

# MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF MAWLNNONG, THE CLEANEST VILLAGE IN ASIA: A CASE STUDY

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the study is to examine the initial stimulating factors as well as the factors influencing persistency of community participation in the 'clean and green' initiative of Mawlnnong village, a village well-known for community collective efforts in preserving and promoting cleanliness and greenery, strict cultural adherence and nature-based tourism entity. The study was framed and conducted based on a number of firm theories. Interview schedule was used as a primary tool of data collection accompanied by observation method and percentage method was used to analyse the data. The findings in the study will contribute significantly towards understanding incentives of sustainable community participation in community development initiatives.

## Introduction:

Mawlnnong is a small village in East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya with a distance of around 90 Kms from the capital city of Shillong. The village comprised of 77 households and a total of 414 population (2011 Census), is well placed in the tourism map due to its tranquillity, strict cultural adherence and collective effort of the local folks to keep the village clean and green. The village was conferred the title of 'Cleanest village in India' in 2003 and the 'Cleanest village in Asia' in 2005 by the Discover Magazine. Since the time the title was conferred, the village became one of the popular nature-based tourist spots in the state of Meghalaya. The whole village looks like a botanical park with different species of endogenic and exogenic origins. Due to its enigmatic serene beauty, Mawlnnong was also known as 'God's own garden' to many travellers. The location of the village being tucked on a hilly region overlooking the plain of Bangladesh enhanced its potential for sightseeing, and the existence of unique living root bridge in the nearby village, Riwai, enhanced the potential of eco-tourism in the area.

The motivation for community participation in the process of transformation of Mawlnnong from being a poor ordinary village into a model cleanest village in Asian continent has not been brought into discourse so far. The motive behind community participation in community development initiatives may be different from one community to another depending on the context of the concerning issue affecting communities. The initial stimulating factors of participation may begin with either a positive or negative consideration, however, the motivating factor for consistency of community participation relies considerably on positive influencing factors. For instances, a community under a state of vulnerability to communicable diseases or disasters feel an immediate need to participate collectively to find plan and adopt measures in order to combat or to reduce vulnerability to such diseases or disasters. People's motive of participation is greatly determined by the outcome of participation. Krishna (2002) used the term 'social capital' to describe collective actions for mutual benefits within a particular community. Yieng and Zhou (2007) stated on two perspectives for consideration in community participation, i.e., the opportunity and recognition of all community members in decision-making process and sharing of benefits on account of the outcome of participation. People's expectation may be for economic gain (Mason, 2004) or for personal satisfaction and improvement of local community's quality of life (Noorhayati et al, 2015). Zhang (2010) described the kind of community participation depending on the opportunities and level of control bestowed upon local people.

## Theoretical Background:

Community participation is widely advocated as a critical element for success of sustainable tourism development (Lai, 2013). Lack of community participation in decision-making may result in failure in the implementation of rural tourism development plan (Miranda, 2007).

1. **Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943):** According to Maslow's theory, human beings respond in a way to attain a hierarchy of needs, initially to fulfil their basic needs and gradually to more complex needs up in the ladder, viz., safety needs, the needs to belong to social groups, self-esteem needs and lastly, self-actualization.

2. **Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964):** The theory stated that people will choose how to behave depending on the outcome of their behaviour. Expectancy theory has three elements viz. *expectancy*- the belief that efforts eventually lead to achievement of desired goal; *instrumentality*- the belief that reward can be achieved if the expectations of the work itself are met; *valency*- the value that is placed on the reward (Contactzilla, 2014).

3. **Arnstein's typology of participation (1969):** Arnstein's typology of participation was demonstrated in the form of an eight-rung ladder with the two bottom rungs being *manipulative* and *therapy* which describe a 'non-participation' by local communities. The second upper two rungs comprised of *information* and *consultation* in which local people are simply informed about the plan and consulted for ideas but the ideas may or may not be incorporated in the planning process. The third two rungs

up in the ladder included of *placation* and *partnership*. Placation represents a tokenism which allow the poor to advise even though the power holders still retain the overall power to decide and partnership represents a level of participation in which community is involved in trade-offs with power holders. The last uppermost rungs comprised of *delegated power* and *citizen control* in which provide full empowerment to the community people in decision-making process and full authority in planning in a self-mobilized way. Delegated power and citizen's control in Arnstein's typology of participation are the most crucial factors in determining community participation in community-based tourism.

4. **Freirean concept of conscientization and praxis(1973):** According to Paulo Freire, people's awareness of their own situation and social reality is an initial factor for community transformation. Conscientization enables community people to find the cause of their own problems. When people become aware of the root cause of their own problems, it is easier for facilitators to arrange a context in which a dialogue on the issue can take place among themselves in a *culture circle*. A plan of action to solve the problem may evolve which can be made more effective in due course of time through regular cycle of reflection and action on the success, failure and mistakes and hence people can become more and more capable of transforming their dissatisfied situation.

Therefore, based on Maslow (1943), Vroom (1964), Arnstein (1969) and Freire (1973), community participation in community development including community-based tourism is primarily determined by certain factors like community awareness of social reality and situations, community spirit or mutual understanding among community members including both rich and poor, recognition and incorporation of community's ideas in decision-making, full power issued to concerned community in development planning, and finally the outcome of participation.

#### Objectives of the study:

1. To find out the motivational factors pertaining to transformation of Mawlynnong into being the cleanest village in Asia.
2. To find out the factors for sustaining collective community efforts in keeping Mawlynnong village clean and green.

#### Research Questions:

1. What were the initial causes/factors that stimulated the people of Mawlynnong to start making and keeping their village clean and green?
2. How did the local folks of Mawlynnong furnish their dream of transforming the environmental condition of their village?
3. Does the initial initiative of keeping their village clean and green persists and pertains to long-term sustainability?
4. What are the potential factors underpinning the assumption that the 'clean and green initiative' of Mawlynnong conforms to long-term sustainability?

#### Methodology:

Universe- The population of the study comprised of all households of Mawlynnong Village.

**Sample-** In order to eliminate potential bias in a small population, census method was used in which all the 77 households of Mawlynnong village and hence 77 respondents each from each household were randomly selected. Therefore, census method for selection of households, and simple random sampling technique for selection of respondents from each household were used in the study.

**Tool:** Interview schedule containing both closed and open-ended questions with structured and unstructured questions, and observation methods were used in the study.

**Statistical technique-** Percentage method was used to analyse the data.

**Limitation of the study:** The study is limited only to 77 households of Mawlynnong village. Analysis on demography was limited only to age, gender, educational qualification, occupation and household income. Analysis on motivational factors is limited only to social and environmental factors.

#### Tabulation, analysis and interpretation:

##### Profile of household respondents

**Table 1.0 Age group of respondents:**

Sl . No.	Age group	No. of male respondents	No. of female respondents	Percentage		
				Percentage of male respondents	Percentage of female respondents	Overall percentage
1	20-30	10	9	13%	12%	25%
2	30-40	10	13	13%	17%	30%
3	40-50	11	6	14%	8%	22%
4	50-60	6	4	8%	5%	13%
5	60 and above	5	3	6%	4%	10%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.0, the household respondents belonged to the age groups 20-30 (13% males, 12% females), 30-40 (13% males, 17% females), 40-50 (14% males, 8% females), 50-60 (8% males, 5% females), 60 and above (6% males, 4% females). Male respondents were 42 and female respondents were 35 in number, accounting for a 54% and 46% respectively. Hence, 77 out of selected 77 household respondents had responded accounting for a 100% response.

**Table 1.01 Educational qualifications of respondents:**

Sl. No.	Educational qualification	No. of males	No. of females	Percentage		
				Percentage of male respondents	Percentage of female respondents	Overall percentage
1	Illiterate	0	0	0%	0%	0%
2	I-IV	8	11	10%	14%	24%
3	V-VIII	15	12	19%	16%	35%
4	IX-XII	13	8	17%	11%	28%
5	Graduation and above	6	4	8%	5%	13%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.01, no respondents were illiterate (0%), 10% male respondents and 14% female respondents belonged to class I-IV, 19% male respondents and 16% female respondents belonged to class V-VIII, 17% male respondents and 11% female respondents belonged to class IX-XII, 8% male respondents and 5% female respondents had finished either graduation or above.

**Table 1.02 Occupation of household respondents:**

Sl. No.	Present occupation	No. of males	No. of females	Percentage		
				Percentage of male respondents	Percentage of female respondents	Overall percentage
1	Cultivator	6	4	8%	5%	13%
2	Student	7	6	9%	8%	17%
3	House wife/house husband	0	4	0%	5%	5%
4	Self-employed	14	8	18%	10%	28%
5	Teaching	2	1	3%	1%	4%
6	Shopkeeper	10	12	13%	16%	29%
7	Tourist guide	3	0	4%	0%	4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.02, we see that 8% male respondents and 5% female respondents were cultivators, 9% male respondents and 8% female respondents were students, 5% female respondents were housewives, 18% male respondents and 10% female respondents were self-employed, 3% male respondents and 1% female respondents were involved in teaching, 13% male respondents and 16% female respondents worked as shopkeepers, 4% male respondents worked as tourist guides. None of the male respondents were house husbands and no female respondents were involved as paid tourist guides.

**Table 1.03 Household incomes per annum of households of the respondents:**

Sl. No.	Range of Household income (in Rupees)	No. of males	No. of females	Percentage		
				Percentage of male respondents	Percentage of female respondents	Overall percentage
1	Rs.70000-Rs.80000	12	8	16%	10%	26%
2	Rs.80000-Rs.90000	10	10	13%	13%	26%
3	Rs.90000-Rs.100000	6	9	8%	12%	20%
4	Above Rs.100000	14	8	18%	10%	28%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.03, we see that 16% male respondents and 10% female respondents said that the overall annual income of each of their household was between Rs.70000-Rs.80000, 13% each of female and male respondents said that the overall income of each of their household was in the range of Rs.80000-Rs.90000, 8% male respondents and 12% female respondents said that the overall income of each household ranged between Rs.90000-Rs.100000, 18% male respondents and 10% female respondents said that the overall annual income of each of their household was in the range of Rs.100000 and above.

#### Analysis of findings for Objective No. 1

**Motivational factors for community participation in transforming Mawlynnong into being the cleanest village in Asia**

**Table 1.04 To find out whether there was a particular individual/agency/institution that worked for planning and organization of the 'clean and green' initiative, and the name of the individual/agency/institution if any, and the year the initiative was first implemented**

<i><b>Q No.</b></i>		<i><b>Questions</b></i>		<i><b>Discretionary Responses</b></i>		
<i><b>1</b></i>	<i><b>A</b></i>	<i>Was there a particular individual/agency/institution that worked for planning and organization of the ‘clean and green’ initiative campaign?</i>		<i>YES [    ]. NO[    ]. If YES, proceed to 1B.</i>		
	<i><b>B</b></i>	<i>What was the name of the individual person/agency/institution that initially worked for planning and organization of the ‘clean and green’ initiative?</i>				
	<i><b>C</b></i>	<i>In which year was the ‘clean &amp; green’ initiative first implemented?</i>				
<b>Respondents’ responses</b>						
<i><b>Q No.</b></i>	<i><b>Response(s)</b></i>	<i><b>No. of males</b></i>	<i><b>No. of females</b></i>	<i><b>Percentage</b></i>		
				<i><b>Male responses</b></i>	<i><b>Female responses</b></i>	<i><b>Overall percentage</b></i>
<i><b>1</b></i>	<b>YES</b>	42	35	55%	45%	100%
	<b>NO</b>	0	0	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i><b>Q No.</b></i>	<i><b>Response(s)</b></i>	<i><b>No. of males</b></i>	<i><b>No. of females</b></i>	<i><b>Percentage</b></i>		
				<i><b>Male responses</b></i>	<i><b>Female responses</b></i>	<i><b>Overall percentage</b></i>
<i><b>2</b></i>	<b>Village Durbar</b>	42	35	55%	45%	100%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i><b>Q No.</b></i>	<i><b>Response(s)</b></i>	<i><b>No. of males</b></i>	<i><b>No. of females</b></i>	<i><b>Percentage</b></i>		
				<i><b>Male responses</b></i>	<i><b>Female responses</b></i>	<i><b>Overall percentage</b></i>
<i><b>3</b></i>	<b>In the year 1989</b>	42	35	55%	45%	100%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.04, we can see that 100% of the respondents including both males and females responded by saying yes there was an institution that worked out for planning and organization of the 'clean and green' initiative. 100% of the respondents responded that the village *durbar* or village council was the name of the institution. 100% of both male and female respondents also said that the clean and green' initiative was first implemented in the year 1989 and continued ever since.

**Table 1.05 Stimulating factors for community participation in the 'clean and green' initiative**

Q No.	Question	Multiple optional responses	
2	What were the reasons that stimulated the villagers of Mawlynnong to pay heed to the call for the initiative of making and keeping the village 'clean and green'	I	Due to increasing discomfort of living in a filthy environment full of human and animal defecation [ ]
		II	Due to sudden occurrence of water-borne diseases because of unhygienic and insanitary environment [ ]
		III	Due to increasing general awareness that an unhealthy environment would eventually breed a lot of communicable diseases [ ]
		IV	Due to the awareness that the 'clean and green' initiative will boost up tourism [ ]
		V	All of the above [ ]
		VI	Other reason(s):



Respondents' responses					
Responses	No. of males	No. of females	Percentage		
			Percentage of male responses	Percentage of female responses	Overall percentage
I	22	17	29%	22%	51%
II	1	2	1%	3%	4%
III	3	4	4%	5%	9%
IV	1	1	1%	1%	2%
V	2	1	3%	1%	4%
I & III	12	8	16%	10%	26%
I, II & III	1	2	1%	3%	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.05, majority of the respondents (29% males & 22% females) said that the initial factor which stimulated the residents of Mawlynnong to pay heed to the call for collective action in the 'clean & green' initiative was *the increasing discomfort of living in a filthy environment full of human and animal defecation*. With the increasing number of residents and increasing open pig rearing, the amount of human and animal wastes increases which stimulated the local people to take action. This proved the existence of a negative stimulus which stimulated the local folks of Mawlynnong to come up with the 'green & green' initiative. 4% of the respondents had mentioned of *sudden occurrence of water-borne diseases* as the initial stimulating factor for action. 9% said that it was because of *increasing general awareness on the health hazard of living in an unhealthy environment* that stimulated people to take action. 2% said had mentioned the stimulating factor behind the initiative was because of the expectation that *the clean and green initiative can eventually boost up tourism*. 4% responded the 'all of the above reasons'. 16% male and 10% female respondents said that there were two stimulating factors behind the initiative, viz., *the increasing discomfort of living in an unhealthy environment full of human and animal defecation, and the increasing general awareness on the consequent health hazard of living in an unhealthy environment*. 4% of the respondents responded by saying that there were three stimulating factors behind the implementation of the 'clean & green' initiative, viz., *the increasing discomfort of living in a filthy environment, the sudden occurrence of water-borne diseases because of unhygienic and insanitary environment, and the increasing general awareness on the consequent health hazard of living in an unhealthy environment*.

**Table 1.06 Strategy of implementing the 'clean & green' initiative**

Q No.	Question	Discretionary response			
3	How did the villagers pursue the ‘clean and green’ initiative from the year that it was first implemented till date?				
Respondents’ responses					
Response	No. of males	No. of females	Percentage		
			Male response	Female response	Overall percentage
In 1989, the village <i>durbar</i> instructed all residents to construct toilets, pigs should be kept in proper pens, and all residents should practice cleaning up the surroundings. The comfort of living in a clean environment prompted the village council and all residents to start planting flowers, shrubs and other ornamental plants in the year 2000 and the practice of cleaning and nurturing plants continued till this moment	42	35	55%	45%	100%
Total	42	35	55%	45%	100%

From table 1.06, it is clear that all respondents gave the same response with regards to the way of pursuing the 'clean and green' initiative and that the initiative was first started in the year 1989 when the village council felt the need for a change and hence instructed all residents to construct toilets, pigs should be kept in proper pens, and all residents should practice cleaning up the surroundings. The comfort of living in a clean environment prompted the village council and all residents to start planting flowers, shrubs and other ornamental plants in the year 2000 and the practice of cleaning and nurturing plants continued till now.

**Analysis of findings for objective No. 2****Table 1.07 Determining factors for sustaining collective community efforts in keeping Mawlynnong village clean and green**

<i>Q No.</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>Multiple optional responses</i>			
<b>4</b>	<i>What were the factors that help retaining the spirit of team work among the residents in pursuing the ‘clean and green’ initiative since the year it was first implemented till today?</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>The sense of comfort and freshness of living in a clean and beautiful surrounding [    ]</i>		
		<i>II</i>	<i>Health benefits [    ]</i>		
		<i>III</i>	<i>The initiative enhances social relationship and social equity [    ]</i>		
		<i>IV</i>	<i>Accompanied continuing economic benefits with tourism growth on account of cleanliness and natural beauty[    ]</i>		
		<i>V</i>	<i>Accompanied benefits in acquisition of knowledge through casual interaction with eco-tourists [    ]</i>		
		<i>VI</i>	<i>All of the above [    ]</i>		
		<i>VII</i>	<i>Other reason(s):</i>		
<b>Respondents’ responses</b>					
<b>Responses</b>	<b>No. of males</b>	<b>No. of females</b>	<b>Percentage</b>		
			<b>Percentage of male responses</b>	<b>Percentage of female responses</b>	<b>Overall percentage</b>
I	4	5	5%	6%	11%
II	3	2	4%	3%	7%
III	2	2	3%	3%	6%
IV	10	6	13%	8%	21%
V	3	4	4%	5%	9%
VI	18	15	23%	19%	42%
I, III & IV	2	1	3%	1%	4%
	<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>100%</b>

From table 1.07, 11% of the respondents responded *the sense of comfort and freshness of living in a clean and beautiful surrounding* as a motivating factor for retention of the spirit of team work in pursuing the 'clean & green' initiative since the time it was first started till now. 7% responded *health benefits*, 6% responded *the initiative enhances social relationship and social equity*, 21% responded *accompanied continuing economic benefits with tourism growth on account of cleanliness and natural beauty*. 9% responded *accompanied benefits in acquisition of knowledge through casual interaction with eco-tourists*. 42% responded multiple factors, i.e. *all of the factors mentioned above (I-V)* and the rest 4% responded *the sense of comfort and freshness of living in a clean and beautiful surrounding, the initiative enhances social relationship and social equity, and accompanied continuing economic benefits with tourism growth on account of cleanliness and natural beauty*. The fact that the majority of respondents giving multiple responses indicates that there are multiple factors of motivation to help retaining the spirit of team work or to sustain the community's collective effort in keeping the concerned village clean and green.

**Finding through observation:** On examining the pursuit for keeping and making the village clean and green, it was found out that the residents of Mawlynnong village usually wake up early in the morning and clean up the footpaths and house compounds either by washing or sweeping and uproot undesirable weeds, watering and providing soil to desirable plants. All habitants including young and old usually take part in the process. Division of works was usually seen during day time, children went to school and adults earn their livelihood by involving themselves in crop cultivation outskirts of residential area or in local businesses including sale of souvenirs, agricultural products, while others worked as shopkeepers, tourist guides, guest house managers, etc.

**Conclusion:** The main findings in the study indicates that it involved a negative factor to stimulate community action for a change. It clearly indicates that before 1989, the village of Mawlynnong was a filthy spot where pigs and humans defecate openly in pathways, crooks and corners of the village. Increase in number of residents led to increase amount of human and animal waste which made the living condition so uncomfortable. It was the increasing discomfort of living in a dirty environment which prompted the village council to initiate a community effort to make the village a clean and green one. With due course of time, people also became aware of the health hazard of living in a polluted environment and that awareness has helped in keeping up with the new effort. This complies with Freirean concept (Freire,1973) which says that people's awareness of their own situation and social reality is an initial factor for community transformation. With regards to motivational factors for persistence and retention of the community spirit in keeping up with the 'clean and green' initiative, the study found out that there are multiple positive factors of motivation, viz., the sense of comfort of living in a clean and beautiful surrounding, health benefits, social cohesion or the sense of belonging to social groups and social equality which complies with Maslow's theory (Maslow,1943) of needs. Other potential positive factors of motivation as found out in the study included of continuing economic benefits due to following tourism growth on account of cleanliness and natural beauty and accompanied continuing benefits in acquisition of knowledge through casual interaction with eco-tourists which therefore complies with Vroom's expectancy theory (Vroom,1964)

and Arnstein's citizen control in community participation (Arnstein,1969). As it is now, people of Mawlynnong keeping the village clean and green has become a habit of each resident right from the kindergartens to the old aged people. It is pertinent that the habit will remain with the future generation kids on account of the fact that children are born with that habit and nurtured with it and also of the fact that people will certainly prefer to live in a clean environment than to go back to the dirty situation of the past.

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