

# Motivational Factors Affecting Participation in the Academic Service Project among Residents of Dusit District, Bangkok

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## Abstract

This study investigates the motivational factors influencing participation in the academic service project among residents of Dusit District, Bangkok. The research aims to identify the extent to which intrinsic motivation, extrinsic incentives, social influence, and perceived community benefit affect residents' willingness to engage in university-led service activities. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 320 residents through questionnaires and interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis, while qualitative responses were examined to provide contextual insights. The findings reveal that intrinsic motivation—particularly personal fulfillment, learning opportunities, and interest in community development—serves as the strongest predictor of participation. Social influence, including support from community leaders and peer encouragement, also significantly contributes to participation levels. Extrinsic incentives play a moderate yet meaningful role, while perceived community benefit strongly enhances engagement intentions. Overall, the study highlights the need for academic service programs to prioritize intrinsic and community-centered motivations while strengthening communication channels and community partnerships. These results offer practical guidelines for universities and local authorities seeking to improve participation in academic service projects and foster sustainable community development.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Participation, Academic service project, Community engagement

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Principles and Rationale

Academic service projects have become an essential mechanism through which universities contribute to community development, social improvement, and lifelong learning. As higher education institutions expand their roles beyond teaching and research, community engagement has emerged as a critical mission that strengthens university–community relationships and enhances local well-being (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). Participation from community members is a key determinant of the effectiveness and sustainability of such projects, as local engagement ensures that initiatives address real needs and generate meaningful outcomes (Promkul & Seskhumbong, 2025).

Motivation plays a central role in influencing individuals' willingness to participate in community-based programs. Theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and self-determination theory suggest that individuals are driven by a combination of intrinsic and

extrinsic factors, including personal growth, social connection, and perceived benefits (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Maslow, 1987). In the context of community participation, motivation can stem from social responsibility, access to learning opportunities, trust in the organizing institution, and expectations of improved quality of life (Wilson, 2012). Understanding these motivations is essential for designing programs that resonate with community members and encourage sustained involvement.

In Bangkok's Dusit District, the involvement of residents in academic service projects organized by local universities—such as Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University—varies depending on socio-demographic factors, community needs, and perceived project relevance. Previous studies in Thailand indicate that community engagement is strongly shaped by perceived usefulness, convenience, cultural values, and the credibility of the organizing institution (Chummee & Boonmee, 2021; Ketsing & Wongwanich, 2019). However, research specifically focused on motivational factors affecting participation in Dusit District is limited.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the motivational factors that influence residents' participation in academic service projects in the Dusit District of Bangkok. Insights from this research can support universities in developing more effective engagement strategies, improving project design, and strengthening long-term collaboration with the local community.

## **1.2 Research Objective**

The following specific research objectives are outlined:

1. To examine the level of participation of residents in the academic service project in Dusit District, Bangkok.
2. To identify the motivational factors both intrinsic and extrinsic—that influence residents' participation in the academic service project.
3. To analyze the relationship between motivational factors and the degree of resident participation in the academic service project.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical foundations of motivation for community participation**

Motivation research provides the theoretical backbone for understanding why people join and sustain involvement in community and university-led projects. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) distinguishes between intrinsic motivations (autonomy, competence, relatedness) and extrinsic motivations (external rewards, recognition), and shows how social-contextual factors either support or undermine intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). SDT has been widely applied to explain participation in volunteerism, service learning, and community engagement because it clarifies how internal drives (e.g., personal growth, solidarity) and external incentives (e.g., certificates, stipends) interact to shape behavior.

Maslow's needs framework (e.g., belongingness, esteem) and social-exchange perspectives supplement SDT by emphasizing how perceived benefits and reciprocal relationships (what participants receive in return) influence decisions to participate (Maslow, 1987; Wilson, 2012). Together, these theories suggest that effective academic service projects must address both inner motivations (learning, meaning) and practical/external motivators (recognition, convenience) to attract and retain community members.

## **2.2 Typologies of motivation relevant to academic service projects**

Empirical and theoretical work on volunteerism and community participation converges on a few recurring motivational categories relevant to academic service projects: (a) altruistic or civic motives (helping others, social responsibility); (b) self-development motives (learning, skill acquisition, personal growth); (c) social motives (meeting people, belonging); (d) instrumental/extrinsic motives (material benefits, certificates, career advantage); and (e) institutional trust and perceived credibility (willingness to participate when the organizer is trusted). Studies of volunteers and service-learning participants show these motifs repeatedly, and indicate that their relative importance varies by context and population (Wilson, 2012; Chutipongdech et al., 2024).

## **2.3 Empirical evidence from Thailand: volunteer motivation & community participation**

A growing body of Thai research examines motivations for volunteering and community engagement across domains (disaster relief, health programs, sports events, university service learning). Recent studies show that Thai participants often combine civic duty and social benefits with practical considerations such as convenience, perceived usefulness, and institutional reputation (Chutipongdech et al., 2024). For example, research on volunteer motivations within Thai organizations highlights intrinsic satisfaction and social connection as strong drivers, while organizational support and recognition increase retention.

Specific to Bangkok and nearby areas, several recent studies have addressed community participation in development and learning projects. Research conducted within Dusit District (and adjacent Bangkok communities) indicates that local participation is influenced by awareness of programs, perceived relevance to residents' needs, accessibility of events, and trust in the organizing body (Pinsagul et al., 2025; Phukamchanoat, 2023). Community projects that used participatory design methods (e.g., design thinking, Appreciative Influence Control) reported higher engagement when residents saw tangible benefits (skills training, health promotion) and when the project design respected local schedules and customs.

## **2.4 Academic service / service-learning and university–community relations in Thailand**

Universities pursuing University Social Responsibility (USR) and service-learning typically frame academic service projects as mutually beneficial: students gain practical experience while communities gain access to knowledge and services (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Denpaiboon, 2018). Thai universities (e.g., Mahidol, KMUTT, local Rajabhat universities) have adopted workshops and curricula to strengthen service learning and community engagement; institutional credibility and clear communication are repeatedly identified as prerequisites for sustained community participation (MUIC materials; KMUTT reporting). Projects that embed community voice in planning and evaluation tend to achieve better participation and outcomes.

The literature indicates a multifaceted motivational landscape where intrinsic drives (learning, meaning), social ties, perceived benefits, convenience, institutional trust, and extrinsic incentives jointly influence participation. Self-Determination Theory offers a robust theoretical frame to interpret these drivers, while Thailand-specific studies point to cultural and logistical factors (trust, local relevance) that must be addressed. The current study will apply

these insights to the Dusit District context, using a mixed-methods approach to produce practical recommendations for improving resident participation in academic service projects.

### 3. Research Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively assess motivational factors influencing resident participation in an academic service project. The quantitative component measured levels of motivation and participation using structured questionnaires, while the qualitative component explored deeper contextual insights through semi-structured interviews. The combination of methods enhances validity and provides a robust understanding of community engagement behaviors.

#### 3.1 Population and Sample

The population consisted of residents of Dusit District, Bangkok, where Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University conducts its academic service activities. A sample size of 350 residents was determined appropriate based on Cochran's sampling formula for an unknown population proportion, ensuring adequate statistical representation (Cochran, 1977). A stratified sampling technique was used to ensure proportional representation across sub-districts, age groups, and occupations. For the qualitative phase, 15 key informants—community leaders, active project participants, and representatives from local organizations—were selected through purposive sampling, consistent with qualitative research norms.

#### 3.2 Research Instruments

The questionnaire consisted of four sections:

- Demographic information
- Level of project participation
- Motivational factors (intrinsic, extrinsic, social, perceived benefits, and trust)
- Barriers to participation

Items measuring motivation were adapted from existing validated scales in volunteer and community engagement research (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Wilson, 2012). A five-point Likert scale was employed to assess perceived motivation and participation levels. Content validity was examined by three experts in community development and academic service, and the instrument was refined based on their feedback. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha yielded coefficients above 0.80, indicating high internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

##### 3.2.2 Semi-structured

Interview questions explored residents' experiences, perceived benefits, expectations, and constraints regarding participation in academic service projects. This tool allowed flexibility and depth, adhering to guidelines for qualitative interviewing (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

#### 3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection began after obtaining ethical approval from Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University's research ethics committee. Questionnaires were distributed both online and through paper-based surveys to increase accessibility and participation rates. Respondents were given a four-week period to complete the survey, with clear assurances of anonymity and

voluntary participation, which is essential for ethical community-based research. Interviews were conducted in person with selected participants and audio-recorded with consent.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

#### 3.4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics such as Pearson’s correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis were used to identify relationships between motivational factors and participation levels. These techniques are widely recommended for behavioral and social science research.

#### 3.4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the phases outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), including coding, theme generation, and interpretation. Triangulation was applied to integrate quantitative and qualitative findings, enhancing overall credibility.

## 4. Results

A total of 350 residents participated in the study. The demographic profile showed that the majority were female (58%), followed by male respondents (42%). Most participants were between 26–45 years old, representing 62% of the sample, consistent with prior research showing that adults in this age group tend to engage more actively in community development initiatives. Occupational backgrounds included small business owners (30%), private-sector employees (28%), government workers (18%), students (12%), and others (12%). These diverse demographics support the representativeness of the sample across Dusit District.

### 4.1 Descriptive Analysis

The analysis examines overall participation levels, as well as intrinsic, extrinsic, and social motivations, perceived benefits, and trust in the institution, providing insights into the drivers of community involvement in university-led initiatives.

**Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Participation and Motivational Factors in the Academic Service Project**

Variable / Factor	Mean	SD
Overall Participation	3.72	0.65
Intrinsic Motivation	3.95	0.58
Extrinsic Motivation	3.61	0.72
Social Motivation	3.88	0.64
Perceived Benefits	4.02	0.55
Trust in the Institution	3.90	0.60

The descriptive analysis of participation and motivational factors in the academic service project indicates a generally moderate-to-high level of engagement among residents. Overall participation received a mean score of 3.72 (SD = 0.65), showing that most residents actively

engaged in project activities, particularly attending training workshops and seeking community-related information provided by the university.

Among motivational factors, intrinsic motivation scored 3.95 (SD = 0.58), highlighting that personal interest, community pride, and the desire for self-development were strong drivers of participation. Extrinsic motivation had a mean of 3.61 (SD = 0.72), suggesting that external incentives, such as certificates or material rewards, contributed to engagement but were less influential compared to intrinsic factors.

Social motivation was rated at 3.88 (SD = 0.64), indicating that residents valued opportunities for networking, social interaction, and contributing to collective well-being. Perceived benefits emerged as the highest-rated factor with a mean of 4.02 (SD = 0.55), reflecting residents' recognition that participation improved their knowledge, enhanced community resources, and increased access to educational support. Finally, trust in the institution scored 3.90 (SD = 0.60), suggesting that credibility and confidence in Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University strongly motivated residents to participate in the academic service initiatives.

Overall, these results demonstrate that participation is driven primarily by intrinsic factors, perceived benefits, and institutional trust, while external rewards play a secondary role. The combination of personal, social, and institutional motivators helps explain the moderate-to-high engagement observed in the community.

### 4.3 Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis found significant positive relationships between motivational factors and participation level:

- Perceived benefits had the strongest correlation ( $r = .62, p < .01$ ).
- Intrinsic motivation showed a moderate correlation ( $r = .54, p < .01$ ).
- Social motivation correlated positively ( $r = .50, p < .01$ ).
- Trust in the institution demonstrated a notable relationship ( $r = .48, p < .01$ ).
- Extrinsic motivation had the weakest but still significant correlation ( $r = .32, p < .05$ ).

These findings support motivation theories emphasizing that internal satisfaction, perceived usefulness, and institutional trust are central drivers of voluntary participation.

### 4.4 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis revealed that perceived benefits ( $\beta = .41$ ), intrinsic motivation ( $\beta = .32$ ), and trust in the institution ( $\beta = .26$ ) were significant predictors of participation ( $p < .01$ ). Extrinsic motivation ( $\beta = .12$ ) and social motivation ( $\beta = .15$ ) were weaker predictors but remained statistically significant. The model accounted for 52% of the variance in participation level ( $R^2 = .52$ ), indicating a strong predictive capability consistent with similar studies of community engagement.

## 5. Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that motivational factors—including intrinsic motivation, extrinsic incentives, social influence, and perceived community benefit—play a significant role in shaping residents' participation in academic service projects in Dusit District, Bangkok. Intrinsic factors such as personal fulfillment, learning opportunities, and interest in

community development were found to be the strongest predictors of participation, aligning with self-determination theory, which highlights autonomy and internal satisfaction as key drivers of voluntary engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Extrinsic motivators, including recognition and tangible benefits, also contributed to participation, although to a lesser extent, supporting previous research showing that incentives can enhance engagement when aligned with personal values (Herzberg, 2017).

Furthermore, social influence including encouragement from community leaders, peers, and family significantly affected participation levels, consistent with earlier studies on community engagement emphasizing the role of collective norms. Residents who perceived the academic service project as beneficial to community well-being showed higher willingness to participate, reinforcing the importance of perceived impact as a motivating factor (Kang & Sung, 2019).

Overall, the study concludes that enhancing participation requires a strategic focus on fostering intrinsic motivation, strengthening community networks, communicating project benefits clearly, and providing supportive incentives. These insights offer valuable implications for universities and local administrations in designing academic service initiatives that effectively engage community members and foster long-term partnerships.

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