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4-H Youth Leaders: Acquisition of Leadership Skills Based on Perceived Influence

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4-H Youth Leaders: Acquisition of Leadership Skills Based on Perceived Influence

A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENTT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

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Cathy Bartlett Gray

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Abstract

This study focuses on youth perceptions of influence on others and leadership skills they may seek to acquire, particularly within the Maine 4-H program. Understanding the relationship between the youth perception of leadership influence and the skills they seek to acquire will enable 4-H club leaders and adult mentors to better facilitate acquisition of leadership skills. This study gains understanding from the perspective of current teen leaders in the Maine 4-H program through the use of personal interviews with active teen leaders. Findings indicate that Maine 4-H Teen Leaders do not necessarily recognize the influence they have with their peers and therefore, do not tend to seek out new leadership skills based on their perceived influence. Though some youths are interested in developing their leadership skills, being able to recognize their positive influence on others appears to be gap in overall leadership understanding.

Keywords: 4-H, youth leadership, teen leadership, Maine 4-H, youth perceptions

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In working with youth in county-level and state-wide 4-H youth activities, the researcher has noticed that some teens who are viewed as leaders seem to be motivated to put extra effort into learning new leadership skills by participating in additional 4-H programs or by taking on increased responsibilities. Conversely, other teens who are also considered to be leaders within 4-H appear to be lackadaisical in their efforts to advance their leadership skills. The researcher wants to know if the more active teen leaders view themselves as being influential among their peers and this is why they are more involved than other teen leaders, who perhaps are not aware of their positive influence on others.

4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization and serves approximately six million youth across the U.S. (National 4-H Council, 2019). With programming being delivered by Cooperative Extension, its focus is to empower young people with life skills such as leadership, confidence, goal setting, and mastery of learned skills. Encouraging a strong sense of belonging is among the top priorities of the staff, volunteers, and mentors connected with the program. As helping youth develop into well-rounded adults is a mission of the 4-H program, it is important to understand how teens view themselves during the development process. Arguably, a clear understanding of teens' perception of influence on their peers will shed light on the reason they choose to pursue additional leadership skills or not.

Assumptions within this study are that (a) youth want to share their leadership knowledge with others and will therefore find ways to teach or mentor younger 4-H members and peers; (b) teen leaders who believe they are influential among peers seek opportunities to learn additional leadership skills; and (c) that some teen leaders view

themselves as acquiring leadership skills that will benefit them only in the future and do not understand their application in the present. Therefore, the focus of this study is to understand why some 4-H teen leaders purposely set out to gain new leadership skills and others do not.

Understanding the relationship between the perception of leadership influence in youth who participate in 4-H and the skills they seek to acquire will enable club leaders and adult mentors to better facilitate further acquisition of leadership skills based on successful implementation of previously gained leadership skills. Additionally, further understanding of the impact of this relationship may be of interest to Maine state-level 4-H program leaders and local-level club leaders. While this study focuses only on teen leaders in the 4-H program in Maine, the implications of the study could benefit other youth-serving organizations. Leaders in this study are defined as teens who show interest in taking additional responsibility within the program other than basic membership or that have been identified as leaders by adult mentors, volunteers, or staff within the program.

Research to-date has addressed the general topic of youth leadership and positive influence from the perspective of community-based volunteerism, adult partners, or from the perspective 4-H alumni. In a study conducted with 4-H college-age alumni, Anderson, Bruce, and Moulton (2010) found that “involvement in the 4-H program develops life skill development which leads to a desire to continue involvement in the 4-H program” (p. 44). Based on this finding, there is evidence to suggest that 4-H members desire to learn new skills that can then be shared with others in the program. In a similar study conducted by Kenneth Jones (2009) that investigated the influence of youth leadership in a community-based context, it has been shown that perceptions of the

“youth became significantly more positive toward youth leadership and decision-making in their communities” (p. 257) when participants were actively engaged in the learning process. Jones’ (2009) study was focused on community volunteerism, which is similar to the 4-H program. Other research shows that adults who are involved in the lives of adolescents can positively influence how they view their leadership skills (e.g., Hancock, Dyk, & Jones, 2012), which is consistent with the researcher’s observations in the 4-H program. In a study conducted in Southern Maine of youth leadership skills development within community clubs and afterschool 4-H programs, it was found that nearly half of youth respondents reported using leadership skills during club activities (Personette, 2015). It was further reported by the respondents that they attribute their leadership knowledge and skills to their involvement with their 4-H club (Personette, 2015).

While the studies indicated above are somewhat similar to this study, there are deficiencies in the research. What is not addressed is the specific relationship of 4-H teen leaders’ own perceptions of positive influence with their level of emphasis on acquiring new leadership skills. Further, these studies have focused on either young adults who have aged out of the 4-H program, or have been studied from a different viewpoint, such as community volunteerism, extracurricular activities, or the benefits of youth-adult partnerships.

Working with the youth in Maine 4-H has provided opportunities for personal interviews which are analyzed for emerging themes. This information reveals how youth view themselves in leadership positions as well as their motivation to seek new leadership skills.

Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to discover if there is a relationship between the influence that 4-H teen leaders perceive they have on their peers and the level of emphasis they put into their leadership skills acquisition through participation in various 4-H activities. From the lens of the youth perspective, the focus is on the interactions they have with peers and various leadership activities within the program. Interviews are conducted and then analyzed for themes.

Research Questions

The primary question addressed in this study is: Why do some Maine 4-H teen leaders, ages 13-19, actively seek to acquire new leadership skills while other Maine 4-H teen leaders ages 13-19 do not? Additionally, sub-questions addressed in this study are:

1. What level of emphasis do 4-H youth leaders put into acquiring new skills in relation to their perception of their influence on others?
2. When youth have an awareness of their impact on others, do they actively seek out new skills, such as communication, critical thinking, facilitation, or mentoring skills to increase their impact on peers?
3. When youth have an awareness of their impact on others, do they actively seek out new peer or adult connections to be able to have a positive impact on them?
4. How do youth describe their perceived impact on their peers?
5. How do youth, who do not realize their impact on peers, view the usefulness of skills such as communication, critical thinking, facilitation, or mentoring?
6. What level of emphasis do 4-H youth who do not realize their impact on peers put into acquiring new leadership skills?

Delimitations

The research subjects in this study are between the ages of 13-19 and are current enrolled 4-H members in the State of Maine. The research subjects are also considered to be 4-H teen leaders by adult club leaders or by other mentors in the 4-H program. This limits the scope to only youth who are enrolled in the 4-H program in the state of Maine and does not include considerations of how youth in other programs and states view their level of influence on their peers.

Definitions

Phenomenological research - “a qualitative strategy in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants in the study” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 249).

Spark – “a passion for a self-identified interest, skill, or capacity that metaphorically lights a fire in an adolescent’s life, providing energy, joy, purpose, and direction” (Scales, Benson, & Roehlkepartain, 2011).

Teen Leaders - Leaders in this study are defined as teens who show interest in taking additional responsibility within the program other than basic membership or that have been identified as leaders by adult mentors, volunteers, or staff within the 4-H program.

Conclusion

By further evaluating the concept of how 4-H teen leaders perceive their influence on their peers in relation to their leadership skills, club leaders and adult mentors will be able to encourage the acquisition of new leadership skills and help youth understand their own impact on their peers. Understanding why youth have various levels of motivation

on gaining new leadership skills will impact the way youth-adult partnerships in the Maine 4-H program are examined.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Many studies have identified Positive Youth Development (PYD) as being an integral part of community and extracurricular programs. The general theme was that youth are positively influenced by leadership opportunities and interactions in youth-adult partnerships. While realizing the importance of PYD in youth programming, it is also essential to understand the motivations that youth have to participate in such programs and seek out leadership opportunities. Questions that drive the research revolve around understanding youths' perceptions of their influence on their peers and whether it impacts how active they are in the 4-H program's activities in the state of Maine. Studies that have been conducted in other states' 4-H programs, as well as in other PYD programs, show a correlation between positive youth-adult partnerships with perceived leadership skills development, however, none have specifically addressed the issue of perception of influence among peers and a drive to acquire new leadership skills. Research shows that there are several motivating factors for youth to choose to participate in activities that ultimately lead to leadership skills acquisition or leadership opportunities. These factors include direct adult influence, youth participation in activities, behavior, perceived influences, and having a voice in the process. The intention of this literature review is to reveal how various 4-H and other PYD programs approach youth leadership skills acquisition, especially in relation to influences on and by adolescents.

Adult Influence

Lerner and Lerner (2013) conducted an eight year longitudinal study of youth in grades 5-12 from 42 different states across the United States in an effort to understand the

connection between positive youth development and the social support they receive. The researchers found that youth who participate in 4-H are substantially more likely to contribute to their community and also display “consistently higher Active and Engaged Citizenship” (Lerner & Lerner, 2013, p. 5) than youth who had not participated in the 4-H program. Lerner and Lerner (2013) share that one strength of youth is their potential for change, which is why adult mentors are able to “positively influence the life paths of all children” (p. 11). Guiding youth to be better versions of themselves is a responsibility of influential adults in adolescents’ lives. Because adult influence is strong, positive youth development (PYD) is important to foster in schools, homes, and in community-based programs and is best promoted by teachers, parents, coaches, club leaders, and other adult mentors (Lerner & Lerner, 2013).

It takes an action on the part of the adult to influence youth. One way adults can accomplish that is by encouraging youth to participate in specialized activities that will stimulate leadership growth. Allen and Lohman (2016) researched the correlation between participation in the Iowa 4-H Youth Conference and life skill development of 4-H youth. They found that as 4-H members participate in activities beyond their club-level, their skills and experiences will be enhanced and “serve as an entry point for potential new 4-Hers” (Allen & Lohman, 2016, p. 11). Allen and Lohman (2016) shared that youth self-identified that serving in their communities is one way to serve as a leader. Youth understanding of leadership comes from observing how adults interact with and encourage youth to participate in leadership activities. The researchers cautioned that while youth want leadership development, they may not know what to expect from it, therefore it is important to be intentional when planning programs for youth (Allen &

Lohman, 2016). In interviews conducted with youth participants of the Iowa conference, some expressed that being a leader means listening to others' needs (Allen & Lohman, 2016), which is also modeled in the positive youth-adult partnership where adults may have an increased influence in youths' lives.

Youth Participation in Activities

Some studies have shown that just by participating in out-of-school activities, youth will be influenced to seek out new skills. Additionally, they develop positive adult relationships within those activities and can be encouraged to attend related activities beyond the local level. Bruce, Boyd, and Dooley (2004) share that 4-H youth develop positive life skills by participating in a variety of activities at the club-level, where participation is greatest, but also at the county and state levels. 4-H members believe their greatest opportunity to acquire new leadership skills is by holding an office such as president, secretary, or treasurer. However, Bruce et al. (2004), found that leadership skills development was greater when youth participated in activities beyond the club-level. Areas most increased include communication skills, career development, value development, and interpersonal skills. "It is also important to note that inter-relatedness plays an important role in defining and achieving motivation" (Bruce et al., 2004, para. 5). It was also noted by Bruce et al. (2004), that group process was an important skill gained by 4-H members who served in a state office role. The members defined group process as knowing how a group functions together and how individuals can influence a group.

One conclusion that Bruce et al. (2004) came to was that participation on State 4-H Council allowed for self-growth and self-discovery. Therefore, providing

opportunities and encouraging youth to participate in leadership activities outside of the local club level is essential to leadership growth. Moran, Bunch, and Cater (2019) discuss findings in relationship to the Louisiana 4-H Program saying that through the program, youth board members will gain leadership skills through giving back to the program as well as influencing change within the state program, local clubs, and in their communities. Moran et al. (2019) sought to discover a correlation between perceived leadership life skills, participation on the various state boards, and youth-adult partnerships. They found that 4-H members perceived they acquired leadership skills from their service on the state boards, increasing their interpersonal skills.

Youth who served on the state boards were found to have levels of involvement with other youth, adults, and youth-adult partnerships. Additionally, it was determined that more activity involvement correlated to increased perceived leadership skills development. It is recommended that 4-H staff provide numerous opportunities for leadership skills development that all youth may have the opportunity to acquire new skills (Moran et al., 2019).

Participation in activities can be strongly encouraged through youth-adult partnerships, where adults help youth recognize areas of interest. Arnold (2018) identified two aspects of Positive Youth Development that engage youth in life skills acquisition: developmental relationships and sparks. Sparks are loosely defined as a passion for an interest or skill that gives joy, purpose, or direction to a person. These sparks can drive a young person's focus which in turn, motivates them to succeed in all areas of their lives. Helping a youth to identify and nurture their spark helps them know who they are as a person. Developmental relationships are a key factor in facilitating this

process. Arnold (2018) discusses the importance of youth engagement in the 4-H program as being more than just showing up. To really develop life skills and acquire new skills, youth must be engaged in the activities. Arnold (2018) further noted that “Thriving, then, is the growth of attributes that mark a young person who is healthy and flourishing” (p. 149). In other words, the proposed Thriving Model encourages life skills development automatically when young people are engaged in areas of interest. Arnold suggests that incorporating specific outcomes, ultimately called the Thriving Model, into the 4-H program, youth will be positively impacted in life skills development while being engaged in program activities such as community service. By serving others, youth are being served in a way that connects them to life skills through positive relationships and interactions in new activities.

Behavior and Retention

Another factor that motivates youth to participate in leadership activities is behavioral intention. Ellison and Harder (2018) theorized that a person’s behavior is directly related to their intention stating that, “an individual is likely to form behavioral intention when he or she believes a behavior is likely to have positive consequences, falls within a range of acceptable social options, and is achievable” (p. 153). This theory can be applied to 4-H youth retention whereas if youth believe that their continued participation in the 4-H program will have positive consequences, they will be more likely to remain in the program. For example, in a study conducted with 4-H members from Florida who ranged in age from 15-18, the researchers found that many respondents did not have control over their choice for involvement in the program, they did all have positive experiences and even became self-motivated as they discovered more

opportunities in 4-H (Ellison & Harder, 2018). Each of the respondents eventually served as elected state 4-H officers. One conclusion that Ellison and Harder (2018) came to was that parental influence played a large role in the 4-H member's overall satisfaction of the program, in that youth were not given control of choice in the program, but found it to be a positive experience regardless. Implications of this research are that 4-H staff should be aware of the developmental stage of "need for experimentation among youth" (Ellison & Harder, 2018, p. 158) where short-term projects and experiences will be more appealing to youth ultimately keeping them engaged longer. When staff and adult mentors are heavily involved in designing programming for leadership activities, they can help youth understand the implications of their participation as far as leadership skills can be gained.

Adolescent's Perceived Influence

Studies suggest that many youth recognize their influence with peers and in their interactions. Likewise, many youth recognize the influences that act upon them, such as adult input. Hancock, Dyk, and Jones (2012) conducted a study of youth who participate in extracurricular activities to determine leadership skill development in relation to influences of adult support, gender differences, and the adolescent's perception of their leadership skills. The adolescents who were surveyed ranged in age from 13-19 and were students in Northern Kentucky. The researchers concluded that adult support had a great influence on how youth perceive their leadership skills. Further, they found that being involved in extracurricular activities will influence how youth perceive their leadership skills suggesting that youth directly benefit from having an official leadership position. Youth-adult partnerships and giving youth voice and choice is imperative to overall

leadership skills development within the extracurricular activities. This will help guide youths' perception of influence to seeing it as being positive.

Equally important, another study conducted with regard to youth perceptions, Jones (2009) researched youth perceptions of leadership within their communities and in relation with adult mentors. The results showed that youth perceptions of their leadership and decision-making skills increased as they became more engaged in their communities. Further, engaged youth perceived their relationships with adults as being a positive experience. Jones (2009) suggests that youth development programs seek to connect youth with their communities and adult mentors by allowing them to serve in leadership roles. As youth serve in their communities in various volunteer or leadership roles, they tend to have more positive perceptions of youth leadership and toward relationships with adults. It was concluded that providing experiential learning opportunities will encourage positive relationships with adults and communities and further encourage a positive perception of themselves as leaders (Jones, 2009). These studies show that adolescents' perception of influence is a strong indicator of how engaged they will be in leadership activities, however they do not identify what really motivates youth to seek out leadership skills beyond heavy prompting from adults.

Similarly, in a study conducted by Rutherford, Townsend, Briers, Cummins, and Conrad (2002) the researchers share that Future Farmers of America (FFA) youth participants of Washington Leadership Conference had higher self-perceptions of their leadership skills compared with youth who did not attend the conference but are still FFA members at the local level. According to Rutherford et al. (2002), this may suggest that youth who are more involved in FFA activities view themselves as leaders more often

than youth who are not as involved in activities outside of the local level. Additionally, the more active members also tended to take on higher level leadership roles. The researchers concluded that FFA participation and leadership self-perceptions are positively related in that the more active a participant is, the more leadership abilities they perceive they have. This study aligns with other research showing that when youth perceive themselves as leaders, they are more likely to participate in leadership activities.

Evidence of the youth perceptions of their own leadership skills can be seen in adolescents in Maine, as well. Research conducted by Personette (2015) of youth in Southern Maine discovered that youth in the 4-H program “strongly agree” that they use leadership skills they acquired in the 4-H program. It was further discovered that when youth had been participating for at least four years, they more often had a deeper understanding of their acquired skills as opposed to youth who had only been in the program for fewer than four years. Youth in this survey defined leadership as serving others, having influence, taking charge, and being able to effectively get work done. All youth in the study agreed that they had gained a better understanding of others as part of leadership skill development (Personette, 2015).

Youth Voice

Teen leaders believe they have an influence on others when they can see change directly relating to their own input; in other words, influence is directly correlated between the actions from others and the actions of the youth. Creating change is valued by youth and should be encouraged in programs where adolescents are actively engaged. One way is to incorporate youth voice and choice through critical youth empowerment (CYE). Jennings, Parra-Medina, Hilfinger-Messias, and McLoughlin, (2006) suggest that

CYE should build on or integrate youth development models that emphasize and promote youth engagement where they can create change in processes around them. Processes might include values, organization and societal policies, values, norms, or structures.

The purpose of the research was to understand how the youth participants perceived the program so that changes could be made to the program in the future. The authors found six key dimensions that are integrated into the CYE model:

- A welcoming and safe environment;
- Meaningful participation and engagement;
- Equitable power-sharing between youth and adults;
- Engagement in critical reflection on interpersonal and sociopolitical processes;
- Participation on sociopolitical processes to effect change;
- Integrated individual and community-level empowerment.

One major benefit of these six dimensions as part of a youth program is that there is an increased level of self-efficacy and awareness, plus an added sense of purpose. Jennings et al. (2006) found that this occurs when adults partner with youth and recognize each other's strengths. Additional findings in the research indicate that youth recognize the power that adults have and also understand how to utilize that power for their own benefit. In other words, youth may lean on adults' influence in areas where they may not be automatically recognized for having a valuable opinion.

Jennings et al., (2006) noted the need for youth-chosen activities that will encourage youth to seek new roles and skills while being reflective of past learning. To facilitate this, there needs to be many opportunities for youth to practice leadership skills, including "having the responsibility for decision-making" (Jennings et al., 2006, p. 44).

One way to encourage youth leadership in the community, is to incorporate social change efforts into their service work. The CYE model promotes the idea that youth are truly empowered when they have the capacity to change the processes and structures they are interested in.

Sense of Power or Laziness

Some youth are motivated to succeed because of the power they believe they will gain by holding positions of leadership. Kagay, Marx, and Simonsen (2015) asked students why they chose to pursue leadership positions in their local Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapters surmising that leaders find personal satisfaction from the experience in addition to feeling the responsibility to be engaged in leadership. The youths' motivations for seeking leadership positions were identified as being control, achievement, and recognition. However, some students were not motivated to seek leadership roles saying that a lack of good communication skills on their part is a barrier (Kagay et al., 2015). Youth who participated in the FFA defined leadership as helping people and making a difference in others' lives and having an influence on them to become better (Kagay et al., 2015). The participants self-identified some leadership skills, such as decision-making and taking charge of the work, as being learned through participation in the program. These simple forms of power may be enough motivation to entice youth to participate in programs that build leadership skills.

It was noted by Kagay et al., (2015) that influence from others, including support from friends and family and especially from older mentors, impacted a youth's decision to pursue leadership roles, reiterating the findings of other studies in this review. While some youth pursue leadership roles, others clearly do not. Kagay et al., (2015) saw a

significant difference between officers' and members' motivations toward leadership roles. Members who did not seek out leadership roles were viewed as lazy and irresponsible by the officers, while those members viewed leadership as being too formal and not having much significance in comparison to the amount of fun a member could have in the program. This shows that one motivating factor may not wanting to be viewed by others as being lazy. Of those members who did choose to pursue leadership roles, most of the officers felt as though the experience enhanced their leadership skills and that they gained new skills such as working well in groups, public speaking, and being more outgoing (Kagay et al., 2015). In reflection, the youth appeared to notice real skills rather than the power they thought they would have.

Conclusion

It is evident that youth desire to have leadership skills and seek out ways to acquire them, however it is less evident that youth realize the influence they have among their peers in a way that motivates them to excel. Keeping youth engaged over many years and with positive youth-adult partnerships is an effective use of Positive Youth Development and it encourages youth to be leaders where they are. Having an understanding of youth motivation to excel in leadership skills will enable adult mentors to recognize when there is a lack of motivation in a particular area, thereby helping to direct youth on the right path.

Chapter 3: Method

4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization and serves approximately six million youth across the U.S. (National 4-H Council, 2019). With programming being delivered by Cooperative Extension, its focus is to empower young people with life skills such as leadership, confidence, goal setting, and mastery of skills. Encouraging a strong sense of belonging is among the top priorities of the staff, volunteers, and mentors connected with the program. As a youth-serving program, members range in age from 5–19 years old and may participate in the program in a variety of ways: afterschool programs, classroom, clubs, workshops, one-time enrichment sessions, or 4-H camp enrollment. Youth participating in this study are recognized as teen leaders either by self-identification or identified by adult mentors, are between the ages of 13 and 19, are enrolled members in the Maine 4-H program, and are willing to participate. The sample size is 5 participants.

Research Design and Its Underlying Assumptions

The researcher has conducted a phenomenological study of youth ages 13-19 who are enrolled in the 4-H program in the state of Maine. Youth who are part of the study are defined as leaders either by self-identification or by adult mentors. Phenomenological research is defined as “a qualitative strategy in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants in the study” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 249). This format was chosen by the researcher because the experiences of the youth can best be shared and understood by the interview process.

The interview questions are designed to gain understanding about a youth's perception of their leadership skills and influence among their peers. Further, the questions may reveal the level of importance youth place on gaining new leadership skills as well as describe how leadership activities affect their leadership perception.

Research Sample

This research was conducted within the Maine 4-H Program which takes place in schools, homes, Cooperative Extension offices, UMaine campuses, and/or other public buildings, all of which are non-controlled environments. The research participants are 4-H enrolled members ages 13 -19 who are actively engaged in any 4-H sanctioned activity such as club meetings, committees, planning boards, youth councils, and/or county or state-wide 4-H events. Youth who were chosen to participate in the study were given a Youth Assent Form and permission from the youth's parent or legal guardian was obtained on a Parental Consent for Participation Form. After permission was gained for participation, youth were interviewed in an online recorded private conference using the Zoom platform. Interviews were conducted between October 1, 2019 and January 10, 2020.

The research participants consisted of five youths currently enrolled and active in the Maine 4-H program and who are considered to be teen leaders either by self-identification or by Cooperative Extension 4-H program staff and/or volunteers. Names have been changed to maintain confidentiality. Each interview was conducted in a one-on-one meeting using Zoom video-conferencing.

Realizing that there could be research bias, it should be noted that one of interviews was with the researcher's own child who is an active teen leader in her county.

To keep the interview on a professional-level basis, it was requested that the interaction during the interview would be modeled as if there were no familial relationship. This arrangement was not uncommon to this relationship as the researcher and child must often interact in this fashion due to the researcher's position at Cooperative Extension as well as the youth's involvement there. That interview was conducted via Zoom from different locations in an effort to maintain professionalism and consistency. One of the primary concerns from a researcher's point-of-view was that the daughter would give the answers she thought the researcher was looking for, however, it was not the case. Of the remaining respondents, three were teens that were known to the researcher through working with them at various state 4-H events. Knowing the teens made getting interviews with them somewhat easier as a certain level of trust had previously been gained. Lastly, there was one interview was with a youth that was not previously known, but was recommended to the researcher as a good candidate for this research. Not having a prior relationship with the youth was only momentarily uneasy during the interview, but the youth's confidence in her own abilities and the researcher's passion for working with teen leaders smoothed any potential awkwardness.

Data Collection

Data was collected during the months of October 2019 through January 2020. Data collection was through recorded interviews where notes were taken and then were transferred to digital form so that sorting was easier to categorize using the qualitative analysis software, NVIVO.

Data Analysis

Data was organized categorically, reviewed multiple times, and coded while looking for emerging themes which were also categorized. Taped interviews were transcribed, categorized, and coded.

Methods of Achieving Validity

The researcher is employed in a field with other youth development professionals who are qualified and willing to review the researcher's notes and reports; therefore, to achieve validity, the researcher has used peer debriefing. Peer debriefing is used as a method to enhance the accuracy of the findings by reviewing the research, asking questions, and having the information resonate with reviewer (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Peers in this research are Cooperative Extension staff working in the 4-H Youth Development program in the State of Maine.

Chapter 4: Findings

There were three primary understandings that emerged from the interviews with the teen leaders: youth tend to equate teaching with leadership, youth sometimes recognize the influence they have among their peers, and youth look for leadership opportunities to have fun rather than for the significance of the training they will receive. Being able to recognize influence among peers confirms findings from other researchers, however this study reveals that having influence with others does not necessarily motivate teen leaders to seek out additional leadership skills as the researcher had supposed.

Equating Teaching with Leadership

The first major theme in this research is teen leaders tend to equate teaching with being a leader. When the teens were asked, “What do you think it means to be a good leader and what makes you feel like a leader?” two respondents specifically mentioned how teaching plays a role. Noel shares, “I think that I’m a leader because I have worked really hard at teaching other people and making sure that they know what’s going on.” Another teen, Morgan, had this to say: “being a leader is somebody that can not only help themselves to improve but also to help others improve and to show and teach other people as you go about doing something or activity.” Two other teens discussed teaching as part of leadership as well. Responding to the question “what are your goals for being a leader?” Mandy shared,

Well right now, I would like to be a teacher, kind of. Not like in the school system. I wouldn’t mind being a dance teacher or a physical workout trainer. So, it could be like group teaching or it could be individual teaching. But teaching is definitely leadership.

Likewise, when asked how they know they have demonstrated effective leadership, Sydney replied, “I feel like some of the things that I’ve helped teach other people, [are] things that they have used afterwards, like in their life.” Noel expressed a similar thought process sharing when she has taught someone how to do something and then later sees that person performing the learned technique or strategy, she knows she has “effectively taught them.” She went further in her explanation by saying “I think that being a leader really means teaching other people and the ability to teach other people.”

Pressing further to understand the relationship of how teaching is like leadership, probing questions were asked. The following exchange between myself and one of the teens explains:

RESEARCHER: Tell me a little bit more about how being a teacher is being a leader.

Mandy: Well, if you look at the qualities of a leader and you look at the qualities of a teacher, a lot of them are the same. Putting others before yourself, that’s a quality in both teachers and leaders. And, working well with others. You can’t have a student and go, “Ooo, I don’t work with you so well, so I’m just gonna go find someone else to work with.” You cannot do that! [laughing] I know, sometimes, it depends on the situation, you can say, “Our personalities don’t work and I’m going to find you somebody else who will work with you.” But when you have a huge class of like kids, you can’t be like, “Ooo, I am not a fan of you.” That doesn’t work, you know.

RESEARCHER: So then would you have to find a way to work with them, whether you liked them or not?

Mandy: Right. So a lot of the qualities are the same in leadership and in being a teacher.

Prior to the above dialogue, Mandy had explained some attributes of good leaders include: “put others first,” “work well with others,” “deal with stress,” and “handle complicated situations.” Though it was not directly stated that teaching is equivalent to leadership, Jules shared, “I guess to be a good leader is to be someone that others can look to for guidance” which is similar to the belief of the other respondents in that guiding and teaching are similar.

The connection between teaching and leadership came up often in the conversations with the teen leaders. For example, when asked “what types of leadership activities have you participated in and where do you look to find them?” four of the five respondents directly spoke of teaching others. Morgan shared that after she joined a karate class several years ago, she and other older members of the group were given leadership opportunities: “[the instructors] started doing some leadership things with kids that were more advanced to help them to learn how to teach the younger kids.” Sydney also shared about teaching opportunities when asked the same question: “At the fairs, I’ve done different leadership activities. In the Farm to Fair exhibit at [the] Fair teaching the public about farming and how it works.” Sydney later stated that when she has the opportunity to teach others new things she positively influenced other people by making them more aware because the people are better informed. A specific instance was around the use of animal sticks for showing. Sticks are tools used to help direct animals by touching certain spots on the animal’s body or to make a loud noise to get the animal’s attention. She noted that some fair goers believed the sticks were cruel for the animals.

Sydney took the opportunity to teach the fair goers the proper use of the sticks and assured them there was no harm to the animals.

Noel also spoke of participating in leadership opportunities that includes educating others, especially at the local 4-H club level where they share knowledge of animal care by teaching others that don't have goats how to properly keep them. Other leadership opportunities that Noel has sought out include being serving as Vice President of the 4-H club, serving on the county teen council, and leading classes at a mini-forum. Mini-forum is a 4-H event where teens are the educators, and oftentimes the organizers of the event. 4-H youth around the county or state are invited to attend by signing up for various workshops taught by the host teen leaders. Noel says "These are all leadership opportunities!"

Mandy shared a similar story of teaching others as leadership opportunities. While on a State 4-H sponsored national trip, Mandy described a time when she didn't get to lead a group but did get the chance to teach other participants some new dances: "Well, I taught a couple people a couple dances that I knew. It wasn't like in front of the whole 300 people that were there. But, it was just a small group of maybe like 10 people."

Recognizing Influence

Most of the youth interviewed recognized the influence they had on their peers to some extent, although, it was not apparent to them how much influence they actually had. Some stated they knew they had influenced others when they saw their peers acting on instructions the youth had given, implying that influence was the same as teaching. Further, some youth thought they had a positive influence on others, but when asked a

second time in a different way, they could not identify how they had been an influence on their peers. An example of this is when Mandy was asked “do you think you’re influential and how so?” she said she had hoped she had been, but said, “I just don’t know if I actually am or not” which may indicate her being able to recognize influence is not fully developed.

Morgan shared a similar sentiment, although she was a little surer she had actually been influential. She was also asked if she had been influential and how so. After responding with “Yeah, I think so. I think that it might not be obvious at the time,” she went on to relate how she had taught others a new skill. Jules did not appear to recognize her influence on her friends at all. She shared that “maybe” she had been influential, but “not a lot.” She recounted a story of when she was at school with her friend-group discussing how they are like a family. Her friends thought she was like the “mother” of the group because she was “the calm one.” This story was the extent of her relating her own influence on her peers. Of all the respondents, Noel was most certain of her own influence. She gave several examples of the “impact” she had on her peers and adult mentors: her mom increased the number of goats in her herd, kids in her club are now more involved with their goats, and she became “a lot closer with adults around showing goats.” Noel completed sharing examples by saying, “teaching is leading.”

Seeking Leadership Opportunities

Youth were asked about their motivation for participation in leadership activities as well as where they look for opportunities to learn new leadership skills. Some of the teens were motivated by the “fun” of an activity rather than for the skills they would gain. And though some teens actively sought out opportunities just to have some fun, others

did not purposely seek out special activities at all, but rather made a choice about participation when the opportunity presented itself.

For Sydney, there were several motivations that drew her to various activities. While she listed “because it is fun” as her primary reason for joining some activities, she also talked about her desire to share her 4-H experience with others. She discussed how participating in the fair meets both of those motivational needs. However, she told of a third motivational factor that enticed her to one specific opportunity:

“One of the reasons I’ve done that before was because there was a scholarship to do that, but that wasn’t the only reason I volunteered to do it [laughing].... I want to try to get some of the other youth in my beef club into public speaking because that’s a really important life skill. You know, you use it a lot.”

Sydney said that her desire to join the state public speaking was to help her local club members increase their communication skills, which she related to being a good leader in her club.

Morgan’s motivations for seeing leadership opportunities is to feed her need for organization, demonstrate leadership to younger members, as well as to have fun. She serves as the president of two different clubs in two different counties and enjoys being able to share her strength of keeping things organized. She shared this about her two clubs:

“One of them is a fairly new club, and the other one has a lot of younger children coming up in it, and I think that I can be a good backbone and try to give some good insight and organization to keep everything running smoothly, but still be educational and have a good time.”

Morgan says she does not always seek out specific leadership opportunities; sometimes they find her, but fun is definitely a determining factor as to whether or not she participates. She reported, “Sometimes I seek them out, but other times they come to me, and I’m like, “Yeah, sure, that’ll be fun.”

Jules is another teen that participates in leadership activities because they are fun. When talking about doing public speaking, Jules said that her 4-H club leader encouraged her to join because “ [her leader] said that she believes it’s a very important quality to have and to work on...being able to speak in front of people and have your opinion heard.” And while she felt that was a good reason to participate, Jules’ primary motivation was for the enjoyment of competition. She shared, “I participated in the state competition because I enjoyed the normal competition and I felt like I could do a good job at it and wanted to challenge myself.” Though Jules enjoyed participating in public speaking and other activities, she does not necessarily seek them out. When asked where she finds opportunities, Jules stated, “I don’t know if I’d really say I look for them. I mean, I don’t know, I just... sometimes I do something that’s leadership, sometimes I don’t, you know?”

Mandy’s motivation experience was a little different in that, while she enjoys participating in various leadership opportunities, her motivations are learning and giving back to the group. Early in the conversation with Mandy who is a lifelong 4-H member, she also shared that she really likes to be recognized for her efforts, and being a part of a committee or club provides more opportunities to be recognized she said. In speaking of her motivation to participate in leadership activities, she shared,

“A big part of it is the learning, because I like learning experiences. And then also, I like being a part of committees. A lot of times it’s [that] I have something to offer so I want to be on that team so I can give them my advice or opinion or whatnot. So it’s knowing that I have something to offer that they might not have thought of before.”

When Mandy does seek out leadership opportunities, she typically looks at offerings through the 4-H program such as Citizen Washington Focus (CWF) or 4-H@UMaine she shared. Both opportunities are statewide offerings where teens learn more about our nation’s capital and how the government works (CWF), or experience a weekend on a university campus where workshops are taught by UMaine professors (4-H@UMaine).

Another motivation for participating in leadership activities, according to Noel, stems from a lifelong involvement in the 4-H program. Like Mandy, she has been in 4-H since she was eligible to join: “I have always been in 4-H...people have encouraged me. Always being in 4-H means the motivation has always been there.” She added that she is also motivated to take care of the animals she raises and by participating in various 4-H activities, she has opportunities to learn more about caring for them.

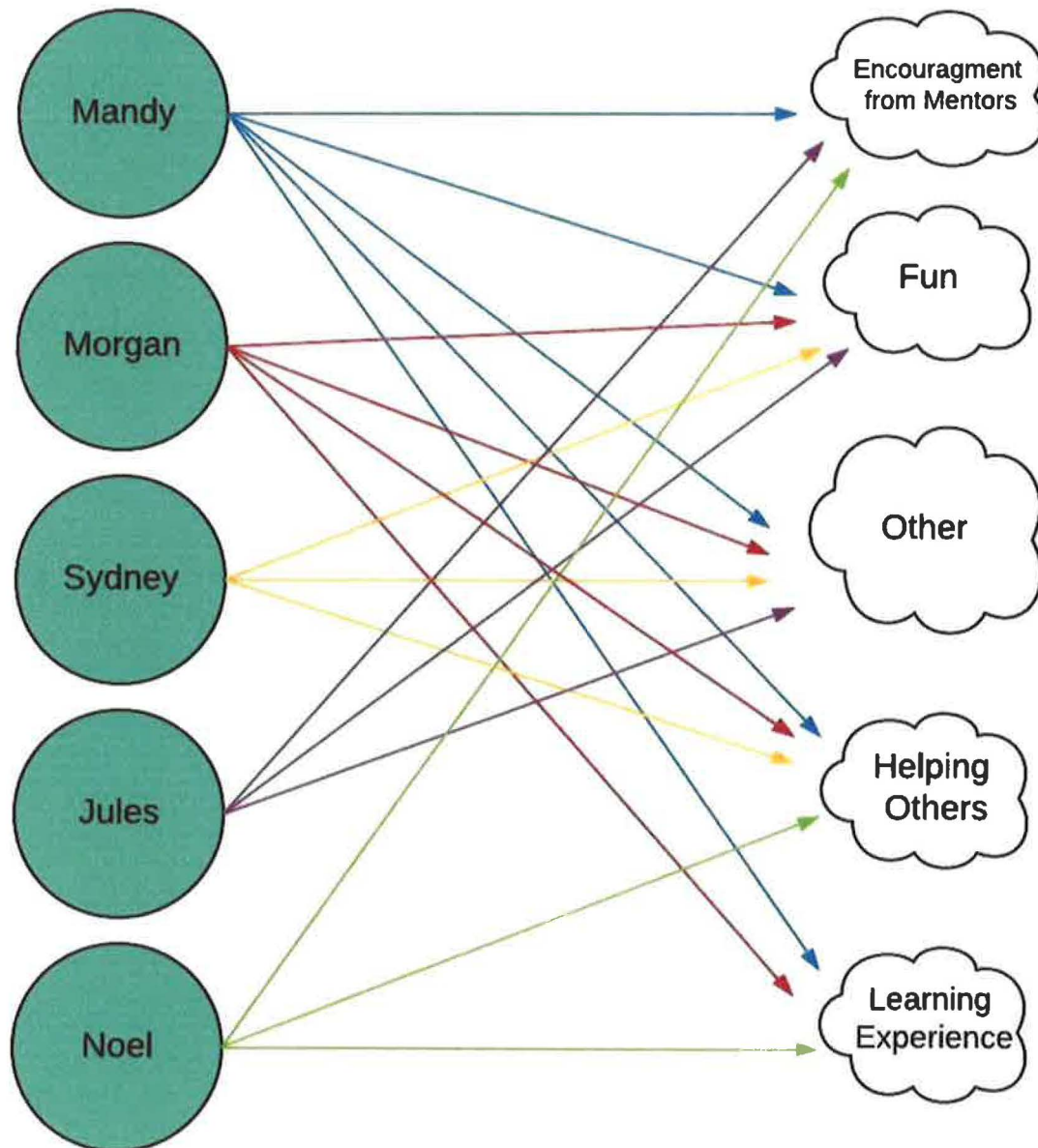
Summary

This study revealed some unexpected motivation factors including “helping others,” “recognition,” “to have fun,” “learning experience,” and “encouragement from mentors.” Additional motivations identified by individual participants rather than by multiple youth in this study include: recognition, organization, competition, and shared experience. *Diagram A* shows these relationships. The motivation to “help others” was identified by multiple participants in this study as both a reason to participate in

leadership activities as well as a definition of what it means to be a good leader.

However, helping others is a broad term used to mean “teach,” “show,” “give,” and “help.”

Diagram A



Youth Motivation Factors Relationships

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

The focus of this study is to understand why some 4-H teen leaders purposely set out to gain new leadership skills and others do not. Understanding the relationship between the perception of leadership influence in youth who participate in 4-H and the skills they seek to acquire will enable club leaders and adult mentors to better facilitate further acquisition of leadership skills based on successful implementation of previously gained leadership skills.

In setting out to discover the relationship between 4-H member involvement and leadership skills acquisition, the interviews with the five teen leaders have shown that if leadership program offerings appear to be a fun activity, youth are more likely to participate willingly. Learning new leadership skills in the process of participating is a bonus. Through interviewing the five teen leaders, it is also clear that the ability to recognize influence with peers and adults still needs to be matured. 4-H club leaders and staff may be able to assist youth in learning to recognize when they are influencing their peers or adult mentors by having regular, reflective conversations following club meetings or activities.

The research did reveal a few of the motives that teen leaders have in learning new leadership skills but did not necessarily indicate why some teen leaders are lackadaisical in their efforts to advance their leadership skills. At the beginning of this research, it was hypothesized that highly active teen leaders knew they were influential among their peers and therefore sought out new leadership skills because of their influence. However, none of the research revealed a correlation to perceived influence and leadership skills acquisition. This study seems to suggest that youth who believe

they have been a good influence continue to perform the same behaviors (teaching others) but do not seek out better ways to teach. Discussions with youth showed that new skills learned through various leadership opportunities are shared with peers, but are not recognized as a better way to teach, for example.

Implications for 4-H Leaders and Staff

With specific skills training 4-H volunteers and staff can learn to help youth identify when the youth have been influential. 4-H club leaders, staff, and adult mentors play an instrumental role in the lives of youth, as indicated in previous research (Hancock, Dyk, & Jones, 2012), and therefore can lead youth to participate in leadership activities that will develop their skills and influence. Guiding youth to new leadership opportunities by offering attractive workshops that appear to be based on fun will have an impact on how youth do acquire needed leadership skills. For example, when leadership workshops are offered, they should be given a fun title and description that will appeal to the entertainment level youth seek. That is not to suggest that workshops should only include “fun” activities, but should gain youths’ attention so they will want to participate. Further, cleverly addressing leadership skills education through experiential learning opportunities may help the lessons stick with the youth, potentially causing the youth to want to share what they have learned with others.

Adult mentors have many opportunities to encourage youth to be a positive influence to their peers and to other adults in their lives. When mentors regularly share with youth how the youth’s actions or behaviors have positively impacted them, youth may be more likely to continue those actions and behaviors toward others. Having

regular conversations that are reflective in nature will help youth recognize how their behaviors have immediate impact on others.

4-H staff can help develop programs to entice teen leaders to participate and also train club leaders and other adult mentors to lead such activities. Additionally, staff can provide opportunities in new leadership roles for teen leaders by inviting youth to serve on state committees or youth action boards. 4-H staff members may be positioned to create roles for teen leaders to serve on various boards, or to serve as youth advisors on adult-led committees. Setting aside reflective or feedback sessions with youth directly following meetings might help youth understand the impact or influence they had in the meetings.

Conclusion

It is essential that adults help youth know when they have been influential and to help them seek leadership opportunities. When youth recognize times they are being a positive influence on others, they may continue to display those positive behaviors or actions. Further, youth may gain confidence in their abilities to lead their peers by sharing about their own experiences. Seeking leadership opportunities for the skill is not why youth will participate in the activities, so it is up to the adults to appeal to a youth's sense of fun and enjoyment to entice them to join. The outcomes of greater youth participation will be worth the extra effort.

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FINAL APPROVAL FORM

University of Southern Maine

Master in Leadership Studies

April 26, 2020

We hereby recommend that the thesis of Cathy Bartlett Gray entitled *4-H Youth Leaders: Acquisition of Leadership Skills Based on Perceived Influence* be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master in Leadership Studies.



(signature)

Thesis Advisor



(signature)

Second Reader

Accepted



(Signature)

Leadership and Organizational Studies Department Chair

Appendix A
CITI Certificate

(See next page)



Completion Date 28-Oct-2018

Expiration Date 27-Oct-2022

Record ID 28846537

This is to certify that:

Cathy Gray

Has completed the following Citi Program course:

Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (Curriculum Group)

Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher (Course Learner Group)

1 - Basic Course

(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

University of Maine System



Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w26554e89-9918-4885-96a5-cdf6a1142bc5-28846537

Appendix B

Interview Questions

What do you think it means to be a good leader and what makes you feel like a leader?

How do you know when you have demonstrated leadership? What about *effective* leadership especially?

What motivates you to participate in 4-H activities outside of your club or in addition to being just a club member? (ex. club officer, committee member, state public speaking, teen council)

In what ways do you think that you have been a good influence to your friends or adults in or out of 4-H? What kinds of positive action has someone else done because of your influence?

How do you believe you are perceived by your peers as a leader?

What types of leadership activities have you participated in and where do you look to find them?

Why is being a leader important to you and what are your goals for being a leader?

Tell me about the importance of gaining new skills (is it important to you or does it matter much to you)?

When you feel like an effective leader, does it make you want to learn more about leadership? In what ways?

If you do not see yourself as a leader (even though others see you as a leader), what value do place on leadership life skills you now have such as public speaking, critical thinking, or facilitation skills? What about gaining new leadership skills?

Probing questions will also be used to supplement the above questions as needed.

Appendix C

University of Southern Maine
PARENTAL CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Project Title: 4-H Youth Leaders: Acquisition of Leadership Skills Based on Perceived Influence

Principal Investigator(s): Cathy Bartlett Gray, Leadership and Organizational Studies Graduate Student, University of Southern Maine cathy.gray@maine.edu

Introduction:

General requirement language:

- Please read this form, you may also request that the form is read to you. The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about this research study, and if you choose for your child to participate, document your decision by signing your name below.
- Your child will be provided with information about this study if permission for your child to participate is received. If your child does not wish to participate they will not be included in the study. • You are encouraged to ask any questions that you may have about this study, now, during, or after the project is complete. You can take as much time as you need to decide whether or not you want your child to participate. Your child's participation is voluntary. • Please share this information with any other parent or legal guardian with caregiving responsibility for your child.

Why is this study being done?

- The principal investigator is seeking understanding about youth gaining new leadership skills.
- The results of this study could help club leaders and adult mentors in the 4-H program guide youth to see their potential as leaders and help them gain new skills.

Who will be in this study?

- Current enrolled 4-H members who are between the ages of 12 and 19 who are identified as teen leaders in the State of Maine are being asked to participate.
- Your child has been identified as a potential participant because they self-identify, or a 4-H leader or staff person has identified them, as a teen leader in the State of Maine 4-H program.
- Youth: parent/legal guardian must give written consent for participation and those youth must give written assent to participate in youth interviews.
- There will be approximately 10 youth included in this research.

What will I be asked to do?

- Read Parental Permission for Participation in Research form.
- Ask principal investigator all questions, at any time, and sign permission form, if desired.
- Review study information with youth participant; let them know that they do not have to participate in the study.

- Return completed permission form to principal investigator.
- The interview should take approximately one hour and will be recorded and then transcribed.
- Names will not be attached to interviews or used in the research documentation.
- There is no compensation for participation in the research project.

What will my child be asked to do?

- Read Youth Assent Form.
- Ask principal investigator all questions, at any time, and sign assent form, if desired.
- Return completed Youth Assent Form to principal investigator.
- Participate in a scheduled oral interview which will take approximately one hour to complete and will take place via a video conference such as Zoom.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- There are no foreseeable risks beyond those in the normal course of participation in 4-H. Should any issues concerning suspected child abuse and/or neglect arise during the interview, the interviewer is mandated to report.
- Any questions, problems, or discomforts should be addressed to the principal investigator or the investigator's faculty advisor.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- The results of this study may benefit Maine 4-H youth by revealing motivations for why youth seek out new leadership skills.

What will it cost my child?

- It is not expected for participants to incur any costs as a result of participation in the research.

How will my child's privacy be protected?

- Consent forms and assent forms will be stored separately from any data collected in this study and will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to.
- Each participant will be assigned a number for all documentation, other than the consent and assent forms, in order to maintain confidentiality.
- Participant's names or other identifying information such as age, address, 4-H club, or gender will not be included in the data records or study report. Respondents will only be referred to in a neutral manner such as "they," "participant," "respondent," "teen leader," or "4-H club member."

How will my child's data be kept confidential?

- This study is designed to be confidential. This means that no one other than the research team can link the data your child provides to them, or identify them as a participant.
- Research records will be kept in a locked file at the Androscoggin/Sagadahoc Cooperative Extension office.

- The consent forms and assent forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to, which will be stored separately from data collected in this study.
- Research results will be shared in the principal investigator's thesis paper.
- Participant's names or other identifying information such as age, address, 4-H club, or gender will not be included in the data records or study report. Respondents will only be referred to in a neutral manner such as "they," "participant," "respondent," "teen leader," or "4-H club member."
- Participants may request research findings after completion of thesis by contacting the principal investigator or the Androscoggin/Sagadahoc Cooperative Extension office. Research findings will be given in aggregate form.

General requirement language:

- Please note that regulatory agencies and the Institutional Review Board may review the research records.
- A copy of your signed consent form will be maintained by the principal investigator for at least 3 years after the project is complete before it is destroyed. The consent forms will be stored in a secure location that only members of the research team will have access to and will not be affiliated with any data obtained during the project.
- Audio or video tape recordings will be accessible to the research team and will only be used for research purposes. After a period of up to one year, all digital recordings will be deleted or destroyed.

What are my child's rights as a research participant?

General requirement language:

- Your child's participation is voluntary. Your decision for your child to participate will have no impact on your child's current or future relations with the University, Cooperative Extension, or the 4-H program.
- Your child may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If your child chooses not to participate, there is no penalty to your child and they will not lose any benefits that they are otherwise entitled to receive. Your child is free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you or your child chooses to withdraw from the research there will be no penalty to your child and they will not lose any benefits that they are otherwise entitled to receive.

What other options do I have?

- Your child may choose not to participate.

Whom may I contact with questions?

General requirement language:

- The researcher conducting this study is Cathy Bartlett Gray, Leadership and Organizational Studies Graduate Student, University of Southern Maine, cathy.gray@maine.edu
- If you choose for your child to participate in this research study and believe they may have suffered a research related injury, please contact Dr. Elizabeth Goryunova at elizabeth.goryunova@maine.edu.

- If you have any questions or concerns about your child’s rights as a research subject, you may call the USM Research Compliance Administrator at (207) 228-8434 and/or email usmorio@maine.edu.

Will I receive a copy of this consent form?

General requirement language:

- You will be given a copy of this consent form.

Parental Consent Statement

I understand the above description of this research and the risks and benefits associated with my child’s participation as a research subject. I agree to allow my child take part in the research and do so voluntarily.

Parent or Legal Guardian’s signature

Date

Printed name

Researcher’s Statement

The participant named above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

Researcher’s signature

Date

Printed name

Appendix D

University of Southern Maine**YOUTH ASSENT FORM**

University of Southern Maine YOUTH ASSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Dear 4-H member,

I am working with 4-H to do a research project to learn about Youth Leadership in the Maine 4-H program. You are being asked to participate in this research project because you have been identified as a teen leader and I am interviewing 4-H youth like you to learn about your experiences.

This interview is voluntary. If you do not want to participate, you do not need to. However, I hope you will take some time to speak with me because your perspective is highly valued.

This interview is private. No one at your school, home, or 4-H club or project will see your answers. Please answer the questions as honestly as you can. You may skip any question you do not wish to answer.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers, and your answers will not affect your participation or place in the program in any way. Thank you for your help!

What will I be asked to do?

- Read Youth Assent Form.
- Ask principal investigator all questions, at any time, and sign assent form, if desired.
- Return completed Youth Assent Form to principal investigator.
- Participate in a scheduled oral interview which will take approximately one hour to complete and will take place via a video conference such as Zoom.

What are the possible risks of taking part in this study?

- There are no foreseeable risks beyond those in the normal course of participation in 4-H. Should any issues concerning suspected child abuse and/or neglect arise during the interview, the interviewer is mandated to report.
- Any questions, problems, or discomforts should be addressed to the principal investigator or the investigator's faculty advisor.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

- The results of this study may benefit Maine 4-H youth by revealing motivations for why youth seek out new leadership skills.

What will it cost me?

- It is not expected for participants to incur any costs as a result of participation in the research.

What are my rights as a research participant?***General requirement language:***

- Your participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your current or future relations with the University, Cooperative Extension, or the 4-H program.
- You may skip or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- If you choose not to participate, there is no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time, for any reason. If you choose to withdraw from the research there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive.

What other options do I have?

- You may choose not to participate.

By signing this Youth Assent Form, you are assenting (agreeing) to participate in this study.

Youth signature _____ Date _____

Printed name _____

Researcher's Statement: The youth participant above had sufficient time to consider the information, had an opportunity to ask questions, and voluntarily agreed to be in this study.

Researcher's signature _____ Date _____

Printed name _____