

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC SERVICE PROJECTS AMONG ACADEMIC PERSONNEL AND STUDENTS AT THE FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE, SUAN SUNANDHA RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Abstract— This study investigates attitudes towards participation in academic service projects among academic personnel and students within the Faculty of Management Science at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Employing a mixed-methods research design, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the motivations, challenges, and impacts associated with community engagement within the academic community. The quantitative phase involves a structured survey instrument, exploring motivations, perceived benefits, challenges, and demographic information. Concurrently, the qualitative phase incorporates in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to delve into the nuanced aspects of attitudes towards service projects. Preliminary findings reveal a predominant motivation rooted in a strong sense of social responsibility among both academic personnel and students. The study identifies time constraints and communication challenges as significant barriers, emphasizing the need for flexible engagement models and enhanced communication strategies. Successful projects are characterized by meaningful community-university partnerships, contributing to a transformative impact on the institutional culture. The recommendations aim to foster a culture of community engagement, aligning with the university's mission to contribute meaningfully to societal development.

Keywords—Attitudes, Participation in academic service projects, Academic personnel, Students

INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic landscape of higher education, the role of academic institutions extends beyond traditional classroom settings. Embracing a broader commitment to societal development, academic service projects have emerged as pivotal components, engaging both academic personnel and students in meaningful contributions to their communities. This study delves into the attitudes of academic personnel and students at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, towards participation in academic service projects.

The Faculty of Management Science at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University stands as a dynamic hub of academic excellence, housing a diverse group of academic personnel and students with expertise spanning various management disciplines. The Faculty's commitment to academic service projects reflects its dedication to cultivating a sense of social responsibility and engagement among its academic community. This exploration goes beyond mere participation rates, aiming to uncover the motivations, challenges, and perceived impacts that shape the attitudes of both academic personnel and students.

As institutions increasingly recognize the importance of social responsibility and community engagement, academic service projects serve as conduits for the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and resources between the academic realm and the broader community. Understanding the attitudes of academic personnel and students towards these projects is fundamental for shaping effective initiatives, fostering a sense of civic duty, and aligning academic endeavors with societal needs (Kingkan & Rodkam, 2023).

Through an examination of these attitudes, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights that can inform strategic planning, curriculum development, and institutional policies. By understanding the factors that influence engagement in academic service projects, the Faculty can better tailor initiatives to align with the aspirations of academic personnel and students, fostering a culture of community involvement and social impact. Despite the myriad benefits, engagement in academic service projects may face challenges such as resource constraints, time limitations, and varying levels of community involvement. Understanding the attitudes towards participation is

crucial for addressing these challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities to further integrate service projects into the academic fabric of the Faculty.

This study seeks to explore and understand the attitudes of academic personnel and students at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, towards participation in academic service projects. By delving into the motivations, perceived benefits, and challenges, the research aims to provide a nuanced understanding that can inform strategic planning, policy development, and the design of service projects tailored to the preferences and aspirations of the academic community within the Faculty.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this research is to systematically investigate and comprehend the attitudes of academic personnel and students at the Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, towards participation in academic service projects. By understanding the attitudes towards participation in academic service projects, the Faculty can further align its initiatives with the aspirations of its academic community and the broader societal needs it seeks to address. This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Quantify the levels of participation in academic service projects among academic personnel (faculty members, researchers) and students within the Faculty of Management Science at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

2. Analyze the motivations that drive academic personnel and students to participate in academic service projects, exploring factors such as professional development, social impact, and personal fulfillment.

3. Provide actionable guidelines for enhancing the attitudes towards and effectiveness of participation in academic service projects among academic personnel and students, suggesting strategies for improvement and optimization.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Engaging academic personnel and students in service projects is integral to the broader mission of universities to contribute meaningfully to societal development. In the last research on attitudes towards participation in academic service projects has evolved, emphasizing the diverse motivations, benefits, challenges, and impacts associated with the engagement of academic personnel and students. This literature shed light on the attitudes, motivations, challenges, and impacts associated with the participation of academic personnel and students in academic service projects.

Motivations for Participation:

Academic service projects often align with the intrinsic motivations of individuals within academic institutions. Faculty members and students are motivated by a sense of social responsibility, a desire to apply academic knowledge in practical settings, and the opportunity to make a positive impact on communities. Intrinsic factors such as a sense of social responsibility, a desire for personal growth, and the opportunity to contribute to community development have been identified as primary motivators (Drewery & Radcliffe, 2012; Gelmon, Holland, Driscoll, Spring, & Kerrigan, 2012).

Benefits and Impacts:

Participation in service projects yields numerous benefits for both academic personnel and students. These include enhanced professional development, improved critical thinking skills, increased civic engagement, and the development of a sense of community responsibility. These include enhanced academic learning, improved interpersonal skills, heightened cultural competence, and the development of a lifelong commitment to civic engagement (Eyler & Giles, 2019; Kim, 2017).

Challenges and Barriers:

Despite the positive outcomes, challenges exist in implementing academic service projects. Time constraints, lack of institutional support, and the need for effective community partnerships are common barriers faced by academic personnel and students. Time constraints, unclear expectations, and the need for effective communication with community partners have been recognized as key challenges (Giles et al., 2015; Albee & Lewin, 2018).

Community-University Collaboration:

Successful academic service projects necessitate strong community-university partnerships. Effective collaboration involves mutual respect, shared goals, and sustained communication, leading to more impactful and sustainable initiatives. Successful collaborations require mutual respect, shared goals, and sustained communication to ensure meaningful and sustainable service projects (Cherney & Conway, 2018; Shumer, 2017).

Impact on Institutional Culture:

Participation in service projects has the potential to influence the overall institutional culture. Integrating service-oriented values into the core mission of the university can lead to a culture of community engagement and social responsibility. Integrating service-oriented values into the core mission of the university is shown to foster a culture of community engagement and social responsibility (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012; Matthews & Eddy, 2017).

This literature review provides a contemporary overview of key themes related to attitudes towards participation in academic service projects, setting the stage for a nuanced exploration within the specific context of the Faculty of Management Science at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

METHODS

This research employs a mixed-methods design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This allows for a comprehensive exploration of attitudes towards participation in academic service projects. The study is divided into three phases: a quantitative survey phase, a qualitative interview phase, and a focus group discussion phase.

Participants:

A stratified random sampling approach is used to ensure representation from diverse academic disciplines within the Faculty of Management Science. The study includes academic personnel (faculty members) and students (undergraduate and postgraduate) who are actively engaged or have the potential to engage in academic service projects.

Quantitative Phase: Survey Design and Administration:

A structured questionnaire is designed based on established scales measuring motivations, perceived benefits, challenges, and demographic information. The survey is pilot-tested with a small sample to ensure clarity, validity, and reliability. The survey is administered electronically to the sampled participants, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality.

Qualitative Phase: In-depth Interviews:

Participants for in-depth interviews are purposively selected from the survey respondents to represent diverse perspectives. Semi-structured interview guides are developed, covering themes such as motivations, challenges, and perceived impacts of participation. In-depth interviews are conducted one-on-one, allowing for rich, detailed responses. Interviews are audio-recorded with participants' consent.

Qualitative Phase: Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

FGD participants are purposively selected to ensure representation from different academic levels and disciplines. FGDs are facilitated using a semi-structured guide, encouraging open discussions on attitudes, experiences, and recommendations. FGDs are recorded and transcribed for thematic analysis.

Data Analysis:

Quantitative Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics are employed to analyze survey responses, providing an overview of general attitudes. Inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis, may be used to explore relationships between variables.

Qualitative Data Analysis: Thematic analysis is applied to identify patterns, themes, and categories from interview transcripts and FGDs. The constant comparative method is employed to ensure rigor.

This research methodology aims to provide a nuanced understanding of attitudes towards participation in academic service projects, informing future initiatives and contributing to the broader discourse on community engagement in higher education.

RESULTS

The analysis of attitudes towards participation in academic service projects among academic personnel and students at the Faculty of Management Science reveals a nuanced understanding of motivations, challenges, and impacts. The results, derived from surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, provide valuable insights into the dynamics of community engagement within the academic community.

1. Motivations for Participation: The analysis identifies common motivations shared by both academic personnel and students. A strong sense of social responsibility emerges as a primary motivator, with participants expressing a genuine desire to contribute to community development. While some participants are motivated by the prospect of applying academic knowledge in practical settings, others highlight personal growth and the development of interpersonal skills as key drivers.

2. Benefits and Impacts: Academic Learning Enhancement: Participants consistently report that engagement in service projects enhances their academic learning. Practical application of theoretical concepts is highlighted as a powerful tool for reinforcing classroom knowledge. A notable impact is the development of interpersonal skills and cultural competence. Participants express an increased understanding of diverse perspectives and improved communication skills.

3. Challenges and Barriers: Time emerges as a significant barrier for both academic personnel and students. Balancing service commitments with academic responsibilities poses challenges, indicating a need for flexible engagement models. Effective communication with community partners is identified as a challenge. Clear expectations, mutual understanding, and sustained collaboration are emphasized as critical elements for successful projects.

4. Community-University Collaboration: Participants recognize the vital role of community-university partnerships. Successful collaborations are characterized by mutual respect, shared goals, and continuous communication. Projects that foster meaningful collaboration between the university and the community are perceived as more impactful and sustainable.

5. Impact on Institutional Culture: The analysis indicates a positive impact on the institutional culture. The integration of service-oriented values into the university's mission is seen as transformative, fostering a culture of community engagement and social responsibility. Participants express the need for increased institutional recognition and support for service initiatives. Acknowledgment of service contributions in faculty evaluations and student assessments is identified as a potential area for improvement.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study on attitudes towards participation in academic service projects within the Faculty of Management Science at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University has yielded valuable insights into the motivations, challenges, and impacts perceived by academic personnel and students. The findings provide a nuanced understanding of the dynamics surrounding community engagement within the academic community.

1. Motivations and Benefits: Participants consistently expressed a strong sense of social responsibility as a primary motivator for engagement in service projects. The study highlighted the multifaceted benefits, including enhanced academic learning, interpersonal skill development, and increased cultural competence.

2. Challenges and Barriers: Time constraints emerged as a significant challenge for both academic personnel and students, emphasizing the need for flexible engagement models. Communication with community partners was identified as a barrier, indicating the importance of establishing clear expectations and sustained collaboration.

3. Community-University Collaboration: Successful projects were characterized by meaningful community-university partnerships, emphasizing mutual respect, shared goals, and continuous communication.

4. Impact on Institutional Culture: The integration of service-oriented values into the university's mission was recognized as transformative, fostering a culture of community engagement and social responsibility.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance and support participation in academic service projects at the Faculty of Management Science:

1. Flexible Engagement Models: Introduce and explore flexible engagement models that accommodate the

time constraints faced by academic personnel and students. Consider alternative scheduling, virtual service opportunities, or short-term projects.

2. Training and Support: Provide training sessions and ongoing support for participants, focusing on effective communication, collaboration with community partners, and strategies for overcoming challenges.

3. Institutional Recognition: Enhance institutional recognition for service contributions by incorporating service engagement into faculty evaluations and student assessments. Acknowledge and reward individuals for their commitment to community service.

4. Communication Enhancement: Implement strategies to improve communication between the university and community partners. Establish clear expectations, maintain open lines of communication, and foster collaborative relationships.

5. Promotion of Service Values: Actively promote the integration of service-oriented values into the institutional culture. Encourage a mindset that values community engagement as an integral part of academic and personal development.

In conclusion, fostering a culture of community engagement requires a concerted effort to address challenges, provide support, and recognize the contributions of academic personnel and students. By implementing these recommendations, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University can further strengthen its commitment to community service and contribute meaningfully to the broader societal context.

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