

Motivations for Public Service and Community Engagement in the University of the Philippines Open University

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Abstract

The paper aims to identify the motivating factors of the University of the Philippines Open University stakeholders that in doing public service and community engagement. Using an exploratory sequential mixed method design, the study conducted interviews as part of the qualitative phase of the data gathering and analysis. Results from the qualitative phase became the basis for the conduct of the survey which is the quantitative phase of the study. The study participants were from the internal and external stakeholders of the university. The study found out that one's advocacies and ideologies and a positive public perception and reputation of excellence on the university are the main motivators of its stakeholders to get engaged in its current service programs. Social relevance of service initiatives and strengthened sense of service in the university were factors that can increase their motivation to engage in future endeavours. Concepts of altruism, spirituality, institutional trust, mutuality of benefits, culture, and organisational arrangements proved to encourage stakeholders to participate in public service initiatives. The study recommended that the identified motivating factors need to be institutionalized in the university through appropriate policies and programs to sustain stakeholders' motivation and address their identified concerns in their participation in the university's service program.

Keywords: *community engagement, extension, public service, public service motivation, higher education, Open and Distance Learning*

1. Introduction

The University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) is the fifth constituent university (CU) of the University of the Philippines (UP) System. UP is described as a graduate, research, and public service national university mandated by the Philippine law Republic Act 9500, also known as the UP Charter. As the national university in the Philippines, UP aims to be a leading higher education institution (HEI) in the Philippines and beyond in providing graduate academic programs, research and creative work initiatives, and public service programs and involvements. The UP Charter describes public service in UP by “providing various forms of community, public and volunteer service, as well as scholarly and technical assistance to the government, the private sector, and civil society while maintaining its standards of excellence” (University of the Philippines, n.d., p. 1).

UPOU, as one of UP's CUs, envisions itself as a leader in teaching and learning in the digital age, plays a leading role in the study and practice of open learning and distance education in the Philippines, and

seeks to provide wider access to quality higher education (University of the Philippines Open University, 2015). This vision is hoped to be achieved through provision of degree and non-degree programs in various disciplines alongside research and service efforts. As a matter of philosophy by its leaders, UPOU considers public service at the core of its mission that cuts across its various functions (University of the Philippines Open University, 2016).

For the extension services, UPOU implemented various non-academic services and community programs for its constituents, linkages and partners particularly with individuals, groups, and institutions, including massive open online courses. With UPOU's efforts in working for and with various internal and external individuals and organisations, it has not yet clearly identified the motivating factors that encourage and push its stakeholders to engage in public service within its context. The Public Service Motivation theory explains that there are factors that push and motivate people, like those in the higher education institutions, to act in the public domain for the purpose of doing good for others and society (Perry et al. 2010). Various theories discuss specific motivating factors and causes that encourage people and organisations to get involved in initiatives that benefit others and the society. These factors range from those at the individual, organisational, and community level.

If the motivating factors to engage in public service of UPOU will be identified, appropriate policies in UPOU as an open and distance e-learning institution will be instituted that will provide responsive policies and mechanisms that will encourage and sustain participation and involvement of the university's stakeholders in its public service programs and initiatives. This will hopefully lead to fulfillment of the mutual goals and benefits of the university's stakeholders and of the university itself. Towards this end, an improved societal contributions of the university to national and global development and transformation, as a public service university is expected, as well.

2. Literature Review

As the life force of any organisation like higher education institutions (HEIs), missions are multi-layered and are described to be dynamic and fluid to enable the HEIs to respond to changes in society and achieve higher education's mission through the following elements: philosophies, education policies, and societal and institutional cultures. HEIs have a multiplicity of missions which have evolved across time (Scott, 2006).

HEI's mission is described to be threefold: teaching, research, and service. Specifically, various terms have been used to refer to the service mission of HEIs. These terms include the following: outreach, extension, service, service learning, third mission, engagement, and public service. The University of the Philippines (UP) uses the term 'public service' to generally refer to its service mission and programs, as stipulated in the UP Charter and university official documents. Literature has described service and public service in higher education in various ways. Public service was described as contributing to the achievement of the HEI missions (Aquiling-Dalisay, 2007; Boyer, 1990) and the interrelatedness of university functions such as teaching, research and service (Cronin & Sjogren, 1998; Lynton, 1995; Scott, 2006; Srisa-an, 2014). It also necessitates the application of the faculty's professional expertise and is considered a professional activity (Lynton, as cited in Cronin & Sjogren, 1998; Lynton, 1995), which responds to societal realities and problems (Lynton, 1995; Moore, 2014; Wagner, 1993). With the evolution of higher education across eras, the twenty-first-century universities were described as adopting one general mission: service to the public supported by teaching, learning, and new research discoveries (Scott, 2006).

The factors that push organisations and their individual members to operationalise the vision to create public value through public service can be explained through the Public Service Motivation theory. Public service motivation (PSM), as a theory, is described as "to act in the public domain for the purpose of doing good for others and society... driven by other-regarding motives, not only by self-concern and self-interest" (Perry et al., 2010, p. 687). PSM, thus, hopes to identify the push factors of public service that encourage people or institutions to create public value and provide public service, or otherwise.

The Prosocial behavior theory suggests that helping intends to improve oneself in the process, which does not need any reward. Most often, those being helped are the ones benefiting from the helping process (Schroeder & Graziano, 2014). This behavior, especially when applied and demonstrated more often, increases the helper's sense of self-worth, social acceptance, and social connection with others. The Social Exchange theory explains that helping can be considered as a relationship between two parties with consideration of the benefits and risks associated with helping for both the helper and the party being helped. The theory identifies various elements which can be used for assessment of the exchange and service relationship: rewards (Perry et al., 2010), costs, profits, and equity and distributive justice (Redmond, 2015). In this regard, the utilitarian and service incentive systems as motives for doing public service are important to assess to be able to address the multiple motives and situations of doing public service (Gill, 2013b; Viljoen, 2014).

The empathy-altruism hypothesis discusses that feelings of empathy and compassion for others produce motivation to work for others' welfare. This hypothesis emphasizes the importance of developing empathy for others which enables a better understanding of others' situations (Lishner & Stocks, 2007). Culture theory explains that decisions, relationships, and activities are powered by social beings and a group with distinctive ideas, beliefs, values, and knowledge, called culture commonly shared by its members (Serrat, 2017). Consistent with this concept, a certain system of values can help motivate people to help others. An indigenous Filipino trait, *bayaniban*, or the spirit of civic unity, cooperation, mutual help and concern among Filipinos, has been observed and practiced in Filipino groups and communities throughout history, even before colonization (Ang, 1979). Drawing from the culture theory, this sense of concern for others as part of Filipino culture can push people and institutions to help others and society.

As espoused by the community development framework, belief in and developing the capacities of the community to participate in the whole process and effect changes to their situation are important to be facilitated through service programs. This process leads to people and community empowerment (Manalili, 1990), which is also a core objective of the social work profession (International Federation of Social Workers, 2014). To facilitate the community's capacity building and participation, the approaches also suggest making participatory mechanisms available to the community in the whole process to be able to solve their problems, leading to the fulfilment of people of their right to participation, self-determination, and human rights, in general, to freely pursue their development (East, 2016; International Federation of Social Workers, 2018; Manalili, 1990). These ideologies can also be a form of spirituality or the 'greater power' that people believe in, which sustains hope and enable people to engage (Bernardo et al., 2014).

UPOU is one of the smallest universities of the UP system based on the population of its faculty, staff, and students. On one hand, the smallness of UPOU needs to be seen in a different light as flexibility and agility can be observed in order to adjust to various changes and needs (Lumanta, 2014). In contrast, the small number of faculty and staff to run various programs and units of UPOU may really be challenging for such a university which hopes to achieve a lot of things in various aspects. For example, facilitating practicum courses has been a challenge to conduct close monitoring of practicum students by some faculty who may have roles in the university other than teaching. This problem can limit the learning of students while compromising the quality of faculty outputs in teaching and even their wellbeing (Taylan, 2015). Moreover, multiple roles of faculty and staff become a continuing concern to perform various tasks such as those related in public service (UP Padayon, 2017). Given such conditions, university personnel may not be able to create or maximize opportunities for equally important tasks such as research, self enhancement, innovation, or public service.

With UPOU's efforts in working for and with various internal and external individuals and organisations, the diverse and multiple motivations that push people and institutions to engage with UPOU as an online and distance learning institution are necessary to be identified and explained which will help UPOU to institutionalize systems that can sustain the participation of its stakeholders and encourage more actors in these endeavours, thereby realizing its organisational mission and mandate as a public service university.

The discussions on the factors that motivate people and organisations to participate in service programs have informed this paper of the necessity to identify and explain motivators and even the hindrances in

participating in public service from both internal and external stakeholders at various levels and forms. Thus, this paper will provide discussions on the motivating factors that push UPOU's stakeholders to engage in service programs and initiatives. Moreover, this paper will identify the recommended policies related to managing and strengthening stakeholders' motivators for their engagement and service in UPOU as an open and distance learning institution.

3. Research Method

This section will present the ways how the study was conducted through discussion of the research design, population, data collection methods, and data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

The research used the Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Design. The research explored the public service of UPOU, given the limited literature about the subject matter prior to the current study. As it is a sequential design, the research was conducted in two phases.

The research facilitated the collection and analysis of the qualitative data in the first phase. The purpose of the first phase is to explore and discuss in-depth the various perceptions on public service by the leaders of the university and its partner organisations. The various literatures and documents of UP and UPOU became the bases for the construction of questions for the first phase. Drawing from the results of the first phase in exploratory mode, the second phase, which is a quantitative phase, was used to test, validate, and generalize the initial findings from the qualitative phase. The second phase measured the various dimensions of the problem raised in the first phase to a larger population of stakeholders. Data that were drawn from the first phase was used by the researcher in identifying and measuring variables and statistical results in the second phase, guided by post-positivism.

3.2. Population

Following the research design discussed above, the identified population for data gathering for the study were categorized for each phase. For the first phase, the population were the following: UPOU administrators, coordinators from UPOU of the chosen public service projects; and coordinators from the partner institutions and communities of the chosen public service projects. These interviewees were targeted based on their actual position and involvement in the organization and program. For the second phase, the population were UPOU faculty, staff, and students and the project participants from the chosen public service projects. For the respondents from the university, there were 223 in total who participated in the survey while 211 respondents came from the external stakeholders or project participants.

In the study, the flagship public service projects of the three (3) Faculties of Study of UPOU were highlighted for documentation and assessment. Minimum criteria used for the selection of such projects were the following: existence of a documented agreement between UPOU or UPOU unit and partner organisation/ community like a memorandum of agreement or understanding; at least three years of project's existence as of start of the conduct of the study; and project involvement of UPOU personnel such as faculty and staff from the faculty. Aside from the chosen projects from the Faculties of Study, one flagship university-wide public service project was documented and assessed in the study, following the same set of criteria.

3.3. Data collection

The first phase required the use of qualitative methods through semi-structured interviews. It provided an in-depth understanding of UPOU's public service system based on the visions and experiences of the leaders of UPOU and its partner organisations who were involved in university's decision making and management of chosen public service projects.

For the second phase of the study, an online self-administered survey was employed to gather perceptions of larger population of UPOU stakeholders. The survey served to triangulate the findings from interviews and make necessary generalizations about the problem. Guided by the data gathered from the interviews, the survey covered questions on similar topics discussed from the first phase. The survey was conducted for two groups of respondents: UPOU internal community and public service project participants. The survey respondents from the UPOU internal community included the following: UPOU faculty, staff, and students. The other survey group was composed of the participants or beneficiaries from the chosen public service projects, who were mostly not part of UPOU. This measure ensured that the chosen public service projects were represented well by their respective project participants who come from various locations and contexts. The survey questionnaire was sent through electronic mail to all the target respondents from each of the survey groups who meet the criterion provided.

The study also added open-ended questions in the survey questionnaire in relevant questions which provided the respondents the opportunity to explain lengthily the choices they made in the preceding questions. A final open-ended question was asked at the end of each major topic and at the end of the questionnaire which opened opportunity for respondents to share their perceptions on other important topics which were not asked previously.

3.4. Data Analysis

Following the sequential mixed methods research design the researcher analyzed the data drawn from each phase of data collection. Data analysis was carried out separately for the qualitative data drawn from the semi-structured interviews. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis which determined various codes and themes within data responses. The various edited transcripts were read and reviewed by the researcher to create codes or nodes consistent with the research questions. Patterns or themes were then drawn based on the analysis of the researcher of the coded and categorized responses of the interviewees, which were drawn from the interviewees' own words and narratives, ensuring that the process of analysis and interpretations were done accurately. The qualitative data across the respondent group were explained and compared in terms of themes identified. Responses for each question from various respondents were compared, which showed similarities and differences of perceptions of the interviewees. Guided by the theories and concepts from the literature and framework, the researcher derived and presented lessons and insights on the interviewees' narrations at the end of each discussion for each code and category. These interpretations provided spaces for further exploration of categories and themes through the quantitative procedures under phase 2.

After undergoing screening and normality check on the data sets, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted for each variable for data sets of UPOU respondents and project participants and were compared to determine the similarities, differences, and observed patterns of perceptions of the two respondent groups. Further analysis through inferential statistics was performed using correlation analysis which enabled the researcher to show the relationships among the research variables and the strength of these relationships and showed the consistency of respondents' perceptions on various aspects of UPOU's public service.

The data drawn from the data gathering methods, both qualitative and quantitative, with the groups of respondents were compared and contrasted with one another. The merged results were summarized and interpreted by discussing the extent and ways these results converged, diverged, or related to each other. The researcher identified similar content areas which were presented in both the qualitative and quantitative data. Furthermore, differences were identified within one set of results based on dimensions within the other data sets and examine these differences. This process allowed for triangulation (Creswell 2009; Newcomer et al. 2015). The researcher then synthesized the results which formed the major findings and eventually the conclusions of the study.

To further the research validity, peer examination through pilot testing of questionnaires, data collection from several sources, the involvement of more stakeholders to the study coming from various backgrounds, and the guidance from the research supervisors who are seasoned researchers in the field have contributed to a more holistic picture of the research problem. In terms of research reliability, the

study developed a research design that enabled multiple level of validation of responses from multiple stakeholders. Moreover, the collected data, after undergoing regular checking and review, was managed and processed using software for data consolidation and analysis. These mechanisms ensured that the study including its results are consistent and dependable.

4. Findings

The findings from the study has two types: the qualitative data and the quantitative data.

4.1. Findings from the Qualitative Phase

The qualitative phase of the study through interviews identified the following motivating factors of UPOU stakeholders to engage in public service initiatives:

Public service mandate of the university

The UP Charter specifies the goal of UP and its CUs. One respondent mentioned the UP Charter which encourages UPOU to respond to the public service call as part of its mandate.

If these are not done, we are not complying with the law... Because we have to do it, the UPOU way, because we need to make the standard, the template... because there is no existing template. (UPOU Administrator 3)

Service initiative as part of personal and professional ideology and advocacy

People's advocacies and how they see the world push them to work with communities. Furthermore, doing public service helps members of the university to advance their own calling. Some other interviewees also explained this idea in other ways such as the quotations below:

Let us not dwell on scoring our efforts, let us not be materialistic. The interest and advocacy of the individuals push people to engage, because we saw the need. Public service is an outlet, buffers out the toxicity of our work, to enjoy ourselves, not much on what we can get from it in terms of own material reward like points. They are just bonuses from what we want to do. (UPOU Project Leader 1)

The proposed project is really good. These match with what we want in our school... These are also what the Department of Education wants us to do... (Partner Organisation 2)

Psychological reward or feeling of fulfillment

Related to one's ideologies as motivation, service programs can provide psychological reward or sense of fulfillment for the UPOU personnel doing public service initiatives. One of them explained his points through this statement:

I think it is more of a personal matter, just like the same impetus with one's choice in working with UP, and why not other universities, or with UPOU rather than with UPLB, for example... I cannot imagine a world without service. Life and work would become meaningless, nor purpose. It can both be material and psychological reward. (UPOU Administrator 1)

Service to people as innate in one's life in UP and in Philippine culture

Interviewees explicitly mentioned service and people-oriented education and evolution of UP which showed the university's relevance and responsiveness to the needs of the society. One of the interviewees explained this in this statement:

Service is ingrained in our system as part of UP, we are educated in a system with nationalism in mind, as part of being an 'Iskolar ng Bayan' [Scholars of the Nation, in English]. (UPOU Administrator 2)

With UPOU's history of establishment in consideration, three of the respondents explained that UPOU has always put the public, especially those in marginal situations, at the center of its operations. Being the

pioneer and leading open and distance university in the Philippines, the interviewees explained that UPOU has to develop ways in order to help out other institutions and public in general and always considers the situations of the public. The other interviewees mentioned that UPOU does not just do public service as part of its functions, but this has been an ongoing journey since they were UP students. They said that the intention of helping the community was always there, being Filipinos with service culture.

Positive perception and reputation of excellence of UP and UPOU

Interviewees mentioned that the positive perception of UPOU and UP facilitates development of trust among partners of UPOU, as mentioned above by one UPOU interviewee. The statements below expressed the perceptions of external organisations which confirmed this view:

UP's reputation is really something the community regards highly. For UPOU, since we are part of UP, we take the UP's reputation with us... So, for our projects, the community also trusts our expertise as part of UP. (UPOU Project Leader 1)

Well-packaged public service program

Interviewees, from both UPOU and partner organisations, said that the public service program should be well-thought of and consider carefully its goal, approach, expected impact, and facilitative system. Interviewees from UPOU mentioned about the need to create mechanisms which may attract more people from UPOU to become part of the initiatives as mentioned below:

I am thinking of ways how to package the program to really excite and encourage participation, which can involve all of us wherever locations we may be... So, we need to make them, students, aware that we have such programs, in their locality. (UPOU Administrator 3)

For UPOU's partner organisations, they were motivated because of the concept of the project and intended impact as shown in the statements below:

We were looking at the concept being forwarded to us. The innovative ideas... that was submitted was appealing to us. The proponent knew what he wanted to do. It was clear. It fits our criteria... (Partner Organisation 3)

More balanced work functions

One interviewee explained that various tasks in the university can hinder people from pursuing and giving their commitment to public service initiatives, as explained in the following statement:

Do we really have the time to do public service, for example given our huge class size, or time to do research? ... Doing public service may not really be a priority because of the huge work to be done. (UPOU Administrator 1)

Moreover, three interviewees mentioned that time, energy, and focus are essential when it comes to doing public service, usually more than what it takes for doing teaching or research.

Provision of load/ academic credit for public service

The interviewees mentioned academic crediting or loading system as arrangements that help in motivating personnel to become more involved in-service programs as it will signify that the university recognises the importance of efforts and expertise given by the personnel in public service. Furthermore, they explained that it also legitimizes the participation and hard work of UPOU personnel in public service. One interviewee explained this in his statement below:

Loading system is already available for MOOCs, even for teaching and course development. There are also some ongoing talks in doing the same for other kinds of initiatives. (UPOU Administrator 2)

Compensation/ honorarium offered

Some interviewees shared that financial rewards such as honorariums have encouraged people to a certain extent. Their service and time spent are monetarily rewarded while implementing service programs.

Recognition and other non-monetary incentives

UPOU interviewees narrated that the faculty or staff can include their service initiatives for existing recognition or awards and evaluation systems in the university. Some interviewees explained that these existing systems necessitate revisions, though, to encourage more people to participate.

There are existing [recognition] systems but still not enough to motivate [us] further. (UPOU Administrator 2)

4.2. Findings from the Quantitative Phase

There were two types of motivators which were asked of the respondents: (1) motivational factors in actual public service engagement and (2) factors that will increase motivation to participate in future service endeavours. A five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) Does not motivate at all to (5) Strongly Motivates was used to rate each motivational factor which were drawn from the interviews.

Motivational factors for actual service engagement

Among the identified motivational factors, service initiative as part of one’s advocacy and ideology was the mostly agreed motivational factor for the UPOU respondents ($M=4.57, SD=.720$). One respondent explained, “the topic in the project is my burning passion as I am a public servant”. Psychological reward or feeling of fulfilment as a motivational factor ($M=4.35, SD=.795$) followed the tally. Effects on those who are involved in the project were emphasized in this factor, with one respondent mentioning “the hope to inspire others” being part of the project was motivating. This perception was also shared by the project participants from the external communities of UPOU. The perceived effects of the project and psychological reward drawn from the service program were the factors that were highly agreed to by the project participants. “It developed [a] sense of pride and honor, make [ing] a difference in public service in the community”, one respondent shared. Another respondent explained the amazing feeling of fulfilment when one helps others.

Table 1. Motivational factors in actual service initiatives

Motivational Factors	Mean (<i>M</i>)		Standard Deviation (<i>SD</i>)	
	UPOU	Project Participants	UPOU	Project Participants
Public service mandate of the university / Organisational and professional growth	4.02	4.77	.954	.617
Recognition and other non-monetary incentives	3.52	4.39	1.110	.865
Service initiative as part of personal and professional ideology and advocacy	4.57	4.59	.720	.699
Psychological reward/ feeling of fulfilment	4.35	4.63	.795	.699
Service to people as innate in one’s life in UP and Philippine culture	4.24	N/A	.874	N/A
Good image and reputation of excellence of UP and UPOU	4.11	4.82	.924	.547
More balanced work functions in UPOU	3.83	N/A	.950	N/A
Well-packaged public service program in UPOU	3.76	4.67	1.058	.652
UPOU’s provision of load/ academic credit for the initiative	3.52	N/A	1.130	N/A
Compensation/ honorarium offered	3.22	N/A	1.263	N/A

Good or positive image and reputation of UP and UPOU was the factor which had the strongest effect in motivating the public to get engaged ($M=4.82$, $SD=.547$). Public's positive perception UP and UPOU was confirmed in the respondents' explanations. One respondent shared, "the name speaks for itself; being part of UP is such a great opportunity". Professional and organisational growth that can result from the service project as a motivational factor followed the list ($M=4.77$, $SD=.617$). One project participant explained, "public servant is the nature of my work, so I need this engagement to enhance my skills to be a public servant, to update my knowledge in giving service to others".

Among the factors assessed by the respondents, compensation or honorarium was the factor which was perceived to be the least motivating for UPOU respondents ($M=3.22$, $SD=1.263$) followed by recognition and other incentives to be received. The latter was also perceived by the project participants to be the least motivational factor for them ($M=4.39$, $SD=.865$).

Other motivational factors for actual engagement

In addition to the motivational factors that were assessed, the respondents provided other motivational factors that pushed them to participate in service initiatives of UPOU. The team involved in the service initiatives was cited by UPOU respondents as one additional motivational factor particularly the project team's responsiveness and alertness to address project's concerns.

Some project participants cited that the online nature and innovativeness of the UPOU service projects was a huge pull factor for them as the programs were made accessible and self-paced which allowed flexibility to juggle their usual work and personal arrangements. The projects were also free of charge for those who wanted to avail the services, which encouraged more people to join in. Some also narrated that they were influenced to join in the service projects by their workmates, families, and other peers.

Factors to Increase Motivation for Future Service Endeavours

Almost all respondents from the project participants group or 98.3 percent shared that they want to engage in future service projects of UPOU.

UPOU members perceived social relevance of service initiatives as the factor that will mostly motivate them to engage in future endeavours ($M=4.49$, $SD=.707$). One respondent indicated that they will engage more if service initiatives are within the advocacies of the university and their personal advocacies. Another suggested the need for UPOU's public service to "focus on those who are most vulnerable poor communities" or "improve the lives of those in the margins" for UPOU's public service. A strengthened or renewed sense of service or service culture in the university was the factor that followed the tally ($M=4.43$, $SD=.723$). A participant shared that the "perspective that public service is part of the everyday life of any academic" may need to (re)surface in the university.

A sustained and well-planned project followed closely in the rank as a highly motivational factor for future endeavours. One respondent shared about the need to integrate "robust theory of change, indicating the higher goal and the means of achieving such goal through UPOUs public service". One respondent mentioned that service initiative, when appropriately planned and theory of change is applied, should have relevance to academic programs, indicating the relationship between instruction, research, and extension. Furthermore, one project participant shared that their involvement in the project made them feel that they were part of the change process while another mentioned the dedication of UPOU to its activities and ample time provided to perform various tasks which make them want to sustain their involvement.

UPOU respondents perceived that other support coming from the university could motivate them such as the following: transportation and accessibility, provision of food, temporary shelter, and protective gear. These forms of support can provide them with a sense of assurance in their safety and health. On the other hand, among the mentioned factors, higher compensation was perceived to be the least motivating for respondents' engagement in future service endeavours ($M=3.73$, $SD=1.051$), followed by a new award/ recognition system for public service ($M=3.89$, $SD=.869$). These results were similar to the motivational factors in actual engagements, where incentives were seen as the least motivating.

Other factors to increase motivation to participate were added by the survey respondents, such as sufficient information and communication to stakeholders like the alums about UPOU's service opportunities and the need for a dedicated unit in UPOU for the public service program of the university would better facilitate their involvement. These suggestions speak of a management system and structure for public service. Part of the management system was the suggested mechanism to recognise and identify the capacities of possible stakeholders and appropriate service engagements. These factors have also been mentioned during the interviews.

5. Discussion

The Public Service Motivation theory speaks of why people are doing or are engaged in the public service (Perry et al., 2010). The theory can also be perceived to explain the opposite: what hinders people from getting engaged and how these can be addressed.

In the study, the motivational factors raised by respondents from both interviews and surveys can be categorised in various dimensions: individual, university system, and the public in general.

Individual factors

The most prominent motivator for UPOU was the personal and professional advocacies of the respondents, which informed their participation in service initiatives. UPOU's external stakeholders mentioned that they were motivated to engage with UPOU on service projects when their objectives and advocacies fit with those of UPOU's service project.

The empathy–altruism perspective and concepts of prosocial behavior and self-rewards taken from the Social Exchange theory explain the above findings. Consistent with one's personal and professional advocacies of UPOU's stakeholders, other-regarding causes and desire to contribute to societal changes and others' welfare can push stakeholders to engage in public service programs. UPOU's service initiatives are therefore seen to help in achieving these advocacies and causes. Public service can also be considered an expression of spirituality of involved parties, or the greater power people believe in that gives and sustains hope. Given these results, identification of the advocacies, ideologies, and other-regarding causes of stakeholders are necessary to be considered for the development of UPOU's service mission and programs.

The study also identified professional growth and psychological reward or sense of fulfilment resulting from service programs, as initially explained above, that when they are able to anticipate benefits from participating in service endeavours, they are likely to engage. On the other hand, some respondents did not agree with this concept of rewards as motivational factors. The difference in the perceptions of research participants about enhancing UPOU's award and incentive systems suggests that participation in service initiatives is not universally seen as endeavours that need to be well incentivized or awarded, especially in terms of financial benefits. Other types of incentives that can help motivate people which may not be in monetary form is personnel promotion (Gill, 2013a, 2013b; Viljoen, 2014) and psychological rewards and benefits such as a deepened sense of meaning, purpose, and self-worth, as espoused by the Prosocial Behavior theory (Klein, 2017; Schroeder & Graziano, 2014). These motivational factors were cited during the interviews.

The above discussions suggest a closer consideration of the motivational factors for both the university and the public which has been suggested by the Social Exchange theory. By doing so, an increase in mutual support and participation of UPOU's stakeholders in UPOU's service program can be achieved.

Organisational factors

During the interviews, the leaders from UPOU's partner organisations emphasized the importance of the alignment between their organisational objectives and UPOU's service program objectives. The respondents also identified UPOU policies and Philippine government policies particularly on procedures that affect ease in partnership building and project reporting.

Some of the identified motivational factors suggest a revision of existing UPOU policies or the creation of new ones to reflect the following: balanced workload of UPOU personnel, well-planned UPOU service program, increased number of human resources, and improved loading system of UPOU's personnel. These will give staff enough time to perform multiple roles and balance their work functions.

A well-packaged public service program in UPOU, including its goals and perceived effects and impact was also considered by the respondents as a motivational factor, more so by the respondents from the chosen service projects. Part of this motivational factor is the program's innovativeness and the public's free and open access to UPOU's service initiatives through the use of ICT. These factors facilitated the public's unhampered participation in and smoother flow of the service program. Moreover, this identified factor confirms the niche of the UPOU as an open and distance e-learning institution in making its programs more accessible to the public through the use of ICT and networked technologies. This finding reaffirms UPOU's worldview and mission of contributing to social transformation through its programs, including public service.

For future service endeavours of UPOU, the research respondents suggested various logistical support to those involved in service activities such as the following themes: transportation, housing, ICT and access to the network, and safety and health. These suggestions can address the hindrances to participating in service programs, especially within the context of crises like the Covid-19 pandemic.

A functional management structure including a dedicated team for public service was also suggested to be created as motivational factor. These suggested organisational factors such as functional management structure, award system, and logistical support can be categorized under institutional infrastructure and architecture as an important elements in doing and measuring the public service (Wynne & Morris, 2018).

Fulfilment of the mandate of UPOU was also considered as a motivator especially by the UPOU internal stakeholders. Through the UPOU's service program, UP's legal obligation stated in the UP Charter and UPOU's roles specified in the Open and Distance Learning Act were seen as motivational factors for UPOU members to engage in service programs, a fulfilment of the university's responsibilities as a government institution. This motivator can be categorized under the institutional rewards or benefits that can be drawn from UPOU's involvement in service as explained by the Social Exchange theory (Redmond, 2015).

The results of the study also emphasized the need for a gradual shift in institutional culture for all stakeholders to embrace perspectives of public service and engagement are necessary ingredients that can support and motivate stakeholders to partake in service and engagement (Noel & Earwicker, 2015). These institutional changes can cover various areas such as organisational mission; support packages; active participation and leadership mechanisms for faculty, students, community and institutional leaders; staffing and structural changes; funding; and reporting, review, and evaluation (Furco et al., 2009; Gelmon et al., 2005).

Community/ public

From the points of view of UPOU's partner organisations and service project participants, the reputation of excellence and positive image of UP and UPOU was the factor which motivated them the most to engage with UPOU on particular projects. Such high regard from the public on UPOU can be a result of their observed excellence on UP's programs and accomplishments including UPOU's public service. Based on the projects that these external stakeholders have participated in, UPOU may have been considered excellent and experts on the following topics or areas of interest: child rights, social development, education and teaching methodologies, research, ecology, sustainable development, and use of ICT. Furthermore, the public's high regard for UP and UPOU is also seen to attract more partners and stakeholders to join in its service-oriented causes in the future. Social Exchange theory explains that the public's trust, coupled with the concept of social reward as motivators for the university and public to do service, can improve the organisation's social relationship. In this process, mutuality and reciprocity of benefits between the public and university drawn from public service can be fulfilled (Guanzon, 2014; Moore, 2014).

Filipinos and UP were also considered as naturally service-oriented by the research respondents, whereas engagement in cause-oriented activities comes as natural or instinctive. The respondents suggested that this sense of service in the university and among Filipinos may need to be awakened or strengthened in order to enjoin more people to participate in UPOU's future service endeavours. This perception is well aligned with empathy, altruism and spirituality concepts, prosocial behaviour theory, and cultural theory. These theories and concepts explain that interest in achieving society's welfare and improved life may be considered part of values, knowledge, lifestyle, and mission that are realized through *bayanihan* or spirit of civic unity, cooperation, mutual help, and concern among Filipinos (Ang, 1979; Serrat, 2017).

The interviewees narrated that the functions and purposes of higher education and that of UP and UPOU can be historically traced to universities' responsiveness to societal realities and conditions. These efforts formed and illustrated the service culture of UP and UPOU. Sustaining and strengthening this service culture will help UPOU in motivating more stakeholders to get engaged in more service programs that can likewise sustain UPOU's positive image and reputation of excellence, an identified motivational factor for the public to participate in UPOU's service program.

Factors that will increase respondents' motivation to engage in future service endeavours were also identified in the study. The results of the study show that these factors can help address the identified issues which hinder people from participating in service endeavours. These factors can serve as policy recommendations for UPOU's public service. Thus, there is a need to develop appropriate policies for public service that will not only define the public service directions but will also make motivational factors available in the university for public service.

The motivational factors identified by the respondents are not exclusive and separate from the others. There are motivational factors that relate to or are affected by the other factors at varying ways and degrees. Thus, the varied perceptions of the respondents on public service motivation suggest the importance of taking a holistic look at the public service system that considers various elements of the organisation, as explained by the systems theory. These motivational factors and organisational elements include vision and goals, resources, structure, access, innovation, policies, strategies, output and the needs of the communities and its partner organisations (Johnson et al., 1964).

Using these motivational factors to engage in the development and improvement of public service shows the importance given by the organisations to the feedback and participation of its stakeholders. A participatory approach in program development and management as suggested by the community-based development framework can help in creating multi-stakeholder feedbacking mechanisms (Manalili, 1990; Wirutomo, 2014).

The factors assessed by the respondents garnered closed means, which indicated that these factors need to be considered in policy development. Categories for motivational factors can be created for a more strategic system of institutionalizing motivational mechanisms for public service in UPOU, which hopes to motivate and provide support to people and organisations, within and beyond the university, to be able to get engaged more in its public service program. This categorization can also expand opportunities for UPOU to institutionalize motivational mechanisms in the future, notwithstanding the political and socio-economic context of the university: (1) legal mandate and university directions.; (2) content, theme, and methodology of service program; (3) academic or career development; (4) monetary and recognition; (5) organisational history and culture; (6) opportunities for leadership and active participation; and (7) administrative and logistical mechanisms.

6. Conclusion

Following exploratory sequential mixed methods design, the study was able to identify the motivational factors that encourage UPOU and its stakeholders in engaging in public service. The motivating factors identified were at the individual, university, and community levels. Consistent with the concepts of altruism and spirituality, one's advocacies and ideologies was the greatest motivator for UPOU's internal

members. Driven by the public's trust on the university, a positive public perception and reputation of excellence on the university were the main motivators for UPOU's external community to get engaged. Social relevance of service initiatives and strengthened sense of service in the university are factors that can increase motivation of UPOU to engage in future endeavours. These factors were recommended to be institutionalized as university policies to provide facilitative mechanisms for people's participation. The study was able to validate the theories and concepts discussing motivation factors in service which can be drawn from or made available at various levels and forms. The paper was able to highlight the importance of communicating the motivational factors and making these available to stakeholders. In addition, the study was able to identify factors that hinder stakeholders from engaging in service program which can be addressed by mostly the identified motivators themselves. The research, having been conducted at UPOU can provide insights to similar HEIs for instituting their own policies and programs that will encourage stakeholders to participate in service programs that will benefit stakeholders in the achievement of their missions and ultimately, social development. Moreover, the study confirms the niche of the UPOU as an open and distance e-learning institution in making its programs more accessible to the public through the use of ICT and networked technologies. The findings reaffirm UPOU's worldview and mission of contributing to social transformation through its programs, including public service.

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