

Factors Affecting Political Participation in Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province

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Received: 15 November 2024; **Abstract**

Revised: 11 December 2024; **Introduction:** This research aimed 1) to study the level of factors affecting

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Keywords:

Political Participation;

People;

Election;

Methodology: The researcher used a quantitative research method. The sample consisted of 248 people from Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province, who were selected using the multi-stage sampling method. The statistics used in data analysis were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, and F-test.

Results: The research found that 1. The results of the study of the general personal data of the respondents are as follows: The sample population of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province. Most of the respondents were female, 135 people or 54.03 percent, 79 people or 31.85 percent were aged 41 to 50 years. They had an education level of secondary 1–6 / vocational certificate, 135 people or 54.03 percent, and had an average monthly income of 5,000–10,000 baht, 195 people or 78.63 percent, respectively. The study of the factors affecting political participation of people in Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province, overall, had an average value at a high level. 2. The results of the comparison of the level of factors affecting the political participation of the people of Ban Sem, classified by personal factors, found that people with different genders, ages, education levels, and average monthly incomes had no different levels of political participation overall. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

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1. Introduction

Political participation is a form of governance by the people and by the people. The central government alone cannot adequately meet the diverse needs, deliver services, or ensure equitable benefits for all citizens. This limitation has led to the concept of decentralizing administrative power to local communities. Decentralization helps ease the burden on the central government and enables local authorities to respond to the specific needs of their communities more effectively, promptly, and accurately. It is a fundamental right in a democratic system that citizens have the freedom to shape their own way of life. Furthermore, it is believed that establishing a strong foundation for democratic governance requires active citizen participation in local self-government. This involvement also serves to reduce social inequality. (Maneesri, 2021)

Local governance plays a vital role in promoting citizen participation across various dimensions. The establishment of self-governing local administrative units not only encourages active public involvement but also supports local economic and social development (Meechai et al., 2024). Furthermore, it helps alleviate the central government's burden, which is often too broad in scope to effectively address the specific needs of local communities. Local government also serves as a foundation for cultivating future national political leaders. While advancement to the national level may still involve the patron-to-client system, the ultimate objective is to foster meaningful public participation. Citizens should be the foundation of the state, exercising sovereign power either directly or through their elected representatives. This democratic framework is grounded in the belief in individual liberty, autonomy, and equality to ensure that all citizens have equal rights and opportunities. (Wiriyachaiwong, 2018). Despite operating within small geographical areas and serving relatively small populations, local governance remains crucial. These variables enable citizens to engage indirectly in self-governance through the direct election of local administrators and council members. While this system is justified by practical necessity, it often results in a disconnect between citizens and local affairs. (Plangsree et al., 2022)

This research on political participation in Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province, aims to enhance the quality of life and promote self-reliance among local residents through active and sustainable community engagement. Recognizing the importance of civic involvement, it is therefore essential to also conduct a study on the political participation of residents in Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province. This approach supports human resource development and encourages communities to open up opportunities for public involvement in problem-solving, local development, and decision-making processes. Ultimately, it aims to improve the effectiveness of participation and contribute to the long-term well-being and sustainability of the community.

2. Research Objectives

1. To study the level of factors affecting political participation of the people of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province.

2. To compare the level of factors affecting the political participation of the people of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province.

3. Literature Review

Sirisingha (2016) studied an offline and online level of participation in politics and public administration of Thammasat University's students and found that the internet serves as a vital channel for promoting political participation. A greater number of individuals have participated in political activities through online platforms compared to those who have done so offline. Such activities include following political news, engaging in discussions and opinion exchanges, expressing opposition or protest, and participating in political campaigns. This study is quantitative research conducted through a survey method using structured questionnaires. A total of 398 respondents were selected using accidental sampling. The independent variables include the respondents' personal information such as place of origin, gender, academic year, faculty group, type of academic program, types of university activities participated in, and internet usage behavior. The dependent variable is the level of political participation through various channels.

Limwarapus, W. (2019) studied the political participation through online media in the case study of Post Today and Naewna and found that the online newspapers play a significant role in political participation by presenting information and providing knowledge, serving as a communication channel between the public and the media in relation to the government's political administration. They also facilitate the monitoring of government actions and the activities of political leaders. In terms of political participation through online newspapers, it was found that these platforms filter information, manage user comments, coordinate various activities, and provide opportunities for the public to express opinions on political news. Most of these opinions pertain to democracy, the performance of political representatives, and political discourse, all of which contribute to strengthening a democratic culture. Moreover, the influence of online newspapers on political development reveals that online media now plays a decisive role in shaping political progress. This influence has contributed to social structural changes, with technology becoming increasingly integrated into people's lives. As a result, political systems have evolved, with notable advancements in democratic practices. Online media provide continuous, unlimited access to information, empowering citizens with greater rights, opportunities, and equality in accessing news and political content.

Nomkasem & Chokworakul (2023) studied the guidelines for the development of political participation of the people in the area of Thepalai Subdistrict Municipality, Kong district, Nakhon Ratchasima province and found that the opinion level of people's political participation overall is low. Considering each aspect, it was found that the use of voting rights was at a moderate level in terms of participating in political activities, attending political demonstrations, and establishing or joining a political party, respectively. Moreover, the results of the comparison of the political participation of people classified by different ages found that the opinion level of participation was not different, whereas the levels classified by educational level and occupation were different. The development

guidelines for promoting people's political participation in the municipality of Thepalai subdistrict, Kong district, Nakhon Ratchasima province were as follows: The government should create awareness among the people and help disseminate information to society. Knowledge and understanding of respect for rights, freedoms, and laws, including the understanding of one's own freedom. Encourage discussions to find solutions to problems together. Recognise the role in proposing solutions to conflicts between communities, such as co-proposing or being an intermediary in solving conflicts between them. Leaders should express themselves in solving problems in the community.

4. Conceptual Framework

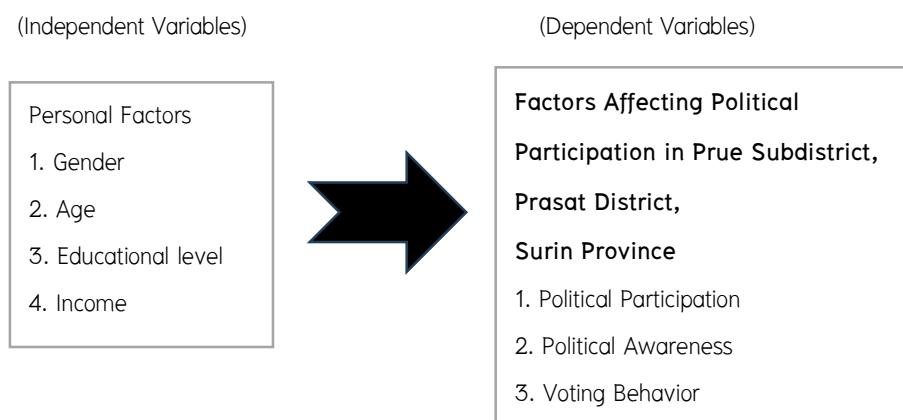


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research design

In this study, the research team employed a quantitative research methodology using questionnaires as the primary tool for data collection.

5.2 Population and sample.

The population in this study consisted of all 651 residents of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province.

The sample group consisted of 248 eligible voters aged 18 years and above, selected from the total population of 651. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's formula (1973) and selected through multi-stage sampling to ensure proportional representation. The sample was chosen at a 95% confidence level with a 0.05 margin of error.

5.3 Research Instrument Tools

The research instrument used in this study was a questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale. It was developed in alignment with the research objectives and conceptual framework concerning factors affecting political participation among citizens of Ban Sem. The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Section 1: General demographic information of respondents (5 items): gender, age, education level, and income.

Section 2: Level of factors influencing political participation of citizens in Ban Sem (23 items using a 5-point rating scale).

Section 3: Open-ended questions for suggestions regarding factors affecting political participation (3 items).

5.4 Data Collection

1. An official request was made to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Surindra Rajabhat University, to obtain permission for data collection. Approval was also sought from the village head of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province, to facilitate access to the sample group.

2. The questionnaire forms were prepared in sufficient quantity for the sample size. Together with the official request letter, they were submitted for approval and used in the field after providing an explanation of the research process to the local authorities and respondents.

3. The research team personally distributed and collected the questionnaires from the sample group.

4. Returned questionnaires were checked for completeness and accuracy. Incomplete or invalid questionnaires were discarded, and additional data were collected until the target sample size was achieved. Data analysis began once all valid questionnaires were compiled.

5.5 Data analysis and statistics used in data analysis

The statistics used in data analysis were frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. Moreover, the inferential statistics used the t-test and the F-test.

6. Results

1. Most respondents were female, totalling 135 individuals or 54.03%. Most respondents were aged between 41 and 50 years, accounting for 79 individuals or 31.85%. In terms of educational background, 135 individuals (54.03%) had completed lower secondary school or vocational certificate levels. Regarding monthly income, 195 respondents (78.63%) reported an average income between 5,000 and 10,000 baht.

Table 1. Analysis of factors affecting political participation among citizens based on three aspects.

Factors Affecting Political Participation	\bar{x}	S.D.	Results	Order
1. Political Participation	4.23	0.58	High	1
2. Political Awareness	4.10	0.65	High	2
3. Voting Behavior	3.87	0.09	High	3
Overview	3.87	0.50	High	

From Table 1, it was found that citizens had opinions on the level of political participation average value was high ($\bar{X} = 3.87$, S.D. = 0.50). When considering each aspect, Political Participation was the aspect with the high level and average value ($\bar{X} = 4.23$, S.D. = 0.58). Next, the aspect of Political Awareness was at the high level ($\bar{X} = 4.10$, S.D. = 0.65). The element of Voting Behavior was at a high level ($\bar{X} = 3.87$, S.D. = 0.50).

Table 2. Summary of the results of the comparison of the level of Political Participation in Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province

Hypothesis	Independent variable	Test Value	Sig.	Result	
				Accept	Reject
1	Gender	t – test	0.262	–	✓
2	Age	F – test	0.255	–	✓
3	Educational level	F – test	0.772	–	✓
4	Income	F – test	0.069	–	✓

From Table 2., the hypothesis was rejected. The comparison of the level of factors affecting the political participation of the people of Ban Sem, classified by personal factors including gender, age, educational level, and income, revealed that individuals with different genders, ages, educational levels, and average monthly incomes showed no differences in overall levels of political participation.

7. Conclusion

The conclusion following research objectives aimed to study the level of factors affecting political participation of the people of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province and to compare the level of factors affecting the political participation of the people of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province were as follows.

1. The overall findings indicate that the factors affecting political participation among the people of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province, were rated at a high level on average.
2. The comparison of political participation levels based on personal factors revealed no significant differences among individuals with varying gender, age, education level, or average monthly income.

8. Discussion

The overall findings indicate that the factors affecting political participation among the people of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province, were rated at a high level on average. As most people are familiar with using mobile phones and the internet to access political information and increasingly participate through social media, this has led to a higher level of public political participation. This finding is consistent with Sirisingha's (2016) research, which suggests that the internet serves as a vital channel for promoting political

participation. This is consistent with the research of Piamsomboon (2024), which found that the social and economic factors and political interests influenced the political participation of people, including membership in social groups, household income, attendance at political meetings, volunteering time to help with election campaigning, or running as a candidate in an election. However, the comparison of political participation levels based on personal factors revealed no significant differences among individuals with varying gender, age, education level, or average monthly income. This situation arises because there are 651 residents of Ban Sem, Prue Subdistrict, Prasat District, Surin Province. It is considered a large community, which contributes to continuous community development. Politics plays a significant role in this development, and there is also increased oversight of administrative operations. As a result, citizens gain knowledge and develop the community together, leading to relatively minimal disparities. This is consistent with the research of Nomkasem & Chokworakul (2023), who found that the different ages had the same opinion level of participation.

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