

The Development of Collaborative Network of College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

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Abstract

The study aims to study the current situation of collaborative networks at the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, and to explore approaches for developing collaborative networks at the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The focus group discussion form was designed to facilitate interviews with 17 key informants. The data were analyzed using content analysis. The results found that building collaboration networks with alumni and MOU-partnered organizations is a strategic focus for sustainable development at the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Alumni networks provide support through scholarships, research funding, and community initiatives, while technology enhances communication and engagement. Encouraging alumni involvement in decision-making and diverse activities strengthens relationships and promotes long-term growth. However, challenges include inconsistent engagement and underutilized technological resources. To address this, the university should adopt CRM-based solutions using AI, Big Data, and automated systems for personalized services and efficient network management. Collaborative networks significantly enhance academic performance by fostering research opportunities, modernizing curricula, and supporting human capital development. They also drive innovation through idea co-creation, resource access, and competitive advantages. Additionally, these networks improve resilience by enabling adaptability, risk diversification, and resource sustainability during crises. However, misuse of power and unresolved conflicts undermine network effectiveness by reducing trust, stifling creativity, and hindering coordination.

Keywords: collaborative network, university, logistics and supply chain

1. Introduction

Collaborative networks, such as MOUs (Memorandums of Understanding), MOAs (Memorandums of Agreement), and alumni networks, play a vital role in the growth and success of a university. These networks strengthen partnerships with academic institutions, industries, and government agencies, enabling resource sharing, joint research, and academic exchanges that enhance the university's academic reputation and global visibility. They also facilitate technology and knowledge transfer, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. Alumni networks, in particular, serve as valuable bridges to professional opportunities, providing mentorship, job placements, and financial support through donations or

sponsorships. Additionally, partnerships through MOUs and MOAs open avenues for international collaborations, student and faculty exchanges, and access to global education opportunities. These networks also align academic programs with market demands, improving graduate employability while promoting community engagement and addressing societal challenges. Overall, collaborative networks enhance the university's brand, financial sustainability, and societal impact, ensuring long-term institutional growth and competitiveness (Wang et al., 2024; Moon, 2022; Aunyawong et al., 2021).

The collaborative networks of the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, may face several challenges that hinder their effectiveness. One potential issue is the lack of consistent communication and coordination between partners, which can lead to misunderstandings and delays in project implementation. Limited financial and human resources may also restrict the scope of partnerships and the ability to maintain long-term collaborations. Furthermore, differing goals and expectations among stakeholders, including academic institutions, industries, and alumni, can create conflicts or reduce the alignment of objectives. Bureaucratic hurdles and regulatory constraints may complicate the formalization of MOUs and MOAs, particularly with international partners. Additionally, insufficient engagement from alumni or a lack of structured mechanisms to leverage their expertise and support can reduce the impact of the network. Finally, the rapidly changing demands of the logistics and supply chain industry may make it challenging to keep collaborative initiatives relevant and aligned with emerging trends and technologies, potentially limiting their value to students and stakeholders (Personal Communication, August 14, 2024). As a result, the study focuses on the current situation and guidelines on collaborative network management at the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

1.1 Research Objective

- 1) To study the current situation of collaborative networks at the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.
- 2) To explore guidelines for developing collaborative networks at the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

2. Methods

The focus group discussion form was designed to facilitate interviews with 17 key informants. The questions included in the focus group discussion form were developed based on prior research conducted between 2020 and 2024 on collaborative networks, utilizing international databases. The form consists of a total of 6 questions divided into two sections: Current situation and needs in the development of collaborative network at College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University plus collaborative networks. The data collection process for this research involves the following steps: First, meetings with relevant persons were conducted to ensure a clear understanding of the research objectives and the questions in the interview guide. This includes prioritizing the questions to prevent confusion regarding the research objectives and limitations. Second, appointments with key informants were scheduled to determine the date, time, location, and format for the focus group discussions. Third, focus group discussion was carried out while verifying the accuracy of the data during the collection process. Forth, the data collected were analyzed from the

focus group discussions using content analysis. Fifth, the results from the data analysis were summarized.

This research employs content analysis by utilizing secondary data collected from documents related to technology and collaborative networks, as well as primary data gathered through focus group discussions. The collected data is analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the studied phenomenon—connecting external networks through the application of an innovation ecosystem and collaborative technology for the development of the university. The analysis process includes categorizing and organizing the data (categories) and indexing it to identify and explain the meaning of patterns observed in the phenomenon. Structural features are analyzed, and the meaning of the phenomenon is interpreted to facilitate the reorganization of the data. Finally, conclusions are drawn regarding the connection of external networks using an innovation ecosystem and collaborative technology for university development, addressing each research objective. The content analysis involves describing and interpreting the phenomena to address the specific research questions outlined in the study.

3. Results and Discussion

The current situation of collaborative networks at the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University from focus group results has represented that building collaboration with alumni networks and MOU-partnered organizations is a key strategy for sustainable development at the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. By fostering positive relationships through various activities, the university strengthens the sense of belonging and pride among alumni. Alumni networks can provide valuable support, such as scholarships, research funding, and community-focused initiatives. Meanwhile, leveraging technology enhances information sharing and communication with these networks efficiently. Encouraging alumni participation in activities, decision-making, and forums for idea exchange further empowers the university's development. Establishing diverse networks with strong leadership and a focus on socially beneficial outcomes promotes long-term sustainability and impactful results. However, the university faces challenges in organizing consistent engagement activities with alumni and MOU-partnered organizations. Additionally, the full potential of technological resources to support sustainable network development has not yet been realized.

To address these gaps, the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University should prioritize the development of technology and networks using CRM-based solutions to improve relationship management with students, alumni, parents, and partners. This includes creating a CRM platform tailored to diverse target groups, employing AI and Big Data for personalized services, and implementing automated communication systems like chatbots and notifications. Furthermore, the university should connect networks with external organizations and alumni, monitor outcomes, and continuously refine its services to foster enduring and meaningful relationships for long-term value. While, Focus group results depicted the impact of collaborative network in various views and the obstacles in developing collaborative network as follows:

3.1 How do collaboration networks impact the academic performance of the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University?

Collaborative networks play a vital role in enhancing the academic performance of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University by promoting research, teaching, and human resource development through partnerships with various sectors, as follows:

Increasing Opportunities for Collaborative Research; Collaborations with educational institutions, government agencies, and the private sector facilitate high-quality joint research, improve access to research funding, and modern technology, thereby enabling the university to produce research that meets societal and industrial needs.

Knowledge and Educational Resource Exchange; Building networks with universities both domestically and internationally provides access to new knowledge for staff and students while promoting personnel exchange and extracurricular activities such as student exchange programs.

Modernizing Curricula to Match Labor Market Demands; Partnerships with industries help identify essential skills and knowledge for the labor market, leading to curriculum improvements, such as adding courses in digital technology, engineering skills, or modern business management.

Student and Human Capital Development; Collaborations with organizations support internships, training, and skill development through workshops, joint research projects, or skill-building activities, enabling students and staff to enhance their expertise across various fields.

Access to Resources and Technology; Network collaborations provide access to resources such as laboratories, research tools, and advanced software, increasing the university's readiness for academic and research activities.

Building Credibility and International Recognition; Collaborations with global universities increase opportunities for publishing research in international journals, enhancing the university's reputation and addressing QS Ranking criteria.

Using Academic Knowledge for Social Problem-Solving; Networks allow the university to apply research and knowledge to solve societal issues, such as community development projects or innovations that improve quality of life.

3.2 How do collaborative innovative networks affect innovative performance of the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University?

Collaborative innovative networks, defined as systems connecting individuals, organizations, or institutions to collectively create, develop, and propose new solutions, impact innovative performance in the following dimensions:

Co-Creation of Ideas; Diverse personnel from academia, industry, and society can exchange different perspectives, fostering creativity and innovative approaches through workshops or hackathons.

Access to Resources and Technology; Partnerships enable access to cutting-edge technology and specialized resources, accelerating the development of quality innovations.

Prototyping and Implementation Opportunities; Collaboration facilitates rapid testing of prototypes in real environments, reducing development risks and enhancing market success rates.

Enhancing Competitiveness; Combining knowledge and resources from network partners creates innovative advantages, boosting market opportunities and expanding the reach of innovations.

Learning and Capability Building; Knowledge-sharing activities within networks, such as technology transfer and training, continually enhance the expertise of personnel involved in innovation.

Sustainability of Innovation; Networks integrate innovation with societal and environmental goals, creating sustainable and widely accepted solutions.

Long-Term Collaboration; Strong networks foster ongoing partnerships, increasing the likelihood of continual innovation development, such as joint innovation centers or industrial clusters.

3.3 How does developing collaborative networks enhance the resilience of the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University?

Developing collaboration networks significantly increases the flexibility and resilience of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University by enabling it to adapt to changes, respond effectively, and achieve sustainability in the following ways:

Adaptability to Change; Networks provide access to critical knowledge and resources, allowing the university to adapt to new situations, such as transitioning to online learning during the COVID-19 crisis.

Risk Diversification; Partnerships with diverse sectors reduce dependence on single resources or expertise, mitigating risks like budget constraints or personnel shortages.

Improved Communication and Decision-Making; Networks enhance internal and external communication, supporting informed and timely decisions.

Financial Flexibility; Partnerships expand funding sources, improving the university's financial management during crises.

Sustainable Relationships; Strong, enduring relationships with alumni and MoU partners can bolster future flexibility.

Innovation for Resilience; Collaborative networks drive innovation that addresses challenges, such as blended learning systems.

3.4 How does power negatively affect the collaborative performance of the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University?

The misuse or inappropriate application of power within collaborative networks can harm performance in several ways:

Internal Conflicts; Centralized power can lead to dissatisfaction and distrust, reducing cooperation among network members.

Unfair Decision-Making; Power imbalance may result in biased decisions, discouraging participation and motivation.

Stifling Creativity; Overly centralized authority may limit input from diverse members, reducing innovation potential.

Resource Concentration; Unequal resource distribution can hinder critical projects and overall collaboration effectiveness.

Lack of Flexibility in Processes; Rigid power structures can slow decision-making and adaptation to changes.

Decreased External Collaboration; Excessive control might discourage external partners from maintaining collaborations.

Lack of Transparency; Non-transparent processes undermine trust and reduce network performance.

3.5 How do conflicts negatively impact the collaborative performance of the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University?

Conflicts within networks can diminish performance in several ways if not effectively managed:

Reduced Trust and Confidence; Conflicts undermine trust, limiting information sharing and cooperation.

Lack of Coordination; Disputes hinder effective teamwork, causing delays and inefficiencies.

Decreased Participation; Members may withdraw from active involvement due to unresolved conflicts.

Resource Waste; Disagreements divert resources from productive collaboration.

Weakened Network Structure; Persistent conflicts may fragment the network, reducing its overall effectiveness.

4. Conclusion

Building collaboration with alumni networks and MOU-partnered organizations is essential for the sustainable development of the College of Logistics and Supply Chain, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. These networks foster alumni pride and engagement, provide vital resources such as scholarships and research funding, and facilitate community initiatives. Leveraging technology enhances communication and information sharing, while alumni involvement in decision-making and activities strengthens relationships and promotes long-term growth. However, challenges include inconsistent engagement and underutilized technology for network development. To address these issues, the university should implement CRM-based solutions, utilizing AI and Big Data for personalized services, creating tailored CRM platforms, and integrating automated communication tools like chatbots. By connecting with external organizations, monitoring outcomes, and refining services, the university can build sustainable, meaningful relationships that support long-term progress (Tirastittam et al. 2020; Waiyawuththanapoom et al., 2022).

Collaborative networks have a profound impact on the academic performance, innovative capacity, resilience, and overall operational effectiveness of the College of Logistics and Supply Chain at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (Aunyawong et al., 2020; Srisawat & Aunyawong, 2021; Sangchareontham & Aunyawong, 2023). These networks enhance academic performance by promoting opportunities for high-quality research, facilitating knowledge exchange, modernizing curricula, and supporting human capital development through internships and resource sharing (Pintuma et al., 2020). Additionally, they improve the university's reputation and global competitiveness while enabling the application of academic knowledge to address societal challenges. Innovative collaborative networks significantly boost innovation by fostering idea co-creation, providing access to advanced resources, accelerating prototype development, and enhancing competitiveness (Kerdpitak et al., 2023; Kerdpitak et al., 2022). These networks encourage knowledge-sharing and sustainability, ensuring long-term benefits for both academic and industrial innovation (Waiyawuththanapoom et al., 2020; Sommanawat et al., 2021). Furthermore, they enable the university to adapt to changes and diversify risks, ensuring resilience and flexibility during crises.

However, the misuse of power within collaborative networks negatively impacts their effectiveness by fostering internal conflicts, stifling creativity, and reducing trust and transparency (Siawsh et al., 2021; Kovacs & Sigala, 2021). Similarly, unresolved conflicts within the networks weaken their structure, hinder coordination, and waste valuable resources. Addressing these challenges requires equitable decision-making, transparent communication, and effective conflict resolution mechanisms to sustain collaboration and maximize the benefits of these networks (Roy et al., 2023; Prakash et al., 2022; Buchanan-Smith (2021).

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