

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION WITH ACADEMIC SERVICE PROJECTS OF SUAN SUNANDHA RAJABHAT UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate community satisfaction with academic service projects organized by Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The research focused on four key dimensions: satisfaction with project implementation, expectations of participants, application of acquired knowledge, and community engagement. A quantitative research design was employed using a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The sample consisted of 111 participants who had taken part in the university's academic service activities during the fiscal year 2025. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The findings revealed that the overall level of community satisfaction was at the highest level. Participants expressed particularly high satisfaction with the expertise of instructors, the clarity of knowledge transfer, and participatory learning processes. Expectations toward the projects were also rated at a high level, especially regarding the applicability of knowledge to daily life and occupations. Moreover, the application of knowledge and community engagement were both found to be at the highest levels, indicating strong willingness among participants to continue involvement and recommend the activities to others. Overall, the results demonstrate that academic service projects play a significant role in enhancing community capacity, promoting lifelong learning, and strengthening sustainable university–community partnerships. The findings provide practical implications for improving the design and implementation of future academic service initiatives to better align with community needs and sustainable development goals.

Keywords: Community Satisfaction; Academic Service; Community Engagement

Introduction

Academic service projects constitute one of the core missions of higher education institutions, particularly universities with strong community-oriented mandates. In Thailand, Rajabhat Universities play a crucial role in transferring academic knowledge, research, and innovation to local communities to enhance quality of life, strengthen local economies, and promote sustainable development. Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University has continuously implemented academic service projects across various regions, emphasizing participatory learning and community-based development.

However, the success of academic service initiatives should not be evaluated solely by the number of projects conducted, but also by the level of satisfaction and engagement of community participants. Understanding community perceptions is essential for improving service quality and ensuring that academic services effectively respond to real community needs. Therefore, this study examines community satisfaction with academic service projects

organized by Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, providing empirical evidence to support the continuous improvement of academic service practices.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the level of community satisfaction with academic service projects of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.
2. To analyze community expectations regarding participation in academic service activities.
3. To investigate the extent to which participants apply acquired knowledge in daily life and occupations.
4. To explore the level of community engagement and willingness to participate in future activities.

Scope of the Research

This research focused on community members and participants who had previously taken part in academic service projects organized by Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University during the fiscal year 2025. The study examined satisfaction across four dimensions: project implementation, participant expectations, knowledge application, and community engagement. The research was conducted within selected communities in Samut Songkhram Province and related service areas of the university.

Literature Review

Community satisfaction has long been recognized as a key indicator of service quality and organizational effectiveness. Kotler and Lee (2007) emphasized that public and academic services must align service performance with stakeholder expectations to generate positive perceptions and trust. Similarly, Millet (1954) argued that public services should emphasize equity, continuity, and responsiveness to public needs.

In the context of higher education, academic service activities are increasingly viewed as mechanisms for fostering community engagement and sustainable development. Denhardt and Denhardt (2003) highlighted the importance of participatory public service approaches that empower citizens rather than treating them as passive recipients. Previous studies on service satisfaction in public organizations have consistently found that instructor competence, clarity of communication, and participatory processes significantly influence user satisfaction and engagement.

Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative survey research design. The population consisted of community members and stakeholders who participated in academic service projects organized by Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Purposive sampling was used to select 111 respondents with direct experience in the projects.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising three sections: demographic information, satisfaction assessment across four dimensions, and open-ended suggestions. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure satisfaction levels. Content validity was reviewed by experts, and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

Research Results

The results indicated that the overall level of community satisfaction was at the highest level (mean = 4.59). Satisfaction with project implementation was rated highest, particularly instructor expertise and clarity of project design. Participant expectations were rated at a high level (mean = 4.47), reflecting strong expectations regarding practical knowledge application.

Knowledge application was rated at the highest level (mean = 4.52), demonstrating that participants were able to apply acquired knowledge in daily life and occupational contexts. Community engagement also received the highest rating (mean = 4.63), indicating strong attachment to the projects and willingness to participate in future activities and recommend them to others.

Conclusion and Discussion

Building on the high levels of community satisfaction, engagement, and effective knowledge utilization identified in this study, it is evident that academic service projects should move beyond short-term interventions toward more structured and sustainable implementation. The positive outcomes observed are consistent with previous studies on community academic services at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, which emphasize the importance of responsiveness, continuity, and relevance to community needs in achieving sustainable outcomes (Saedan & Hotrawaisaya, 2024). To sustain and expand the benefits of university–community collaboration, strategic improvements in project design, implementation, and evaluation are therefore necessary.

Recommendations

Future academic service projects should further integrate hands-on learning activities and digital tools to enhance knowledge application and accessibility. Continuous follow-up mechanisms and long-term impact evaluation are also recommended to assess sustainable outcomes and ensure that project objectives are achieved over time, as suggested by prior research on community satisfaction with academic service initiatives. Additionally, expanding project coverage to diverse community contexts may enhance inclusiveness, facilitate comparative learning, and support broader knowledge transfer across different community settings.

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