What social and emotional factors motivate users to ask questions, answer questions, & share information with other users on Academia Stack Exchange?

**Purpose**
- Information sharing a significant element of most users' information behaviour, incl. online & social media
- Social and emotional support factors are often important motivations for users' online sharing and their continued use of social media and social Q&A sites as informative and social resources
- Knowledge of socio-emotional motivations that influence online information sharing still limited

**Method**
- Academia Stack Exchange
  - Random sampling via SE API

1. **NORMS**
   - Guidance on how to act and behave in the academic community
   - Is it typical for colleges to cancel a course well into the semester? What options does an instructor have in this case?
   - 76802 – Anonymous Coward
   - Exploration, suggesting of ethical norms, their variances in academia
   - Is there a way to ethically hire somebody to write 'rough drafts' / 'extended outlines' for your PhD dissertation?
   - 72148 – Esteban

2. **COMMUNALITY**
   - Share to lead to greater acculturation into the Academia SE, academic communities
   - …resources regarding the history & meaning of a PhD?
   - 76415 – Marina_ANOVA
   - …try a second time [to get a PhD]? 75486 – grochmal
   - Explicit statements uncommon
   - …I will share my story as I hope some people might find it insightful.
   - 72784 – Martin Plávala

3. **SELF-EFFICACY**
   - Competency, but also egotistical, with bias towards own expertise
   - My supervisor wants to put someone else as first author when I have done most of the work on both. What should I do?
   - 75175 – AngsTheMan
   - Looking for a research-only career in a University can be much more challenging.
   - 77253 – Dmitry Savostyanov
   - In contrast, some well thought out, evidenced answers offering multiple perspectives

4. **SOCIAL COGNITION**
   - Interest in learning more about social qualities and appearances in academia, academic relationships
   - Does marrying your PhD supervisor put doubts on your PhD?
   - 76286 – Shahensha Khan
   - Can I look for a new post-doc without informing my current PI?
   - 75680 – acca

5. **REPUTATION and STATUS**
   - Acknowledgements of needing and wanting to improve reputation
   - I’d really like to get my research into the workshop track in order to get it noticed and more easily obtain funding…
   - 75940 – pir
   - Known impacts and norms
   - [Is] using pseudocode examples an act of plagiarism? If so where do I go from here? Shall I email the instructor openly and honestly tell them what happened?
   - 75750 – Braineee

6. **NEGATIVE MOTIVATIONS**
   - Some answers coupled with lack of empathy, unnecessary sarcasm, and circumstantial evidence
   - [Q:] How do I tell my advisor that group meetings may be too time-consuming…?
   - [A:] Directly, as if they were an adult human being instead of a soul-sucking demon.
   - 76527 – user3052817 and JeffE
   - As it turns out, teaching is actually a teachable skill… have you every [sic] actually studied the science of teaching?
   - 75876 – eykanal

**Conclusions**
- Stronger role for norms, community, self-efficacy
- Greater negativity concerning lack of empathy
- Stronger focus on socio-informational components
- Information seeking vs. empathy seeking
- Acculturation, learning similar to legitimate peripheral participation

Further work: Clarify whether coherence in norms, values, and behaviours is established, explore implicit empathetic considerations despite little explicit empathy; survey, semi-structured interviews ongoing