997, AGFI = 0.958, GFI = 0.983, RMSEA = 0.039, presented in figure 2.

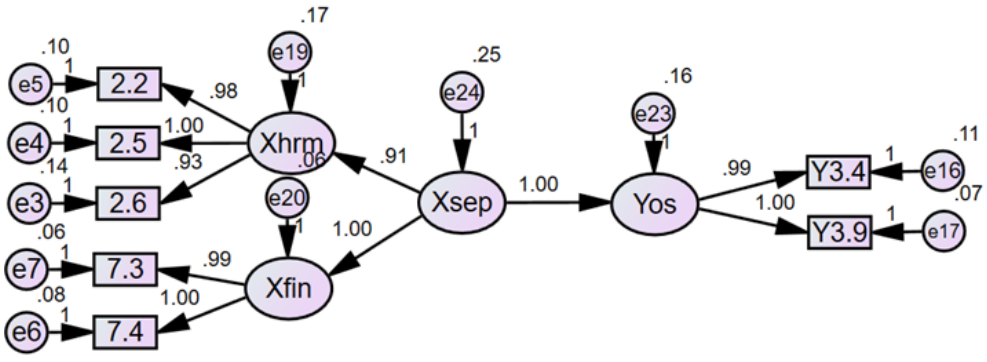

Figure 2 The structural equation model analysis factors of Organizational Sustainability based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University.

Figure 2 shows that organizational sustainability is based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy at Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University. It consists of the variables human resource management (factor weight 0.91) and financial management (factor weight 1.00). Meanwhile, organizational sustainability consists of the variable environmental sustainability, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, implement measures and technologies to transparently reduce the toxicity of gases (factor weight 0.99), and respect environmental laws and norms. (factor weight 1.00).

The respondents provided the following suggestions for aligning Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University's operations with the sufficiency economy principle and fostering organizational sustainability:

1) Aligning with the Sufficiency Economy Principle:

1.1) Develop a participatory action plan: Establish a clear and inclusive policy.

1.2) Implement comprehensively: Promote tangible implementation of the sufficiency economy principle across all levels, from individual departments (branches, faculties, and offices) to the university itself and the wider community.

1.3) Promote the philosophy visibly: The university should actively and demonstrably promote the sufficiency economy philosophy.

1.4) Prioritize ethical conduct: Emphasize honesty and integrity.

1.5) Foster knowledge creation: Encourage the generation and sharing of knowledge within the university.

1.6) Implement transparent auditing: Maintain a clear and transparent internal audit process.

1.7) Improve facilities: Ensure adequate restroom facilities are available for staff and students.

1.8) Cultivate internal commitment: While significant investment isn't always necessary, fostering a strong internal culture of commitment, dedication, collaboration, mutual support, and a focus on the common good is essential for driving organizational success.

1.9) Practice equitable management: Utilize management principles based on equity and fairness.

1.10) Foster teamwork: Encourage collaboration and teamwork to achieve organizational goals.

1.11) Invest in human capital: Recognize the crucial role of human resources and cultivate a supportive work environment.

1.12) Develop a robust KM system: Create a strong and consistently applied knowledge management (KM) system.

1.13) Embrace continuous improvement: The university should consistently strive for development, improvement, and adaptation.

2) Recommendations for Organizational Sustainability:

2.1) Improve governance: Enhance good governance practices.

2.2) Address climate change: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and conserve natural resources.

2.3) Utilize the SDGs: Integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the university's development strategy.

2.4) Involve academics in business ventures: Include academic expertise in the development of the Varunthip water business.

2.5) Enhance tap water quality and access: Improve the quality and accessibility of the university's tap water system, encouraging personnel participation in its development.

2.6) Increase green spaces: Plant more trees to enhance the campus environment.

2.7) Improve campus aesthetics: Enhance the overall beauty and appeal of the university campus.

2.8) Expand recreational facilities: Provide more opportunities for physical activity and well-being, such as badminton courts, fitness centers, and aerobics facilities.

2.9) Promote public health: Launch campaigns encouraging smoking cessation and promoting healthier lifestyles.

2.10) Mitigate environmental problems: Address environmental concerns such as air, noise, and dust pollution.

2.11) Foster community sustainability: Contribute to developing a sustainable community.

2.12) Promote professional development: Encourage employee growth through diverse professional development opportunities.
2.13) Promote volunteerism: Foster a culture of volunteerism and ethical conduct.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study employed structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the factors contributing to organizational sustainability at Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University, utilizing the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) lens. Data were collected from 242 academic and support staff members across 33 departments. The analysis incorporated ten variables representing key organizational sustainability components based on SEP: leadership, people management, organizational culture, marketing management, technology and innovation management, knowledge management, financial management, operations and resource management, environmental development, and social development.

The findings demonstrate a strong alignment between the SEP and organizational sustainability within the university context. This aligns with previous research, notably Kantabutra (2011), Thongbunchoo (2014), Amrina & Vilsi (2015), Sthanadar et al. (2016), and Suwannatada (2020), which similarly explored the relationship between SEP and organizational sustainability, particularly within Thai universities. While Kantabutra (2011) identified ten SEP components crucial for private sector sustainability, this study revealed that human resource management and financial management are the most significant predictors of organizational sustainability within the Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University setting. This finding resonates with Phochanakij's (2022) research emphasizing the importance of human resource management in achieving sustainable organizational practices. The university's application of human resource management and financial management aligns with established assessment criteria for educational institutions, reflecting the broader application of SEP principles in learning and organizational management. Consistent with Weber's bureaucratic theory (Weber, 1947), effective human resource management requires clearly defined roles and competencies, focusing on skills and experience.

Furthermore, the study revealed two critical dimensions of environmental sustainability: reducing greenhouse gas emissions through transparently implemented measures and technologies and upholding ecological regulations. These findings corroborate the university's existing risk management plan. However, the reliance on quantitative data limits the study's scope. Future research should incorporate qualitative methods, such as focus groups with university leadership, to provide more comprehensive insights. The study concludes that the application and interpretation of SEP and organizational sustainability principles should be contextualized. Given the UNEP's efforts to support universities in aligning with national sustainability initiatives, a nuanced understanding of organizational contexts, considering internal and external factors and unique operational goals, is crucial for achieving sustainable organizational practices.

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