

# Analysis of Motivation for Participation in the International Research Presentation Funding Program for Students Abroad at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

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## Abstract

This study aims to analyze the motivations behind students' participation in the International Research Presentation Funding Program for Students Abroad at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. By employing both quantitative and qualitative research methods, the study explores the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that drive students to apply for funding, as well as the perceived barriers they face in the process. The results reveal that intrinsic motivations, such as academic development and intellectual growth, alongside extrinsic motivations like career advancement and networking opportunities, are primary drivers for student participation. Institutional support, particularly financial aid and faculty mentorship, also plays a crucial role in encouraging participation. However, challenges such as the complexity of the application process and time constraints were identified as significant barriers. This study provides valuable insights into how universities can improve participation in such programs by addressing these barriers and enhancing institutional support. The findings contribute to the broader understanding of student motivations in academic funding programs and offer practical recommendations for enhancing engagement in international research activities.

**Keywords:** Motivation, International Research Presentation, Funding Program, Student Participation, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Principles and Rationale

In the globalized context of higher education, international academic exchanges and research opportunities have become crucial for students seeking to expand their academic and professional horizons. At Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (SSRU), the Faculty of Management Science has implemented the International Research Presentation Funding Program to support students who wish to present their research at international conferences. This program offers financial assistance and logistical support to students, enabling them to engage in scholarly discourse, gain international exposure, and enhance their academic credentials. Despite the program's potential, understanding the motivations that drive student participation remains a critical gap in the literature.

Motivation is a key factor influencing students' decisions to engage in extracurricular academic activities, particularly those with financial and logistical considerations (Techarattanased, 2024). Previous studies have suggested that factors such as academic development, career aspirations, personal growth, and institutional support play significant roles in motivating students to participate in international opportunities (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). However, limited research has focused on understanding the specific motivators for students participating in funding programs for international research presentations in the context of Thai universities.

This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the motivational factors driving student participation in the International Research Presentation Funding Program at SSRU. Through a mixed-methods approach, this research will identify the key motivations, barriers, and institutional supports that influence student participation. The findings will provide insights into how the Faculty of Management Science can enhance the effectiveness of the program, better support student engagement in global academic activities, and contribute to the university's broader goals of fostering research excellence and international collaboration.

## **1.2 Research Objective**

The following specific research objectives are outlined:

1. To identify intrinsic motivational factors that drive students to participate in the international research presentation funding program.
2. To examine how institutional support mechanism influence students' decision to participate.
3. To assess the intrinsic motivational factors for international research presentation influences students' academic engagement.

## **2. Literature Review**

This literature review explores key motivational factors, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, institutional support, and barriers to participation, which are pertinent to understanding student involvement in the International Research Presentation Funding Program at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

### **2.1 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation**

Motivation plays a central role in student engagement in academic programs. According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan (1985), motivation can be categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic types. Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity for the inherent satisfaction and personal growth it provides, while extrinsic motivation involves participating in activities for external rewards or recognition. For students participating in research presentation programs, intrinsic motivators may include the opportunity for academic development, personal satisfaction in presenting their work, and intellectual curiosity. Extrinsic motivations, on the other hand, may include career advancement, institutional recognition, and financial rewards (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

### **2.2 Institutional Support and Barriers**

Institutional support plays a significant role in motivating students to engage in academic programs. Eccles and Wigfield (2002) argue that external factors such as institutional resources, faculty mentorship, and the availability of financial assistance can positively influence students' decisions to participate in academic activities. The International Research Presentation Funding

Program at SSRU offers such institutional support, providing financial assistance to reduce the barriers associated with attending international conferences. However, even with institutional support, barriers such as application complexity, lack of information, and perceptions of inaccessibility can limit student participation (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). Students may also face challenges such as balancing academic workloads, financial constraints, or concerns about the value of the experience (Mowen & Lee, 2001).

### **2.3 The Role of Career Development**

Students' career aspirations are another important motivational factor in academic participation. According to Schunk and Zimmerman (2007), career-related motivations are often central to students' decisions to participate in extracurricular academic activities. Research opportunities at international conferences offer students the chance to network with professionals, gain exposure to cutting-edge research, and improve their job prospects. These external rewards are particularly appealing to students in competitive fields such as business and management, where gaining global experience is often seen as an asset in the job market.

### **2.4 Motivation in the Context of Thai Higher Education**

While much of the literature on student motivation for international academic activities comes from Western contexts, limited research has focused on Thai universities. However, studies by Sriwongchai (2014) have examined the role of motivation in Thai students' participation in academic and research activities. These studies highlight the influence of both academic motivation and financial support in encouraging students to engage in international opportunities. At SSRU, the International Research Presentation Funding Program aligns with these findings by providing not only financial support but also institutional recognition, which can enhance the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of students.

## **3. Research Methodology**

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to analyze the motivational factors influencing students' participation in the International Research Presentation Funding Program at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (SSRU). By integrating both data collection methods, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the motivations, barriers, and institutional support that impact students' decisions to apply for the funding program.

### **3.1 Population and Sample**

The target population for this study comprises students at the Faculty of Management Science at SSRU who are eligible to apply for the International Research Presentation Funding Program. The sample is selected through a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representation from different student groups, including undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students.

A total of 200 students will be selected for the survey, which provides a sufficiently large sample size to ensure statistical reliability. In addition, 15 students will be selected for semi-structured interviews based on their past or current participation in the program, ensuring a diverse representation of experiences. These participants will be recruited from various academic disciplines within the faculty to capture a range of perspectives.

## **3.2 Data Collection Methods**

### **3.2.1 Quantitative Data**

A structured questionnaire will be developed to collect quantitative data on the motivations for participating in the funding program. The questionnaire will be designed to assess intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, perceived benefits, institutional support, and barriers to participation. It will use Likert-scale items, where students will rate their level of agreement with statements regarding various motivational factors. The questionnaire will be pre-tested with a small group of students to ensure reliability and validity. The final version will be administered online to facilitate easy access for participants.

### **3.2.2 Qualitative Data**

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a selected group of 15 students to gather deeper insights into their experiences and motivations for participating in the program. The interviews will be open-ended, allowing participants to share their views on the role of institutional support, career benefits, and personal motivations in their decision to apply for the funding. The interviews will be recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key themes and patterns.

## **3.3 Data Analysis**

### **3.3.1 Quantitative Analysis**

The survey data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, percentages, mean scores) to identify the most prominent motivational factors. Inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis and regression models, will be used to determine relationships between different factors, such as the influence of financial support or career benefits on the likelihood of applying for the funding program.

### **3.3.2 Qualitative Analysis**

The interview data will be analyzed using thematic analysis. This involves identifying recurring themes or patterns in the responses related to motivations, barriers, and support mechanisms. The analysis will focus on identifying the main drivers of motivation, including intrinsic goals such as academic growth and extrinsic rewards such as career advancement or financial support.

## **4. Results**

This section presents the findings from both the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews conducted with students to explore the motivations for participation in the International Research Presentation Funding Program for Students Abroad. The results are analyzed based on intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, perceived barriers, and the role of institutional support.

### **4.1 Quantitative Results**

A total of 200 students participated in the survey. The majority of respondents were undergraduate students (60%), followed by graduate students (30%), and a smaller proportion of doctoral students (10%). The survey results reveal several key motivational factors for participating in the International Research Presentation Funding Program.

#### **4.1.1 Intrinsic Motivation**

When asked about intrinsic motivations, 68% of respondents indicated that they were primarily motivated by the desire to enhance their academic skills and knowledge. The opportunity for intellectual growth and the chance to present original research to an international audience were cited as significant factors. These findings align with Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, where intrinsic motivation drives students to engage in activities that foster personal growth and academic achievement.

#### **4.1.2 Extrinsic Motivation**

Extrinsic motivations were also significant, with 75% of respondents stating that they were motivated by the potential career benefits associated with international exposure. Respondents expressed that presenting at an international conference would improve their resumes and provide networking opportunities with experts and professionals in their field. Financial support was another crucial extrinsic motivator, with 62% of participants acknowledging that funding assistance made it more feasible to participate in such programs.

#### **4.1.3 Institutional Support**

The role of institutional support was highlighted by 70% of participants, who cited the availability of financial aid as a major factor in their decision to apply for the program. Students also emphasized the importance of faculty mentorship, with 58% indicating that support from professors or academic advisors played a key role in motivating them to participate.

#### **4.1.4 Barriers to Participation**

Despite the motivation to participate, several barriers were identified. Approximately 45% of respondents noted that the application process was too complex and time-consuming, which deterred them from applying. Additionally, 35% of respondents mentioned that the perceived cost of attending international conferences was a barrier, even with financial assistance. These findings suggest that while financial aid helps, the process of obtaining funding and approval may remain a hindrance for some students.

### **4.2 Qualitative Results**

In-depth interviews were conducted with 15 students who had either participated in or were interested in the funding program. The thematic analysis of the interview responses revealed several key themes:

#### **4.2.1 Academic Development**

Students expressed a strong desire for academic growth as a primary motivator. Many interviewees highlighted the opportunity to receive feedback from international experts as a major factor influencing their decision to apply for the funding program. One participant noted, "Presenting my research abroad helped me refine my ideas and exposed me to new perspectives in my field of study."

#### **4.2.2 Career Advancement**

Another common theme was the potential for career advancement. Several students indicated that the experience of presenting research at an international conference would increase their visibility in the academic community and provide valuable networking opportunities. One student mentioned, "Networking with professionals and professors at the conference could open doors for future job opportunities and research collaborations."

### 4.2.3 Institutional Support and Mentorship

Students consistently noted the importance of financial support and guidance from faculty. Many indicated that the financial assistance provided by the program was essential, and several participants emphasized that faculty members were crucial in guiding them through the application process. "The support from my professors made me feel more confident about applying. They helped me with the application details and provided advice on how to present my research effectively."

### 4.2.4 Barriers to Participation

In addition to the financial concerns raised in the survey, interviewees mentioned logistical challenges such as time constraints, especially for students balancing academic workloads with personal responsibilities. One participant noted, "It's hard to find time to work on the presentation while managing other coursework, and sometimes it feels like a big commitment for just one conference."

## 5. Conclusion

This study has explored the motivational factors that influence students' participation in the International Research Presentation Funding Program at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The research findings reveal a complex interplay of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, institutional support, and perceived barriers that impact students' decisions to apply for this funding program.

The study identified that intrinsic motivations, such as the desire for academic development and intellectual growth, play a significant role in encouraging students to participate. Furthermore, extrinsic factors such as career advancement opportunities and networking prospects were found to be crucial in motivating students to engage in the program. These findings align with the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), which suggests that intrinsic motivations drive academic behavior and achievement. Additionally, the financial support provided by the program was a key extrinsic motivator, with many students indicating that the availability of funding made participation feasible.

Institutional support, particularly faculty mentorship, emerged as a critical factor in fostering student participation. The guidance and encouragement from faculty members not only provided students with the confidence to apply but also helped them navigate the application process. This emphasizes the importance of strong academic mentorship in motivating students to take part in research activities and international conferences (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

However, the study also revealed several barriers to participation. The complexity of the application process and time constraints were significant deterrents for some students. These barriers highlight areas for improvement, such as simplifying the application procedure and providing more flexibility to accommodate students' academic workloads.

In conclusion, while the International Research Presentation Funding Program offers significant academic and career benefits, it is essential for the university to address the identified barriers to increase student participation. Future research should explore ways to streamline the application process and enhance support structures to ensure that all eligible students have the opportunity to benefit from the program. Additionally, further studies could examine how these findings relate to students from other faculties or universities to broaden the understanding of student motivations in the context of international academic programs.

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