

Factors Affecting the Implementation of Academic Service Projects on the Development of Educational Innovators of the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the impact of the academic service project of the Faculty of Education on teachers, mentors, alumni, and student teachers. The sample consisted of 875 participants, the majority of whom were female (58.17%) and under 25 years old (93.14%), with most being third-year students (49.14%) and having no prior participation in the project (72.23%).

The results indicated that the institution played a significant role in supporting policies and managing the project systematically and continuously ($\bar{x} = 4.83$, S.D. = 0.42). Regarding personnel, faculty members, students, and teachers were found to be crucial in implementing the project effectively ($\bar{x} = 4.36$, S.D. = 0.79), with faculty members demonstrating the highest competence in organizing academic service activities, while student participation still required enhancement. The project had a positive impact on teachers, mentors, and alumni, enhancing their knowledge, innovative thinking skills, and ability to design and utilize educational media ($\bar{x} = 4.60$ – 4.74). Similarly, student teachers improved teamwork, problem-solving skills ($\bar{x} = 4.63$), and educational innovation skills ($\bar{x} = 4.78$), and developed awareness of their role in community development ($\bar{x} = 4.79$).

In conclusion, the academic service project positively affected all participant groups, fostering knowledge, skills, attitudes, and social responsibility, thereby enhancing their capacity to apply knowledge and innovations to improve teaching quality and community development.

Keywords: Strategy, Educational Innovator, Academic Service Project

1. Introduction

His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua graciously bestowed an educational royal policy with the ultimate goal of nurturing Thai citizens who possess four essential qualities: appropriate attitudes and values, a stable foundation for life, meaningful occupations, and the discipline to become responsible citizens. This royal initiative has become a fundamental pillar in strengthening the nation's stability and sustainable development.

In response to this policy, the Rajabhat Universities have established the 20-Year Strategic Plan for Local Development (2017–2036), which comprises four strategic areas: (1) local development, (2) teacher production and development, (3) educational quality

enhancement, and (4) institutional management development. This plan serves as a key framework to guide the universities in fulfilling their missions related to local development, academic services, and educational advancement in alignment with the 20-Year National Strategy of Thailand.

The Faculty of Education, as a core institution for producing teachers and educational personnel, plays a pivotal role in fostering teacher quality, preparing student-teachers, and supporting schools within local communities. Academic service projects under the Faculty are not only designed to disseminate knowledge but also serve as critical mechanisms to develop educational innovators—individuals equipped with creative thinking, technological competence, and research-based approaches to design educational innovations that meet the needs of learners and society. Theories such as Rogers’ Diffusion of Innovations (2003) and Bandura’s Self-Efficacy Theory (1997) highlight the central role of innovators in driving change and emphasize the necessity of social support and practical application for innovation development.

However, the effectiveness of academic service projects depends on multiple factors, including institutional policy and support (Wang & Sedivy-Benton, 2016), the capacity of personnel and learners (Supawadee Sriwiset, 2019), sufficient budget and resources (Bamber, 2019), as well as active participation from communities and educational networks (UNESCO, 2017). Without a balance of these factors, projects may lack sustainability and fail to generate long-term impact.

Accordingly, this research aims to examine the factors influencing the implementation of academic service projects of the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, under the 20-Year Rajabhat University Strategic Plan for Local Development. The study emphasizes the development of educational innovators and evaluates the impacts of such projects on teachers, student-teachers, and local communities. The findings are expected to provide useful insights for designing and improving future academic service projects to ensure greater effectiveness and sustainability.

2. Objective

1. To analyze the problems and obstacles arising from the implementation of academic service projects provided to the educational institutions participating in the projects in collaboration with the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.
2. To evaluate the impacts of the implementation of academic service projects on the enhancement of quality among in-service teachers, mentor teachers, student-teachers, and alumni in developing educational innovations.

3. Methodology

This quantitative study examines the factors influencing the implementation of academic service projects by the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, under the 20-Year Strategic Plan for Local Development, focusing on the creation and development of educational innovators. It also evaluates the projects’ impacts on improving the quality of teachers, student-teachers, mentor teachers, and alumni in educational innovation.

Population and Sample

The study involved 875 participants, including in-service teachers, mentor teachers, alumni, and third- and fourth-year student-teachers from the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Participants were selected using simple random sampling to ensure representativeness, with 60 teachers/alumni, 430 third-year student-teachers, and 385 fourth-year student-teachers.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was a questionnaire designed to examine the problems and factors influencing the implementation of academic service projects of the Faculty of Education with schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC). The questionnaire targeted in-service teachers, mentor teachers, alumni, and third- and fourth-year student-teachers from the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The instrument was developed based on the research framework and objectives and reviewed by experts for content validity and language appropriateness.

The questionnaire consisted of three parts:

1. General information – Items on respondents' gender, age, education level, and position, using a checklist format.
2. Opinions on problems and influencing factors – Items on (1) coordination between the Faculty of Education and schools, (2) school-related context affecting participation, (3) context of participating teachers, mentor teachers, and alumni, and (4) context of student-teachers, using a 5-point rating scale.
3. Open-ended questions – To allow respondents to provide additional opinions and suggestions regarding factors affecting the implementation of academic service projects.

Data were collected from 875 participants using the validated questionnaire in an online format via Google Forms.

Data Collection

The data for this study were collected following these procedures:

1. A formal request for cooperation was sent to in-service teachers, mentor teachers, alumni from schools in the teacher training network, and third- and fourth-year student-teachers from the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, totaling 875 participants in the fiscal year 2025.
2. The researcher explained the purpose of the study and the questionnaire procedures to all participants.
3. Data were collected using an online questionnaire via Google Forms from the selected participants.
4. Participants completed the online questionnaire.
5. The researcher checked and verified the completeness of the collected data for further analysis.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the online questionnaires were analyzed using statistical software as follows:

1. All returned questionnaires were checked for completeness, and frequency and percentage distributions were calculated.

2. Verified responses were entered into statistical software to calculate mean ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviation (S.D.) for descriptive and comparative purposes. A 5-point rating scale was used, with the following weights:

5 = Highest
4 = High
3 = Moderate
2 = Low
1 = Lowest

The mean scores were interpreted based on the following criteria:

4.50 – 5.00 = Highest
3.50 – 4.49 = High
2.50 – 3.49 = Moderate
1.50 – 2.49 = Low
1.00 – 1.49 = Lowest

4. Results

Results of Data Analysis

Part 1: General Information of Respondents

Data were collected from 875 participants (100%). The analysis of percentages revealed that the majority of respondents were female (509 participants, 58.17%) and male (366 participants, 41.83%). Most respondents were under 25 years old (93.14%), followed by those aged 25 - 35 years (4.34%), 36 - 45 years (2.17%), and 45 years or older (0.34%).

Regarding respondents' status, the largest group consisted of third-year student-teachers (49.14%), followed by fourth-year student-teachers (44%), teachers from network schools (5.94%), and alumni (0.91%).

In terms of experience participating in academic service projects, the majority had never participated (72.23%), followed by those who had participated 1 - 2 times (18.17%), 3 - 5 times (7.20%), and more than 5 times (2.4%).

Part 2: Results of the Study

1. Opinions on the Problems and Factors Affecting the Implementation of Academic Service Projects

The analysis of participants' opinions regarding problems and factors affecting the implementation of academic service projects by the Faculty of Education revealed that, overall, participants perceived these aspects at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.83$, S.D. = 0.42). This indicates that the institution plays a crucial role in supporting the projects through clear policies and systematic project management.

Specifically, the highest-rated item was the statement, "The Faculty of Education has concrete strategic plans and guidelines for project implementation" ($\bar{x} = 4.86$, S.D. = 0.34), reflecting the clarity of policy and alignment with the faculty's mission to promote academic services. Other highly rated items included "Appropriate support in regulations and coordination is provided" ($\bar{x} = 4.83$, S.D. = 0.44), and "University administrators have clear policies supporting academic service projects" ($\bar{x} = 4.79$, S.D. = 0.47), indicating strong institutional support and administrative commitment.

Regarding personnel and project participants, opinions were generally high ($\bar{x} = 4.36$, S.D. = 0.79), highlighting the significant roles of faculty members, student-teachers, and school teachers in driving project activities. Notably, “Faculty members possess knowledge and skills in organizing academic service activities” ($\bar{x} = 4.63$, S.D. = 0.58) was rated at the highest level, emphasizing their expertise. Participation by teachers in project design ($\bar{x} = 4.33$, S.D. = 0.74) and active engagement by students ($\bar{x} = 4.13$, S.D. = 1.07) were also rated high, though student participation indicated room for further development.

Project management was perceived at the highest level overall ($\bar{x} = 4.77$, S.D. = 0.43). The project implementation process was systematic ($\bar{x} = 4.75$, S.D. = 0.43), communication and coordination among stakeholders were highly effective ($\bar{x} = 4.78$, S.D. = 0.42), and continuous monitoring and evaluation were maintained ($\bar{x} = 4.74$, S.D. = 0.44). These results indicate the project’s management system is highly efficient and structured, supporting successful project outcomes.

2. Opinions on the Impact of Academic Service Projects

Impact on In-Service Teachers, Mentor Teachers, and Alumni

The overall impact on in-service teachers, mentor teachers, and alumni was rated high ($\bar{x} = 4.60$, S.D. = 0.54), demonstrating that the projects positively enhanced participants’ knowledge, skills, and capabilities. Specifically, participants acquired new knowledge applicable to classroom teaching ($\bar{x} = 4.74$, S.D. = 0.44), developed innovative thinking skills ($\bar{x} = 4.33$, S.D. = 0.74), and enhanced their ability to design and use educational innovation media ($\bar{x} = 4.74$, S.D. = 0.44). These findings indicate improved professional competence and readiness to apply educational innovations effectively.

Impact on Student-Teachers

The overall impact on student-teachers was also rated high ($\bar{x} = 4.73$, S.D. = 0.49). The projects contributed to the development of essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes for professional teaching, including teamwork, problem-solving, educational innovation, and awareness of local development roles. Student-teachers enhanced teamwork and problem-solving skills ($\bar{x} = 4.63$, S.D. = 0.58), practiced educational innovation skills ($\bar{x} = 4.78$, S.D. = 0.42), and demonstrated awareness of their role in local development ($\bar{x} = 4.79$, S.D. = 0.47). These results highlight students’ preparedness and capacity to perform effectively in real-world teaching contexts while contributing to local community development.

Summary

Overall, the findings indicate that the Faculty of Education provides strong institutional support, highly capable personnel, and effective project management, which together create a positive environment for implementing academic service projects. The projects significantly enhanced the knowledge, skills, and professional competencies of teachers, student-teachers, and alumni, fostering innovation, teaching quality, and social responsibility, ultimately contributing to sustainable local development.

5. Conclusion And Future Work

The results of the study on factors influencing the implementation of academic service projects under the 20-Year Strategic Plan of Rajabhat Universities for Local Development, conducted by the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, can be discussed as follows.

The findings indicate that the academic service projects of the Faculty of Education have a positive impact on all participant groups, including in-service teachers, mentor teachers, alumni, and student-teachers. Participants were able to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for teaching and community development. These results align with Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Learning theory, which emphasizes learning through real experiences and

reflection on practice. For in-service teachers, mentor teachers, and alumni, the study found that participants acquired new knowledge that could be effectively applied to classroom teaching. They also enhanced their innovative thinking skills and their ability to design and utilize educational innovation media. These outcomes are consistent with the research of Kannika Piromrat (2023), which highlighted that educational programs promoting employability provide opportunities for career development, enhance learners' quality of life, and improve teaching efficiency and professional development. Regarding student-teachers, the results showed that the academic service projects fostered teamwork, problem-solving skills, and the creation of educational innovations, while also raising awareness of their roles and responsibilities in local development. This outcome aligns with the 21st Century Skills framework of the Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21, 2019), which emphasizes creativity, collaboration, problem-solving, and social responsibility.

Overall, the findings suggest that academic service projects are an essential tool for developing teachers' and student-teachers' competencies across multiple dimensions, including knowledge, professional skills, creativity, and social awareness. Participants are thus better prepared to apply their knowledge and skills to enhance teaching and contribute to society in a sustainable manner. The study also revealed that faculty members and school teachers play a significant and highly capable role in implementing academic service activities. However, student participation was at a level that could be further developed, indicating the need to design activities that more actively engage students. Such engagement would enhance hands-on experience and professional skill development, consistent with the Situated Learning theory proposed by Lave & Wenger (1991), which asserts that learning occurs most effectively when learners are genuinely involved within the context of authentic practice.

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