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## **Benefits of participating in 4-H judging activities as perceived by former Giles County 4-H members**

Kevin L. Rose

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Kevin L. Rose entitled "Benefits of participating in 4-H judging activities as perceived by former Giles County 4-H members." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Agriculture and Extension Education.

Roy R. Lessly, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Randol G. Waters, Ben T. Powell

Accepted for the Council:


Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

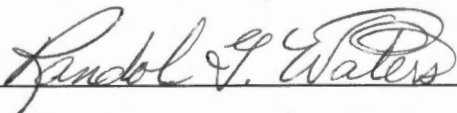

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Roy R. Lessly, Major Professor

We have read this thesis  
and recommend its acceptance:

  
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Accepted for the Council:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Vice Chancellor and  
Dean of The Graduate School

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN 4-H JUDGING  
ACTIVITIES AS PERCEIVED BY FORMER GILES  
COUNTY 4-H MEMBERS

A Thesis  
Presented for the  
Master of Science  
Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Kevin L. Rose

May 1996

AD-VET-MED.  
Thesis  
96  
894.

**DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my parents

Mr. Lloyd A. Rose

and

Mrs. Lequita J. Rose

for their love, support, guidance and inspiration in

helping me to achieve my academic and career goals.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express his appreciation to Dr. Roy R. Lessly, Professor and Head of the Agricultural and Extension Education Department, for serving as his major advisor and graduate committee chairman throughout the completion of this thesis. He would also like to thank Dr. Randol G. Waters, Associate Professor of Agricultural and Extension Education, and Mr. Ben T. Powell, Professor and Leader of the 4-H Club Program, for serving as members of his graduate committee. Without the support and assistance of the graduate committee, this thesis study would not have been possible.

The author would also like to thank all staff members in the Agricultural and Extension Education Department for the help in completing this study.

The author would also like to express his appreciation to all Giles County Extension staff members for their assistance and support of this project. Their help in locating addresses, contacting former judging participants, typing and copying segments of the thesis and, most important, encouraging the author was invaluable.

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The author would also like to express appreciation to all those former Giles County 4-H judging team participants who took the time to complete the survey which made this thesis possible.

The author would especially like to thank his family; parents, Lloyd and Lequita, and sister, Angela for their support and inspiration throughout this entire project.

Lastly, the author wishes to express special appreciation to his fiancée', Lisa Carol, whose support and encouragement came at the time when he needed it most.



## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the benefit of agricultural related judging teams on former 4-H members in Giles County. The objectives of the study included: 1) to identify selected demographic characteristics of the judging team participants, 2) to determine if judging team participation influenced respondents' decision to attend college and major area of study, 3) to determine if judging participation influenced respondents' choice of a career, 4) to measure perceptions of the influence judging team participation had on the respondents' development of life skills, 5) to determine if life skills developed aided respondents in acquiring a job, and 6) to determine if a relationship existed between independent variables and the dependent variables in the study.

A questionnaire was developed and mailed to 115 former Giles County 4-H members that participated on agricultural judging teams with 56 returned. Descriptive statistics including measures of central tendency were used to report the findings.

The respondents tended to agree that judging team participation influenced their knowledge of possible areas of study. Those who "agreed" that this was true indicated that the subject matter area of the teams and the opportunity to work with a 4-H agent had "moderate" influence on their

knowledge of possible areas of study. The respondents who "agreed" that judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college indicated that the opportunity to visit a university had "considerable" influence on their decision. Those respondents who "agreed" that judging team participation influenced their major area of study indicated that the subject matter of the teams and the opportunity to visit a university had "considerable" influence on their major area of study.

Respondents indicated that judging team participation only "moderately" influenced their knowledge of possible careers. However, the respondents agreed that judging team participation influenced the development of life skills. They also indicated that life skills developed through judging team participation had "moderate" influence on their ability to acquire a job.

The independent variable, years of judging team participation, was analyzed with relation to the dependent variables, decision to attend college and major area of study, choice of a career, development of life skills and ability to acquire a job. As the number of years participating increased, so did the respondents' perception that judging team participation influenced their development of the dependent variables listed above.

Gender was also analyzed in relation to these dependent variables. Males tended to agree that judging team

participation influenced their knowledge of possible areas of study where females did not. Both males and females indicated that judging team participation only "moderately" influenced their knowledge of possible careers. Both males and females agreed that judging team participation influenced their development of life skills. Males indicated that life skills developed through judging team participation had "considerable" influence on their ability to acquire a job. Females, however, indicated that life skills developed through judging team participation had only "moderate" influence on their ability to acquire a job.

Judging team participation had the greatest influence on the development of life skills according the study's respondents. It also had a positive influence on their knowledge of possible areas of study in college. In addition, the longer former 4-H members participated on judging teams the more influence judging team participation had on the respondents' decision to attend college and their major area of study, choice of a career, development of life skills and the life skills developed on their ability to acquire a job.

In addition to these conclusions, recommendations for program improvement and future study were also included in the study.

**PREFACE**

Growing up in a small rural community in Southern Middle Tennessee, one of the things the author noticed most commonplace were the farms that surrounded the rural setting. Much of the work done in and around that community had to do with some type of farming. Jobs such as hauling hay, cutting tobacco, working cattle, or putting up fence were available for those who wanted to work. These opportunities provided young people with spending money or possible college tuition. They also provided ideas for career planing and goals.

Although he was not raised on a farm, the author of this study took advantage of work opportunities as well as opportunities provided through programs such as FFA to learn all he could about the greatest industry in the world, agriculture. He dedicated himself to be a part of this great industry and to obtain a degree and a job in agriculture so he could help those who are currently making their living through farming.

After obtaining a B.S. degree and employment with the Agricultural Extension Service in Giles County, the author began his pursuit of a Masters of Science Degree through the Extension Service. Since his responsibilities fall under 4-H, he wanted to conduct a study that would obtain useful information on the 4-H program from former 4-H members in Giles County. Based on the authors participation on FFA and

4-H judging teams while in high school and his understanding of the educational potential of judging teams, the 4-H judging activity was selected to be studied. The specific areas to be studied were the influence judging teams had on former Giles County 4-H member's decision to attend college and their major area of study, choice of a career, development of life skills, and perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job.

Hopefully, the information provided by the study will be helpful in conducting and improving 4-H judging activities and opportunities to all those Giles County 4-H members interested in the judging program for years to come.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. A Historical Perspective

"The basic purpose of 4-H Clubs is the development of boys and girls so that they may become responsible and capable citizens....This purpose is the reason why clubs are used to train boys and girls in leadership, self-expression, cooperation, group participation, democratic action, and fair play " (Kelsey and Hearne, 1963). Ralph Tyler concluded that the 4-H Club program "provides many educational opportunities for young people to acquire new and significant, desirable ways of thinking, feeling, and acting" (cited in Carter and Clark, 1961).

The 4-H Club program in Tennessee offers many activities which give 4-H members the opportunity to grow in their education and develop into well-rounded citizens. The 4-H judging program happens to be one of these.

In describing the effectiveness of judging teams on 4-H members, John L. Morris (1960), referring to dairy judging, indicated that judging extended far beyond the contest field. He explained that it has to do with "developing such qualities as honesty and sincerity, courage, ability to make definite decisions, ability to reason, poise, confidence, well-informed in subject matter, public speaking, pleasant, even temperament, and steady nerves."

An average of 5,000 participants compete each year in judging contests on the county, district and state levels in Tennessee. The subject matter content of these contests include livestock, dairy, poultry, forestry, wildlife, meats, soil, horse, plant and seed identification, clothing, interior design, food and nutrition, and dairy products.

Each year 4-H members in Giles county participate in judging contests, events, training and other aspects of the judging program. Teams in Giles County have been very successful in reaching state level competition over the years, with some teams even achieving national competition.

## II. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the benefit of agriculturally related judging teams, specifically livestock, dairy, poultry, forestry, wildlife, meats, plant and seed identification (formerly crops), soil and horse on previous 4-H members in Giles County. The intent of the study was to discover if participation on agricultural judging teams had an effect on the respondents' decision to attend college and their major area of study since many of the subject matter areas of the teams actually are related to various degrees that could be obtained through college. In addition, did judging team participation aid members in selecting a career. Finally, were any life skills learned such as decision making,

leadership, or communication as a result of participation on judging teams, and if so, did the development of these skills aid members in acquiring a job.

One study (Jellicourse, 1974) was found that was previously conducted in Tennessee regarding 4-H judging teams. However, the Jellicourse study only considered three home economics judging teams which included food and nutrition, interior design, and clothing and used comparison groups of both judging team participants and non-participants.

This study focused on former Giles County 4-H members that participated on the agricultural judging teams listed above between 1973 and 1988. Home economics judging team participants were not studied. The goal was to determine the effect participation on agricultural judging teams had on former 4-H members. The results may be used in future program planning for Extension 4-H programs in Giles County.

By understanding the impact of judging participation on past members, future training of judging teams may be enhanced to help 4-H members develop into well-rounded, educated citizens and provide them with appropriate and proper learning opportunities.

### III. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

1. To identify selected demographic characteristics of former Giles County 4-H agricultural judging team

participants regarding age, gender, number of years participated in 4-H, highest level of judging team participation, number of years participated on judging teams, highest level of education, agriculturally and non-agriculturally related majors in college, adult or teen leader coach of a judging team, and participation in other 4-H activities.

2. To determine if participation on agricultural judging teams influenced 4-H member's decision to attend college, their major area of study, and their knowledge of possible areas of study.
3. To determine if participation on agricultural judging teams influenced 4-H member's career decisions.
4. To measure perceptions of the influence 4-H agricultural judging teams had on former 4-H member's development of life skills.
5. To determine if life skills, developed as a result of judging participation, aided former 4-H members ability to acquire a job.
6. To determine if there is a relationship between variables identified in objectives two, three, four and five and selected demographic variables described in objective one.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to determine the impact of 4-H agricultural judging teams on former Giles County 4-H members, this literature review will focus on the following topical areas:

1. 4-H Judging Activities
2. Educational Potential of 4-H
3. 4-H Develops Life Skills
4. 4-H Develops Decision Making Skills
5. 4-H Develops Critical Thinking Skills
6. 4-H Enhances Career Development

#### I. 4-H Judging Activities

According to Willman (1963), judging may be defined as "an everyday activity because every time people make a decision or choose, they judge." Kowalski (1991) defined judging as "the ability of an individual to form an opinion or make a decision based on current knowledge, careful consideration of evidence and the testing of alternate solutions." "In 4-H club work, judging is simply a matter of selecting one article or product over another because of certain desirable qualities. It teaches good standards and establishes ideals toward which to work" (Willman, 1963).

In Tennessee, the 4-H judging activity consists of one team of three or four 4-H members. Subject matter areas include clothing, dairy, dairy products, forestry, food-nutrition, horse, interior design, soil, livestock, meats, plant and seed identification, poultry, and wildlife. Competition is held on the district and state levels for county teams in each area (TN 4-H Awards Handbook, 1988).

## II. Educational Potential of 4-H

To understand the educational potential of 4-H, we must first define education. Tyler defines education as a process by which people change their thinking, feeling, and acting in desired directions through learning. According to W.W. Charters, "the aim of education is continuous individual and social growth." John Dewey said that "education is that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience" (Tyler, Charters, and Dewey cited in Carter and Clark, 1961).

Tyler discussed eight general conditions of learning to illustrate how 4-H Club situations are helpful to provide conditions for effective learning. Three of these conditions of learning that most closely relate to the judging activity are as follows. One is that 4-H Club work for those who engage in it is a meaningful activity. They are motivated

because they are doing something they enjoy and they will continue to practice it. The second is that 4-H Club work ties together concrete observations and practices. Not only do they see a practice, but they learn the why of that practice. The third condition is the fact that most of the activities furnish intrinsic satisfaction in carrying on the desired behavior. In other words the satisfaction comes from the sheer production, from being able to accomplish this task (cited in Carter and Clark, 1961).

Pierce (1981) explained that being a member in 4-H in Illinois enabled her to learn through the 4-H judging activity. The skills learned included communicating, memorizing clearly, stopping and accessing situations, and speaking with poise and confidence to one judge, face to face.

In recognizing the interest in the livestock judging activity in Iowa, Wickersham and Gauger (1963) asked the question "What unique learning experiences does livestock judging contribute to the growth of 4-H members?" They concluded that judging provides the opportunity for 4-H'ers to:

1. learn and understand standards to be used in livestock selection,
2. understand the decision making process,
3. learn to apply livestock selection standards in a realistic decision making situation, and



4. learn to recognize the reasons for their decisions and develop the ability to present them.

The 4-H program in Tennessee is geared toward educating youth. In 1991, the Tennessee 4-H Program Review Committee determined the end result of 4-H should be to prepare young people to become capable, responsible, and compassionate adults. This intended outcome should always be considered in planning any 4-H activity (cited in Beaty, 1993).

### III. 4-H Develops Life Skills

"Life skills, as defined by the Southern Region 4-H Leadership Sub-Committee, are abilities that are useful for living everyday life. They include thinking, feeling, and doing skills" (cited in Waguespack, 1988). Life skills are affected by the type and quality of organizational learning experiences an individual encounters (Ladewig and Thomas, 1987). According to the USDA, part of the overall mission of 4-H is to assist youth in developing life skills and forming attitudes which will enable them to become self-directing, productive, and contributing members of society (cited in Cantrell, et al., 1989). Waguespack and Moss (1989) indicate that 4-H is dedicated to helping youth by providing innovative educational programs which enhance the development of abilities or life skills that are useful for everyday life.

Collins (1986) saw the development of life skills as more than the physical skills of sewing or grooming animals for show. Life skills enable 4-H members to accept responsibilities and become competent, contributing citizens.

Cantrell, et al. (1989) conducted a study to measure the impact of participation in 4-H activities and events such as demonstrations, contests, round-ups, and shows at different levels (club, county, beyond-the-county) of participation. They found that participation in beyond-the-county level events had an impact on perceived life skill development in five areas. These areas included leadership, social development, value development, citizenship, and communication. They concluded that 4-H activities and events clearly are major factors in promoting life skill development.

In an Ohio study, Matulis (1985) learned that Alumni perceived 4-H as having much impact on the development of work competencies, specifically responsibility, compatibility, following directions, cooperation, working unsupervised, self-confidence, decision-making, time management and speaking skills.

Ladewig and Thomas (1987) found that 4-H Alumni rate high the opportunities they had to develop communication and cooperation skills. A Pennsylvania study (4-H News, 1979) found that community leaders who were 4-H Alumni listed major

everyday living, self confidence, and the ability to relate to and work with people.

Rockwell (1981) found that over half of the respondents in a study indicated that 4-H helped former members learn a specific skill, taught responsibility and gave self confidence.

One particular study (Ladewig and Thomas, 1987) attempted to measure the impact of youth organizations on competency, coping, and contributory life skills. They concluded that youth development programs, in particular 4-H, can make a difference in developing life skills of young people.

#### IV. 4-H Develops Decision Making Skills

Everyone makes decisions daily. Some may be considered major while others may only be minor. However major or minor, decision making is an important life skill.

Gersick, Grady, and Snow define decision making as the ability to identify problems, generate alternatives, consider consequences and risk of possible alternatives (cited in Kowalski, 1991). Decision-making involves many cognitive processes such as information search and processing, problem-solving judgement, learning and memory (Mann, Harmon and Power, 1989).

Judging activities impact the decision making abilities of 4-H members. Kowalski (1991) stated that 4-H judging

activities are one of the areas of instruction that allows participants to practice decision making skills. Morris (1960) expressed that one quality developed as a result of 4-H dairy judging was the ability to make definite decisions. As stated earlier, Wickersham and Gauger (1963) indicated that judging provides the opportunity for 4-H members to understand the decision making process.

In a 1989 Nebraska study, Collins concluded that decision making skills were learned through participation in 4-H judging activities (cited in Kowalski, 1991).

#### V. 4-H Develops Critical Thinking Skills

"Teaching learners to think critically has become an important educational goal in our rapidly changing society" (Jones, 1992). Jones and Safrit (1992) indicated that critical thinking is an essential element of problem solving, decision making, and evaluating one's position on issues.

Critical thinking is defined in several different ways. Ennis defined it as "reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do" (cited in Jones and Safrit, 1992). Walsh and Paul defined it as "interpreting, analyzing, or evaluating information, arguments, or experiences with a set of reflective attitudes, skills, and abilities to guide our thoughts, beliefs, and actions" (cited in Aide, 1989). Lipman (1988) defined critical thinking as "skillful, responsible thinking that

facilitates good judgment because it relies upon criteria, is self-correcting, and is sensitive to context."

According to Jones and Safrit (1992) "to foster critical thinking in adolescents, learning environments must:

- (a) provide the opportunity for young people to consider the strengths and weaknesses of opposing points of view;
- (b) actively involve adolescents in evaluating alternative solutions to real-life situations;
- (c) provide opportunities to reflect on, discuss, and evaluate personal beliefs and action;
- (d) raise ethical questions about various consequences of actions and decisions; and
- (e) encourage dialogue among adolescents and adults about contradictions in thoughts, words, and actions."

Adolescents need to develop critical thinking skills to be better prepared to address the complex issues they will face both as youth and adult citizens (Jones and Safrit, 1992). These skills are an essential element of problem solving, decision making, and creative production (Jones, 1992).

#### VI. 4-H Enhances Career Development

According to Matulis, et al. (1988), career development is an important goal of 4-H. They indicated that the blending

of career education with existing projects provides career education to encourage occupational development.

Four-H has been proven to have an impact on career development. Matulis, et al. (1988) reported the following major findings from an Ohio study conducted in 1984. Alumni felt that 4-H had an impact on their self-awareness, their general career awareness concerning recognition of interest and abilities leading to a career, and their knowledge of career exploration resources, career considerations and sense of need to make a career choice. In addition, the study found that 4-H had an influence upon former members discovering the things they enjoyed doing and the things they did well.

Rockwell, et al. (1984) indicated in a Nebraska study on 4-H alumni that 94% of the respondents perceived the 4-H judging activity as having been either helpful, very helpful, or extremely helpful in preparing them for adulthood roles in life. Rockwell (1981) also learned from former 4-H members that 4-H activities, including judging contest, were cited as examples that help individuals with community and occupational leadership roles.

Numerous sources were found which indicated the success 4-H has had on career exploration and choice. In "Teens Speak Out", Shafer describes how participation in a 4-H activity provided the opportunity through which she chose a career (cited in Rockwell, 1981). Four-H'ers and Alumni is a series of short articles about 15 adults who identified how 4-H

contributed to their career selection (cited in Rockwell, 1981). Boardman (1968) reported how two brothers in California were introduced to the poultry project and now operate a \$1,000,000 business. National 4-H News (1979) reported in a Pennsylvania study that a respondent gave credit to 4-H for his career choice saying "The job I've got today and the direction I've chosen are all basically attributable to a sound 4-H program." Pierce (1981) reported that her involvement with 4-H helped her to choose a career in ag communications.

Overall, 4-H programs and activities are having a definite impact on 4-H members choice of potential careers, areas of study for advanced education, first occupation and subsequent occupations (Rockwell, 1981).

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGY

#### I. Population

The population was made up of all participants on Giles County agricultural judging teams, including livestock, dairy, poultry, forestry, wildlife, meats, plant and seed identification (or formerly crops), soil, and horse between the years 1973 and 1988. The population was pulled from score cards on file in the Giles County Extension Office. An attempt was made to locate as many former judging participants as possible. A total of 115 participants were identified for the study.

Participation over a 15 year time period was used for the study. The reason for ending the selection period at 1988 was that most high school graduates from that year should have at least completed college and more than likely are presently employed. This information was critical since the questionnaire tried to determine if judging team participation influenced former 4-H members choice of a career, major area of study and/or perceptions of the influence of life skills developed on the respondents' ability to acquire a job. The 15 year time period also provided a large enough population for the study.



All former 4-H members in the study participated in at least district competition and some participated in state and national judging contests.

Data for this study were obtained using a questionnaire mailed to the judging participants. Questionnaires were coded to aid in follow-up of non-respondents. Of the 115 former judging participants found, 56 returned the questionnaire after two mailings with a response rate of 49%.

## II. Variables

The variables in this study were as follows:

- The independent variables were age, gender, number of years in 4-H, highest level of judging teams participation, and number of years participated on judging teams.
- The dependent variables were former 4-H members decision to attend college and their major area of study, choice of a career, development of life skills, and the development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job.

## III. Design

Since the study was conducted after the activity had taken place or after the fact, it was an Expost facto study. No control of treatment or pretest was possible. The type of

research exhibited by this study was descriptive/correlational because of the limited control and design and because surveys were used to collect all data.

#### IV. Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

The instrument used in this study was tested for content and face validity. The instrument was tested by a panel of experts and a pilot test. The panel of experts included the author's thesis committee. The pilot test was conducted with 15 University of Tennessee students and Extension agents. None of the population was used due to the limited number available for the study.

After the pilot test, one significant change was made in the questionnaire which had to do with the redesigning of the series of questions related to the dependent variable decision to attend college and major area of study. The purpose of this change was to improve the readability and comprehension of the questions being asked.

#### V. Data Analysis Procedures

The scale of measurement for the variables was as follows. The independent variables, highest level of judging

team participation and gender, are nominal. All other independent variables including age, number of years in 4-H, number of judging teams participated on, and number of years participated on judging teams were measured as interval/ratio data. The data obtained through the question asking respondents for the number of years participating on judging teams were collapsed into three nominally scaled categories.

The dependent variables, former 4-H members' decision to attend college and their major area of study, former 4-H members' choice of a career, former 4-H members' development of life skills, and the perceived development of life skills on the former members ability to acquire a job, were measured as interval/ratio data.

Results were determined using descriptive statistics including measures of central tendency. This method allowed for understanding the relationship between the variables of the study's objectives. Since this was a population study it was considered inappropriate to use inferential tests to describe the significance of relationships.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION OF DATA AND FINDINGS

This chapter will present the findings as they relate to the six objectives described in Chapter I. Each objective will be discussed separately throughout the chapter.

#### I. Objective One

The purpose of objective one was to describe selected demographic characteristics of the respondents including age, gender, number of years participated in 4-H, highest level of judging team participation, number of years participated on judging teams, adult or teen leader coach of a judging team, participation in other 4-H activities, highest level of education, and agricultural and non-agricultural related majors in college. Data relating to these characteristics are found in the following two tables.

Data in Table I present demographic characteristics as reported by the respondents. The respondents were grouped into three categories according to their age including 20-25 years old, 26-30 years old, and 31 years old and over. The categories were closely related in numbers of respondents with 19 (33.9 percent) in the 20-25 group, 19 (33.9 percent) in the 26-30 group, and 18 (32.2 percent) in the 31 and over group.

**Table I. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FORMER 4-H JUDGING TEAM PARTICIPANTS IN GILES COUNTY**

CHARACTERISTICS	NUMBER*	PERCENT
<b>AGE</b>		
20 - 25 years	19	33.9
26 - 30 years	19	33.9
31 years and over	<u>18</u>	<u>32.2</u>
TOTAL	56	100.0
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	34	60.7
Female	<u>22</u>	<u>39.3</u>
TOTAL	56	100.0
<b>YEARS IN 4-H</b>		
4 - 5 years	8	14.3
6 - 7 years	7	12.5
8 - 9 years	<u>41</u>	<u>73.2</u>
TOTAL	56	100.0
<b>YEARS ON 4-H JUDGING TEAMS</b>		
2 years or less	19	34.6
3 or 4 years	18	32.7
5 or 6 years	<u>18</u>	<u>32.7</u>
TOTAL	55	100.0
<b>TEEN LEADER JUDGING COACH</b>		
Yes	24	42.9
No	<u>32</u>	<u>57.1</u>
TOTAL	56	100.0

\* In some cases the totals do not equal 56 respondents because some chose not to answer the question.

Table I. (Continued)

CHARACTERISTICS	NUMBER*	PERCENT
ADULT LEADER JUDGING COACH		
Yes	10	17.9
No	<u>46</u>	<u>82.1</u>
TOTAL	56	100.0
PARTICIPATION IN OTHER 4-H ACTIVITIES		
4-H Roundup	25	44.6
4-H Congress	26	46.4
Honor Club	32	57.1
All Star	27	48.2
Public Speaking	47	83.9
Livestock Shows	36	64.3
Camps	43	76.8
Interstate Exchange	21	37.5
Ag. Engineering Events	<u>2</u>	<u>3.6</u>
	**	**
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION		
Some High School	0	0.0
High School Graduate	6	10.7
Some College	19	33.9
College Graduate	23	41.1
Post Graduate Work	7	12.5
other	<u>1</u>	<u>1.8</u>
TOTAL	56	100.0
MAJOR AREAS OF STUDY IN COLLEGE		
Agricultural Related	14	28.6
Non-Agricultural Related	<u>35</u>	<u>71.4</u>
TOTAL	49	100.0

\* In some cases the totals do not equal 56 respondents because some chose not to answer the question.

\*\* Totals may be more than 100% because respondents could mark more than one activity.

Gender, however, was not as evenly divided with 34 (60.7 percent) male respondents and 22 (39.3 percent) female respondents. The demographic characteristics also indicated that a majority of the judging team participants were enrolled in 4-H either eight or nine years with 41 (73.2 percent) of the respondents in this category. Only seven (12.5 percent) respondents participated in 4-H either six or seven years and eight (14.3 percent) participated either four or five years. In addition to number of years in 4-H, respondents were also asked to indicate the number of years they participated on 4-H judging teams. Nineteen (34.6 percent) reported they participated two years or less, 18 (32.7 percent) reported they participated either three or four years, while 18 (32.7 percent) indicated they participated on judging teams either five or six years. It should be noted only 55 participants responded to this question.

Some of the respondents reported that they served as volunteer leader coaches of judging teams either as an adult or teen. Twenty-four (42.9 percent) respondents indicated they served as a teen leader judging team coach while 10 (17.9 percent) respondents indicated they served as an adult volunteer leader judging team coach.

The respondents were also asked to identify their participation in other 4-H activities. Of the 56 respondents, 25 (44.6 percent) had participated in 4-H Roundup, 26 (46.4 percent) in 4-H Congress, 32 (57.1 percent) in Honor Club, 27

(48.2 percent) in All Stars, 47 (83.9 percent) in Public Speaking, 36 (64.3 percent) in Livestock Shows, 43 (76.8 percent) in Camps, 21 (37.5 percent) in Interstate Exchange Program and 2 (3.6 percent) in Agricultural Engineering Events.

The respondents' educational level ranged from high school graduate to post graduate work in college. Their responses indicated that 6 (10.7 percent) were high school graduates only, 19 (33.9 percent) had some college, 23 (41.1 percent) were college graduates, 7 (12.5 percent) had post graduate work, and one (1.8 percent) other response. Of the 49 respondents who indicated they had at least some college, college graduate, or post graduate work, 14 (28.6 percent) reported they had an agriculturally related major.

The highest level of judging team participation for the respondents is shown in Table II. Of the respondents participating in livestock judging, 11 competed on the district level, 10 on the state level, and 4 on the national level. Of the respondents participating in dairy judging, 8 competed on the district level and 8 on the state level. Of the respondents participating in poultry judging, 6 competed on the district level and 4 on the state level. Of the respondents participating in forestry judging, 3 competed on the district level and 11 on the state level. Of the respondents participating in horse judging, 2 competed on the district level, 4 on the state level, and 3 on the national



**TABLE II. HIGHEST LEVEL OF JUDGING TEAM PARTICIPATION AS REPORTED BY THE RESPONDENTS**

<b>TEAM</b>	<b>DISTRICT*</b>	<b>STATE*</b>	<b>NATIONAL*</b>
LIVESTOCK	11	10	4
DAIRY	8	8	0
POULTRY	6	4	0
FORESTRY	3	11	0
HORSE	2	4	3
WILDLIFE	1	0	0
MEATS	1	1	0
SOIL	13	4	0
DAIRY PRODUCTS	8	4	0
PLANT AND SEED ID	3	6	0

\* Respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of participation for each agricultural judging team. This will account for the discrepancies between numbers of participants for the district, state and national levels.

level. Of the respondents participating in wildlife judging, only 1 competed on the district level. Of the respondents participating in meats judging, 1 competed on the district level and 1 on the state level. Of the respondents participating in soil judging, 13 competed on the district level and 4 on the state level. Of the respondents participating in dairy products judging, 8 competed on the district level and 4 on the state level. Of the respondents participating in plant and seed ID judging, 3 competed on the district level and 6 on the state level. It should be noted

that participants competing in judging team activities had to earn their way to the next level.

In summary, the respondents are evenly distributed in age according to the parameters set up in Table I. There are 12 more male respondents than female. A majority of the respondents were enrolled in 4-H for either eight or nine years. The number of years the respondents participated on judging teams was evenly distributed over the three two year categories. Many of the respondents reported they had participated in 4-H activities other than judging contests with public speaking, camps, and livestock shows being the most frequently participated by the respondents. A majority of the respondents indicated their highest level of education included at least some college. Almost half of the respondents had participated as a teen leader coach while only 10 participated as an adult leader coach. At least one respondent had participated on each judging team represented in the survey. The majority of respondents participated on either the livestock, dairy, forestry, or soil teams. The smallest participation was in wildlife and meats. The livestock and horse teams had participation through the national level.

## II. Objective Two

The second objective was to determine if judging team participation influenced former judging team participants

decision to attend college, their area of study, their knowledge of possible areas of study and what specifically influenced them. Only the 49 respondents who indicated they went to college were asked to respond to these questions. Former judging team participants were asked if participation on a judging team influenced their (1) decision to attend college, (2) major area of study, and (3) knowledge of possible areas of study. An attempt was also made to determine what specifically influenced participants if they "agreed" with these three questions. This will be discussed later in this section.

The respondents indicated on a Likert-type scale whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed that judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college and their major area of study. The values used on the Likert-type scale included strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, agree = 3, and strongly agree = 4. The results can be found in Table III.

The 49 respondents, who attended college, were asked if judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college. Forty-five former judging team participants responded to this question with a mean score of 2.33 and a standard deviation of .71 indicating the tendency to disagree. These respondents were also asked if judging team participation influenced their major area of study in college.

TABLE III. INFLUENCE OF JUDGING TEAM PARTICIPATION ON THE RESPONDENTS' DECISION TO ATTEND COLLEGE AND THEIR MAJOR AREA OF STUDY (N = 49)

VARIABLE	MEAN*	S.D.
INFLUENCED DECISION TO ATTEND COLLEGE	2.33	.71
INFLUENCED MAJOR AREAS OF STUDY	2.26	.65
INFLUENCED KNOWLEDGE OF POSSIBLE AREAS OF STUDY	2.55	.73

\*The value ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) on a Likert-type scale.

Forty-five answered this question with a mean score of 2.26 and a standard deviation of .654 indicating the tendency to disagree. Forty-five judging team participants responded to the question, "Did judging team participation influence your knowledge of possible areas of study," with a mean score of 2.55 and a standard deviation of .73 indicating the tendency to agree.

For each of these three questions the participants were also asked to indicate what specifically influenced their decision using a similar Likert-type scale. These potential influences included the subject matter area of the judging team they participated on, the opportunity to visit a university, the opportunity to work with a 4-H agent, and the opportunity to work with a volunteer leader/coach. The Likert-type scale values used for these potential influences were 0 = no influence, 1 = some influence, 2 = moderate influence, 3 = considerable influence, and 4 = great influence.

Data in Table IV show the areas of influence perceived by the respondents who "agreed" that judging participation influenced their decision to attend college. Fifteen respondents perceived that the subject matter area of the judging teams influenced their decision with a mean score of 2.13 and a standard deviation of 1.12. Sixteen respondents perceived that the opportunity to visit a university influenced their decision with a mean score of 2.75 and a standard deviation of 1.12. Sixteen respondents perceived that the opportunity to work with a 4-H agent influenced their decision with a mean score of 2.18 and a standard deviation of 1.10. And finally, 15 respondents perceived that the opportunity to work with a volunteer leader/coach influenced their decision with a mean score of 2.40 and a standard deviation of 1.05.

Data for the areas of influence perceived by respondents who "agreed" that judging team participation influenced their major area of study can be found in Table V. Twelve former judging team participants responded to each area of influence. Respondents indicated that the subject matter areas of judging teams influenced their major area of study with a mean score of 2.66 and a standard deviation of .99. For the opportunity to visit a university, the judging team participants responded with a mean score of 2.58 and a standard deviation of 1.31. For the opportunity to work with a 4-H agent, the judging

TABLE IV. AREAS OF INFLUENCE PERCEIVED BY RESPONDENTS WHO "AGREED" THAT JUDGING TEAM PARTICIPATION INFLUENCED THEIR DECISION TO ATTEND COLLEGE (N = 16)

VARIABLE	MEAN*	S.D.
SUBJECT MATTER AREAS OF TEAMS	2.13	1.12
OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT A UNIVERSITY	2.75	1.12
OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH 4-H AGENT	2.18	1.10
OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH VOL. LEADER/COACH	2.40	1.05

\* The values ranged from no influence (0) to great influence (4) on a Likert-type scale.

TABLE V. AREAS OF INFLUENCE PERCEIVED BY RESPONDENTS WHO "AGREED" THAT JUDGING TEAM PARTICIPATION INFLUENCED THEIR MAJOR AREA OF STUDY IN COLLEGE (N = 12)

VARIABLE	MEAN*	S.D.
SUBJECT MATTER AREA OF TEAMS	2.66	.99
OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT A UNIVERSITY	2.58	1.31
OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH 4-H AGENT	2.08	1.16
OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH VOL. LEADER/COACH	2.33	.99

\*The value ranged from no influence (0) to great influence (4) on a Likert-type scale.

team participants responded with a mean score of 2.08 and a standard deviation of 1.16. For the opportunity to work with a volunteer/leader coach, the judging team participants responded with a mean score of 2.33 and standard deviation of .99.

Data in Table VI indicates the areas of influence perceived by respondents who "agreed" that judging team participation influenced their knowledge of possible areas of study. Twenty respondents indicated that the subject matter area of teams influenced their knowledge of possible areas of study with a mean score of 2.40 and a standard deviation of 1.14. For the opportunity to visit a university, twenty-two judging team participants responded with a mean score of 2.27 and a standard deviation of 1.16. For the opportunity to work with a 4-H agent, twenty judging team participants responded with a mean score of 2.40 and a standard deviation of .94. For the opportunity to work with a volunteer leader/coach, twenty judging team participants responded with a mean score of 2.35 and a standard deviation of 1.08.

### III. Objective Three

The third objective of the study was to determine if judging team participation influenced the respondents' career decisions. The respondents were asked using a Likert-type scale to what degree they felt judging team participation

**TABLE VI. AREAS OF INFLUENCE PERCEIVED BY RESPONDENTS WHO "AGREED" THAT JUDGING TEAM PARTICIPATION INFLUENCED THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF POSSIBLE AREAS OF STUDY (N = 22)**

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>MEAN*</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
SUBJECT MATTER AREA OF TEAMS	2.40	1.14
OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT A UNIVERSITY	2.27	1.16
OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH 4-H AGENT	2.40	.94
OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH VOL. LEADER/COACH	2.35	1.08

\* The value ranged from no influence (0) to great influence (4) on a Likert-type scale.

influenced their career choice or their knowledge of possible careers. The scale ranged from 0 to 4 with 0 representing no influence and 4 representing great influence. The results of this analysis are reported in Table VII.

The respondents were asked to indicate the level of influence they perceived judging team participation had on their choice of careers. Fifty-five judging team participants responded to this question with a mean score of 1.18 and a standard deviation of 1.26. Respondents were also asked to indicate the level of influence they perceived judging team participation had on their knowledge of possible careers. Again 55 judging team participants responded with a mean score of 2.03 and a standard deviation of 1.21.



**TABLE VII. INFLUENCE OF JUDGING TEAM PARTICIPATION ON RESPONDENTS' CAREER DECISIONS (N = 55)**

VARIABLE	MEAN*	S.D.
CHOICE OF A CAREER	1.18	1.26
KNOWLEDGE OF POSSIBLE CAREERS	2.03	1.21

\* The value ranged from no influence (0) to great influence (4) on a Likert-type scale.

#### IV. Objective Four

The purpose of objective four was to determine the respondents' perceptions regarding the influence judging team participation had on their development of certain life skills. The participants were asked to indicate the level of agreement they perceived that 4-H judging team participation had on helping them develop 11 identified life skills. The participants were given four choices, on a Likert-type scale, with 1 representing strongly disagree, 2 representing disagree, 3 representing agree, and 4 representing strongly agree. The results of this analysis can be found in Table VIII.

The 11 identified life skills included making decisions, evaluating choices, accessing situations, identifying and solving problems, memorizing clearly, communicating effectively, speaking with poise and confidence, listening

**TABLE VIII. PERCEPTIONS OF JUDGING TEAM PARTICIPATION ON RESPONDENTS' DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS. (N = 56)**

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>MEAN*</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
MAKING DECISIONS	3.25	.62
EVALUATING CHOICES	3.27	.65
ACCESSING SITUATIONS	3.18	.67
IDENTIFYING AND SOLVING PROBLEMS	3.00	.67
MEMORIZING CLEARLY	3.07	.77
COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY	3.20	.73
SPEAKING WITH POISE AND CONFIDENCE	3.21	.79
LISTENING EFFECTIVELY	3.14	.62
DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP	3.21	.79
DEVELOPING TEAM WORK AND COOPERATION	3.34	.61
BEING A BETTER CONSUMER	3.00	.69

\* The value ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) on a Likert-type scale.

effectively, developing leadership, developing teamwork and cooperation, and being a better consumer. The respondents perceived level of agreement that judging team participation influenced their development of these life skills are reported as follows: making decisions (mean = 3.25 and s.d. = .62), evaluating choices (mean = 3.27 and s.d. = .65), accessing situations (mean = 3.18 and s.d. = .67), identifying and solving problems (mean = 3.00 and s.d. = .67), memorizing clearly (mean = 3.07 and s.d. = .78), communicating

effectively (mean = 3.20 and s.d. = .73), speaking with poise and confidence (mean = 3.21 and s.d. = .77), listening effectively (mean = 3.14 and s.d. = .62), developing leadership (mean = 3.21 and s.d. = .76), developing team work and cooperation (mean = 3.34 and s.d. = .62) and being a better consumer (mean = 3.00 and s.d. = .69).

#### V. Objective Five

The purpose of objective five was to determine if life skills, developed as a result of judging team participation, influenced former 4-H members' ability to acquire a job. A five point Likert-type scale was used with 0 representing no influence and 4 representing great influence. The respondents were asked to indicate what influence they felt the 11 life skills discussed in objective four had on their ability to acquire a job. The results of this analysis are reported in Table IX. Judging team participants responded to this question with a mean score of 2.49 and a standard deviation of 1.29.

#### VI. Objective Six

The sixth and final objective of the study was to determine if there was a relationship between variables identified in objectives two, three, four, and five and

**TABLE IX. RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION REGARDING THE INFLUENCE OF LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH JUDGING TEAM PARTICIPATION ON THEIR ABILITY TO ACQUIRE A JOB (N = 53)**

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>MEAN*</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
INFLUENCE ON ABILITY TO ACQUIRE A JOB	2.49	1.29

\* The value ranged from no influence (0) to great influence (4) on a Likert-type scale.

selected demographic variables described in objective one. Measures of central tendency were used to describe the relationships between these variables. The independent or demographic variables were the number of years participating on judging teams and gender. The dependent variables to be considered in relationship to the independent variables include the respondents' decision to attend college and their major area of study, the respondents' choice of a career, the respondents' perceived development of life skills and the respondents' perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job.

#### **Number of Years Participating and Respondents' Perceived Influence of Judging Teams**

The number of years participating on judging teams was the first demographic variable analyzed. Within this variable the respondents were grouped according to the number of years

they participated on judging teams into the three categories of two years or less, three or four years, and five or six years.

Data in Table X show the relationship between the number of years participating on judging teams and the respondents' level of agreement that judging participation influenced their decision to attend college and their major area of study. The longer respondents participated on 4-H judging teams, the more they agreed the influence to be upon their decision to attend college (means = 2.07 for two years of participation or less, 2.25 for three or four years and 2.61 for five or six years). This relationship also existed regarding the respondents' years of judging team participation and their choice of a major area of study (mean = 2.00 for two years or less, 2.16 for three or four years and 2.55 for five or six years). This same relationship also held true for the respondents' years of judging team participation and their knowledge of possible areas of study (mean = 2.21 for two years or less, 2.41 for three or four years and 2.94 for five or six years).

The relationship between the number of years respondents participated on judging teams and the perceived influence of judging team participation on the respondents' choice of a career and knowledge of possible careers can be found in Table XI. The same categories were used for the number of years participating on judging teams as in Table X.

**TABLE X. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NUMBER OF YEARS RESPONDENTS PARTICIPATED ON JUDGING TEAMS AND THE INFLUENCE OF THIS PARTICIPATION ON THEIR DECISION TO ATTEND COLLEGE AND THEIR MAJOR AREA OF STUDY (N = 44)**

VARIABLE	NUMBER	MEAN*	S.D.
INFLUENCE ON DECISION TO ATTEND COLLEGE			
YEARS OF PARTICIPATION			
2 years or less	14	2.07	.73
3 or 4 years	12	2.25	.45
5 or 6 years	18	2.61	.78
INFLUENCE ON MAJOR AREA OF STUDY			
YEARS OF PARTICIPATION			
2 years or less	14	2.00	.68
3 or 4 years	12	2.16	.39
5 or 6 years	18	2.55	.70
INFLUENCE ON KNOWLEDGE OF POSSIBLE AREAS OF STUDY			
YEARS OF PARTICIPATION			
2 years or less	14	2.21	.80
3 or 4 years	12	2.41	.51
5 or 6 years	18	2.94	.64

\* The value ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) on a Likert-type scale.

Data reported in Table XI show the respondents' perceptions regarding the length of judging team participation and its influence on the respondents' choice of a career. As the length of participation increases so does the respondents' perception that judging team participation influenced their career choices (mean = .79 for two years or

TABLE XI. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF YEARS PARTICIPATING ON JUDGING TEAMS AND THE INFLUENCE OF JUDGING PARTICIPATION ON THE RESPONDENTS' CAREER DECISIONS (N = 54)

VARIABLE	NUMBER	MEAN*	S.D.
INFLUENCE ON CAREER CHOICE			
YEARS OF PARTICIPATION			
2 years or less	19	0.79	0.98
3 or 4 years	17	1.29	1.44
5 or 6 years	18	1.55	1.29
INFLUENCE ON KNOWLEDGE OF POSSIBLE CAREERS			
YEARS OF PARTICIPATION			
2 years or less	19	1.57	1.16
3 or 4 years	17	2.00	1.22
5 or 6 years	18	2.66	0.97

\* The value ranged from no influence (0) to great influence (4) on a Likert-type scale.

less, 1.29 for three or four years and 1.55 for five or six years). However, it should be noted that respondents' answers indicated that judging team participation had only limited influence on their choice of a career. The same relationship between respondents' length of participation and their knowledge of possible careers exist in that as years of participation increase, so does the respondents' knowledge of possible careers (mean = 1.57 for two years or less, 2.00 for three or four years, and 2.66 for five or six years).

The relationship between the number of years participating on judging teams and the influence of judging participation on the respondents' development of life skills is found in Table XII. Again the same three categories for number of years participating on judging teams were used. Data in Table XII describe the relationship between the variables, number of years participating on judging teams and the perceived development of eight of the eleven life skills. Respondents participating on judging teams for five or six years perceived their participation to have a greater influence on their development of eight of the eleven life skills than did respondents in the other two categories. However, for three of the life skills, speaking with poise and confidence, developing leadership, and being a better consumer, there is a slight difference in perceived impact scores. When asked the influence of the length of participation on the development of the perceived life skill, speaking with poise and confidence, respondents of two years or less (mean = 3.10, s.d. = .74) reported that judging team participation had slightly more influence than those participating three or four years (mean = 3.05, s.d. = .90). The same was true for the influence of length of participation on the development of the perceived life skill, developing leadership. Respondents of two years or less (mean = 3.15, s.d. = .90) perceived that judging team participation had slightly more influence on leadership development than those



TABLE XII. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF YEARS PARTICIPATING ON JUDGING TEAMS AND THE INFLUENCE OF JUDGING PARTICIPATION ON THE RESPONDENTS' DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS (N = 54)

VARIABLE	NUMBER	MEAN*	S.D.
YEARS OF PARTICIPATION			
MAKING DECISIONS			
2 years or less	19	2.94	.71
3 or 4 years	17	3.35	.49
5 or 6 years	18	3.50	.51
EVALUATING CHOICES			
2 years or less	19	3.00	.82
3 or 4 years	17	3.35	.49
5 or 6 years	18	3.50	.51
ACCESSING SITUATIONS			
2 years or less	19	2.94	.71
3 or 4 years	17	3.29	.59
5 or 6 years	18	3.33	.69
IDENTIFYING AND SOLVING PROBLEMS			
2 years or less	19	2.68	.75
3 or 4 years	17	3.05	.43
5 or 6 years	18	3.27	.67
MEMORIZING CLEARLY			
2 years or less	19	2.89	.74
3 or 4 years	17	3.05	.83
5 or 6 years	18	3.33	.69

\*The value ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) on a Likert-type scale.

TABLE XII. (Continued)

VARIABLE	NUMBER	MEAN	S.D.
YEARS OF PARTICIPATION			
COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY			
2 years or less	19	2.94	.71
3 or 4 years	17	3.11	.78
5 or 6 years	18	3.55	.62
SPEAKING WITH POISE AND CONFIDENCE			
2 years or less	19	3.10	.74
3 or 4 years	17	3.05	.90
5 or 6 years	18	3.55	.62
LISTENING EFFECTIVELY			
2 years or less	19	3.00	.75
3 or 4 years	17	3.11	.49
5 or 6 years	18	3.33	.60
DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP			
2 years or less	19	3.15	.90
3 or 4 years	17	3.00	.71
5 or 6 years	18	3.55	.52
DEVELOPING TEAMWORK AND COOPERATION			
2 years or less	19	3.10	.74
3 or 4 years	17	3.41	.51
5 or 6 years	18	3.55	.52
BEING A BETTER CONSUMER			
2 years or less	19	2.84	.83
3 or 4 years	17	3.11	.49
5 or 6 years	18	3.00	.69

participating three or four years (mean = 3.00, s.d. = .71). For the life skill, being a better consumer, respondents participating on judging teams either three or four years (mean = 3.11, s.d. = .83) indicated slightly more influence than those participating either five or six years (mean = 3.00, s.d. = .69). For all other perceived life skills, as the length of participation increased the greater the respondents perceived the development of these skills.

Data in Table XIII show the relationship between the number of years participating on judging teams and the respondents perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job. Again the same categories of number of years participating on judging teams were used. The data in Table XIII indicate that as the length of judging team participation increases so does the respondents' perception that the development of life skills influenced their ability to acquire a job (mean = 2.05 for two years or less, 2.23 for three or four years, and 3.16 for five or six years).

#### **Gender and Respondents Perceived Influence of Judging Teams**

The demographic variable gender was also analyzed with relation to the dependent variables, decision to attend college and major area of study, choice of a career, perceived life skill development and perceived life skill development on the ability to acquire a job.

TABLE XIII. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RESPONDENTS' NUMBER OF YEARS PARTICIPATING ON JUDGING TEAMS AND THE PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS ON THEIR ABILITY TO ACQUIRE A JOB. (N = 53)

VARIABLE	NUMBER	MEAN*	S.D.
YEARS OF PARTICIPATION			
ABILITY TO ACQUIRE A JOB			
2 years or less	18	2.05	1.25
3 or 4 years	17	2.23	1.34
5 or 6 years	18	3.16	1.04

\*The value ranged from no influence (0) to great influence (4) on a Likert-type scale.

Data in Table XIV indicate the relationship between gender and the influence judging team participation had on the respondents' decision to attend college and their major area of study. Males perceived mean scores for decision to attend college (mean = 2.37), major area of study (mean = 2.40), and knowledge of possible areas of study (mean = 2.62) were slightly higher than female scores (mean = 2.27, 2.05, and 2.44 respectively). Males had a slight tendency to agree that the influence on knowledge of possible areas of study was positively effected by judging team participation, whereas females did not. As demonstrated by mean scores, both males and females tended to disagree that judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college or their major area of study.

TABLE XIV. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND THE INFLUENCE OF JUDGING PARTICIPATION ON THE RESPONDENTS' DECISION TO ATTEND COLLEGE AND THEIR MAJOR AREA OF STUDY.

VARIABLE	MALE (N = 27)		FEMALE (N = 18)	
	MEAN*	S.D.	MEAN*	S.D.
INFLUENCE DECISION TO ATTEND COLLEGE	2.37	.69	2.27	.75
INFLUENCE MAJOR AREA OF STUDY	2.40	.69	2.05	.54
INFLUENCE KNOWLEDGE OF POSSIBLE AREAS OF STUDY	2.62	.79	2.44	.62

\*The values ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) on a Likert-type scale.

Data in Table XV show the relationship between gender and judging team participation upon the respondents' choice of a career. Males and females indicated only "some" influence of judging participation on choice of a career with mean scores of 1.33 and .95 respectively. For knowledge of possible careers, males and females agreed that judging team participation only "moderately" influenced their knowledge with mean scores of 2.15 and 1.86 respectively. Overall, males perceived mean scores were higher than were females mean scores.

The relationship between gender and the influence of judging team participation on the respondents' perceived

**TABLE XV. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND THE INFLUENCE OF JUDGING PARTICIPATION ON RESPONDENTS' CAREER DECISIONS**

VARIABLE	MALE (N = 33)		FEMALE (N = 22)	
	MEAN*	S.D.	MEAN*	S.D.
INFLUENCE ON CAREER CHOICES	1.33	1.38	.95	1.04
INFLUENCE ON KNOWLEDGE OF POSSIBLE CAREERS	2.15	1.22	1.86	1.20

\*The value ranged from no influence (0) to great influence (4) on a Likert-type scale.

development of life skills is reported in Table XVI. Data in this table indicate that there is little substantive relationship between gender and the 11 perceived life skills. Both males and females tended to agree that all 11 life skills were developed as a result of judging team participation. In addition, females mean scores were higher than males scores.

The relationship between gender and the respondents' perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job is found in Table XVII. Males indicated that judging team participation had a positive influence on their perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job (mean = 2.66). On the other hand, females indicated that judging team participation only "moderately" influenced their perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job (mean = 2.20).

TABLE XVI. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND THE INFLUENCE OF JUDGING PARTICIPATION ON THE RESPONDENTS' DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS

VARIABLE	MALE (N = 33)		FEMALE (N = 22)	
	MEAN*	S.D.	MEAN*	S.D.
MAKING DECISIONS	3.21	.65	3.31	.57
EVALUATING CHOICES	3.21	.70	3.36	.58
ACCESSING SITUATIONS	3.09	.68	3.31	.64
IDENTIFYING AND SOLVING PROBLEMS	2.93	.61	3.09	.75
MEMORIZING CLEARLY	3.00	.87	3.18	.59
COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY	3.12	.78	3.31	.65
SPEAKING WITH POISE AND CONFIDENCE	3.15	.83	3.31	.71
LISTENING EFFECTIVELY	3.06	.66	3.27	.55
DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP	3.15	.80	3.31	.72
DEVELOPING TEAMWORK AND COOPERATION	3.30	.68	3.40	.50
BEING A BETTER CONSUMER	2.81	.68	3.27	.63

\*The values ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4) on a Likert-type scale.

## VII. Additional Findings

Although not included as a part of the initial objectives of the study, three open-ended questions were asked on the survey. These questions had to do with the respondents' 1) opinions on changing one or more classes of a particular

TABLE XVII. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND THE PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS ON RESPONDENTS' ABILITY TO ACQUIRE A JOB

VARIABLE	MALE (N = 33)		FEMALE (N = 20)	
	MEAN*	S.D.	MEAN*	S.D.
ABILITY TO ACQUIRE A JOB	2.66	1.16	2.20	1.47

\*The values ranged from no influence (0) to great influence (4) on a Likert-type scale.

contest to a group collaborative decision, 2) indications of other benefits of the 4-H judging activity not considered by the survey and 3) indications of any concerns or changes that would benefit the 4-H judging contests and activities.

For the question, "Do you feel that a change on one or more classes of a particular contest to a group collaborative decision would be beneficial and enhance the learning that is provided through 4-H'ers participation on judging teams?", 37 respondents indicated "yes" while only 15 indicated "no". Four respondents elected not to answer this question.

Those former judging participants who indicated "yes" stated that a collaborative effort could help judging team participants by stimulating 4-H'ers to put forth more effort, hearing why other members judged the way they did, developing communication skills and team work, evaluating the thought and selection process of someone, and working in group situations.



Only 15 respondents indicated "no" to the group collaborative decision. Some of their comments included some members will let others make the decision without making input, not all people come to the same decision, the larger the team, the less input each member gives, and the team would have a tendency to rely on one particular member.

A complete list of "yes" and "no" responses may be found in Appendix B.

For the questions, "Please indicate any other benefits of the 4-H judging activity that may not be considered by this survey", and "Please indicate any concerns or changes that would benefit the 4-H judging contest", the respondents' comments can be found in Appendix C and Appendix D, respectively.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The purpose of Chapter V is to discuss the major findings of the study. The chapter will be divided into several parts that are representative of the first four chapters. The final part of this chapter will deal with the study's conclusions, implications and recommendations for further study.

#### I. A Historical Perspective

Kelsey and Hearne (1963) indicated that the purpose of 4-H Clubs was the development of boys and girls in leadership, cooperation, group participation, democratic action and fair play. Tyler concluded that the 4-H Club program provides educational opportunities for young people to acquire new ways of thinking, feeling and acting (cited in Carter and Clark). Morris (1960) explained that judging teams went beyond the contest field. They have to do with developing qualities such as honesty, sincerity, courage, poise, confidence, ability to reason and well-informed in subject matter.

Each year an average of 5,000 4-H members participate in the judging program in Tennessee. Giles County 4-H members are a part of those that participate through hours of training, meetings, events and contests.

## II. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceived benefit of previous 4-H judging team members in Giles County on participating on agricultural related judging teams, such as livestock, dairy, poultry, forestry, wildlife, meats, plant and seed identification (formerly crops), soil and horse. More specifically, the study's purpose was to discover if participation on judging teams had an effect on the respondents' decision to attend college, their major area of study, and knowledge of possible areas of study. An attempt was made to determine what specifically influenced their decision to attend college and major area of study such as subject matter area of teams, opportunity to visit a university, opportunity to work with a 4-H agent, and the opportunity to work with a volunteer leader/coach. The purpose was also to determine if judging team participation aided members in selecting a career. The final goal of the study was to determine if any life skills such as decision making, leadership or communication were developed as a result of judging team participation, and if so, did the development of these skills aid members in acquiring a job.

### III. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study included: (1) To identify selected demographic characteristics such as age, gender, number of years in 4-H, number of years participating on judging teams, etc., (2) To determine if participation on judging teams influenced respondents' decision to attend college or their major area of study, (3) To determine if judging participation influenced respondents' career decisions, (4) To measure perceptions of judging team participation on the development of life skills, (5) To determine if perceived development of life skills aided in the ability to acquire a job, and (6) To determine if there is a relationship between variables identified in objectives two, three, four, and five and selected demographic variables described in objective one.

### IV. Literature Review

To determine the impact of 4-H on activities such as judging teams, the literature review focused on six topical areas including 4-H judging activities, the educational potential of 4-H, 4-H development of life skills, 4-H development of decision making skills, 4-H development of critical thinking skills, and 4-H enhancement of career development.

The 4-H judging activity was defined by Willman (1963) and Kowalski (1991). The judging activity as it is conducted in Tennessee was defined by the Tennessee 4-H Awards Handbook (1988).

The educational potential of 4-H was recognized in a study conducted by Tyler, Charters, and Dewey (cited in Carter and Clark, 1961). Wickersham and Gauger (1963) discovered the educational aspect of 4-H through the livestock judging activity. Pierce (1981) related her own learning experiences through judging activities as well. The Tennessee 4-H Program Review Committee determined that 4-H should prepare young people to become capable, responsible, and compassionate adults (cited in Beaty, 1993).

Several sources were found that indicated the life skill development of 4-H. Southern Region 4-H Leadership Subcommittee (cited in Waguespack, 1988), Ladewig and Thomas (1987), Waguespack and Moss (1989), USDA (cited in Cantrell, et al. 1989), Collins (1986), Cantrell, et al. (1989), Matulis (1985), 4-H News (1979) and Rockwell (1981) all described the life skills developed through participation in the 4-H program.

With one of the major life skills, decision making, several sources were found indicating 4-H had a role in its development. Gersick, Grady, and Snow (cited in Kowalski, 1991), Mann, Harmon, and Power (1989), Kowalski (1991), Morris (1960) Wickersham and Gauger (1963) and Collins (cited in

Kowalski, 1991) all stated the decision making skills were developed through 4-H participation.

Critical thinking skills were determined to be developed through youth and adolescents. Jones (1992), Jones and Safrit (1992), Ennis (cited in Jones and Safrit, 1992), Walsh and Paul (cited in Aide, 1989), and Lipman (1988), all cited critical thinking skills as an essential part of problem solving and decision making.

Several sources reported that 4-H activities enhanced career development. Matulis, et al. (1988), Rockwell et al. (1984), Rockwell (1981), Shafer (cited in Rockwell, 1981) Four-H'ers and Alumni (cited in Rockwell, 1981), Boardman (1968), National 4-H News (1979) and Pierce (1981) all reported that career development was a result of 4-H participation.

## V. Procedures and Methodology

### Population

The population for the study was determined through those former Giles County 4-H members who participated on agricultural judging teams. The population was pulled from score cards on file in the Giles County Extension Office from the time period 1973 to 1988. Every effort was made to locate as many of the former judging team participants as possible.

The purpose for using this time frame was that most of the students who participated would have had the chance to graduate from college and could have a job which would be beneficial to the question which asked if judging team participation aided in acquiring a job.

A total of 115 former 4-H members were surveyed with 56 responding either on the first or second mailing. The response rate was 49 percent.

### Instrumentation

The instrument used in the study was a questionnaire which was developed by the author and mailed to former Giles County judging team participants. The questionnaire was field tested with 15 University of Tennessee students and Extension Agents. None of the population for the study was used in the field test due to the minimum number of former 4-H members available to survey.

Only one significant change was made which had to do with the questions regarding judging team participation influencing respondents' decision to attend college, their major area of study, and possible areas of study. This change was primarily in redesigning the questions which asked the respondents to identify what they perceived specifically influenced their decisions within these three areas such as subject matter of judging teams, opportunity to visit a college, opportunity to

work with a 4-H agent, and the opportunity to work with a volunteer leader.

The questionnaire had several open and closed ended questions concerning information about the respondents. Some of the close-ended questions were asked using a Likert-type scale.

### Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Scientist (SPSS Release 4.1) which is available on the IBM 3081 mainframe computer on the University of Tennessee Campus. The results were determined and reported using descriptive statistics including measures of central tendency.

## VI. Major Findings

The first objective was to describe the respondents demographically. Information obtained through the study indicated that 61 percent of the respondents were male and 39 percent were female. The number of years participating on judging teams was evenly distributed in the three categories of two years or less (34 percent), three or four years (33 percent), and five or six years (33 percent). Seventy-three percent of the respondents indicated they had been in 4-H for eight or nine years. Over 43 percent of the respondents were



college graduates or higher. The respondents' age was distributed evenly according to the three categories of 20-25 years (34 percent), 26-30 years (34 percent), and 31 and over (32 percent).

The respondents' participation at the district level was highest for the livestock, soil, dairy, and dairy products teams. Livestock, dairy, and forestry were the most frequently participated on teams at the state level. Livestock and horse teams were the only teams having participants on the national level.

Objective two attempted to determine if judging team participation had an influence on the respondents' decision to attend college, their major area of study, or knowledge of possible areas of study. Of the 56 respondents, only the 45, who indicated they went on to college, answered this particular question. The respondents indicated that their participation on judging teams had more influence on their knowledge of possible areas of study (mean = 2.55) than it did on their decision to attend college (mean = 2.33) and their major area of study (mean = 2.26).

Respondents who "agreed" that judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college, indicated that the opportunity to visit a university (mean = 2.75) had "considerable" influence on their decision. They also indicated that the subject matter area of teams (mean = 2.13), opportunity to work with a 4-H agent (mean = 2.18) and the

opportunity to work with a volunteer leader/coach (mean = 2.40) had only "moderate" influence on their decision to attend college.

Respondents who "agreed" that judging team participation influenced their major area of study, indicated that the subject matter area of the teams (mean = 2.66) and the opportunity to visit a university (mean = 2.58) had "considerable" influence on their decision. The opportunity to work with a 4-H agent (mean = 2.08) and the opportunity to work with a volunteer leader/coach (mean = 2.33) had "moderate" influence on their major area of study.

Although judging team participation influenced the respondents' knowledge of possible areas of study more so than their decision to attend college and their major area of study, they indicated that each variable only "moderately" influenced their knowledge of possible areas of study.

The respondents indicated that 4-H agents had minimum influence on their major area of study (mean = 2.08) and their decision to attend college (mean = 2.18). However, they indicated that agents had more to do with influencing their knowledge of possible areas of study (mean = 2.40).

Objective three was to determine if participation on judging teams influenced the respondents' career decisions and knowledge of possible careers. The respondents viewed the impact of judging team participation on career decisions as having only "some" influence (mean = 1.18). However, the

respondents indicated that judging team participation had "moderate" influence (mean = 2.03) on their knowledge of possible careers.

As compared to the other major dependent variables in the study, decision to attend college and major area of study, development of life skills, and life skill development's influence on their ability to acquire a job, the respondents indicated that judging team participation had the least influence on their career decisions.

The fourth objective was to determine if judging team participation had an influence on the respondents' development of life skills. The respondents indicated they "agreed" that life skill development was effected as a result of their participation on 4-H judging teams. The mean scores for life skill development ranged from 3.00 for identifying and solving problems and being a better consumer to 3.34 for developing team work and cooperation. All mean scores fell between the categories agree and strongly agree. The respondents' mean scores indicated, in the order of importance, that developing team work and cooperation, evaluating choices, making decisions, speaking with poise and confidence, and communicating effectively were the top skills developed as a result of judging team participation.

The fifth objective was to determine if life skills developed as a result of judging team participation influenced the respondents' ability to acquire a job. The respondents

indicated that judging teams had "moderate" influence (mean = 2.49) on the ability to acquire a job.

The sixth and final objective of the study was to determine if there was a relationship between selected demographic variables and the dependent variables in the study. The demographic or independent variables included gender and the number of years participating on judging teams. The dependent variables included the decision to attend college and major area of study, choice of career, development of life skills, and development of life skills on the ability to acquire a job.

The first demographic variable analyzed was the number of years participating on judging teams. The number of years were categorized into three nominal scaled values of two years or less, three or four years, and five or six years of judging team participation.

As the respondents' number of years participating on judging teams increased so did their level of agreement that judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college, their major area of study and their knowledge of possible areas of study. Those respondents who participated either two years or less and three or four years tended to disagree (mean less than 2.5) that judging participation influenced their decision to attend college, their major area of study, and knowledge of possible areas of study. However, those participating five or six years tended to agree (mean =

2.5 or greater) that judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college, their major area of study and their knowledge of possible areas of study. Respondents agreed that judging team participation had more influence on their knowledge of possible areas of study than on their decision to attend college or their major area of study.

For the second dependent variable, choice of a career and knowledge of possible careers, as the number of years participating on judging teams increased, so did the influence on the respondents' choice of a career. The respondents who participated two years or less and three or four years indicated that judging team participation had "some" influence on their choice of a career (mean = 0.79 and 1.29 for each category respectively) while those participating five or six years indicated that judging team participation had "moderate" influence on their choice of a career (mean = 1.55). Respondents' perceived mean scores were slightly higher for the influence of judging team participation on knowledge of possible careers. The respondents who participated two years or less and three or four years indicated that judging team participation had "moderate" influence on their knowledge of possible careers (mean = 1.57 and 2.00 for each category respectively), while those participating five or six years indicated judging team participation had "considerable" influence on their knowledge of possible careers (mean = 2.66).

For the dependent variable, development of life skills, the respondents indicated they "agreed" life skills were developed as a result of judging team participation. For eight of the eleven life skills, making decisions, evaluating choices, accessing situations, identifying and solving problems, memorizing clearly, communicating effectively, listening effectively, and developing team work and cooperation, as the respondents' years of participation increased, so did their perception of the development of these eight life skills. In addition, respondents participating five or six years "strongly agreed" (mean = 3.50 and above) that judging team participation influenced the development of the life skills making decisions, evaluating choices, communicating effectively, speaking with poise and confidence, developing leadership and developing teamwork and cooperation.

For three of the life skills including speaking with poise and confidence, developing leadership, and being a better consumer, some differences existed in the perceived impact scores of the participants. Although the difference was slight on the development of speaking with poise and confidence, mean scores for the respondents participating two years or less (mean = 3.10) were slightly higher than those participating three or four years (mean = 3.05). This same situation existed for the life skill, developing leadership, with perceived mean scores of those respondents participating two years or less (mean = 3.15) slightly higher than those

participating three or four years (mean = 3.00). A similar situation existed for the life skill being a better consumer. Mean scores for those respondents participating on judging teams three or four years (mean = 3.11) were higher for the life skill, being a better consumer, than for those respondents participating five or six years (mean = 3.00). In summary, those respondents participating two years or less indicated that the development of the life skills, speaking with poise and confidence and developing leadership, were influenced more through judging team participation than those participating three or four years. This same relationship held true for those respondents participating on judging teams three or four years compared to those participating five or six years on the development of the life skill, being a better consumer.

The last dependent variable to be considered in relation to the independent variable, number of years participating on judging teams, was the perceived development of life skills on the respondents' ability to acquire a job. As the number of years participating on judging teams increased, so did the perception of the respondents that judging team participation influenced their ability to acquire a job. Those respondents participating two years or less (mean = 2.05) and three or four years (mean = 2.23) indicated that judging team participation had "moderate" influence on the perceived development of life skills on the ability to acquire a job.

Those participating five or six years (mean = 3.16) indicated that judging team participation had a "considerable" influence on the perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job.

The second and final independent variable, gender, was analyzed in relation to the dependent variables in the study. The first set of dependent variables analyzed was the decision to attend college, major area of study, and knowledge of possible areas of study. Mean scores for both males (mean = 2.37) and females (mean = 2.27) indicated they "disagreed" that judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college. This same relationship held true for the influence of judging team participation on the respondents' major area of study, although male (mean = 2.40) mean scores were higher than female (mean = 2.05) scores. For knowledge of possible areas of study, males (mean = 2.62) perceived mean scores indicated they "agreed" that judging team participation influenced their knowledge of possible areas of study while female (mean = 2.44) scores indicated they "disagreed". In summary, both males and females "disagreed" that judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college and their major area of study. Males "agreed", however, that judging team participation influenced their knowledge of possible areas of study while females "disagreed". Both males and females perceived that judging team participation had the greatest impact on their knowledge of possible areas of study



rather than their decision to attend college or their major area of study.

For the dependent variable, choice of a career and knowledge of possible careers, both males (mean = 1.33) and females (mean = 0.95) indicated that judging team participation had "some" influence on their choice of a career. Mean scores for both males (mean = 2.15) and females (mean = 1.86) indicated that judging participation had "moderate" influence on their knowledge of possible careers. Both males and females indicated that judging team participation had a greater influence on their knowledge of possible careers than on their career choice.

The next variable studied was the relationship between gender and the influence of judging team participation on the development of eleven life skills. Both males and females "agreed" that judging team participation influenced the development of all eleven identified life skills. Perceived mean scores of males ranged from 2.81 for being a better consumer to 3.30 for developing leadership. Female scores ranged from 3.09 for identifying and solving problems to 3.40 for developing teamwork and cooperation. For all eleven life skills, female perceived mean scores were higher than male mean scores. These scores indicated that females "agreed" more than males that judging team participation influenced their development of life skills.

The final dependent variable analyzed was the

relationship between gender and the perceived development of life skills on the respondents' ability to acquire a job. Males indicated that judging team participation had more influence on the perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job than did females. Mean scores for males (mean = 2.66) indicated that judging team participation had "considerable" influence on the perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job, while female (mean = 2.20) scores indicated only "moderate" influence. These results indicated that females did not feel that judging team participation had a positive effect on their ability to acquire a job.

## VII. Conclusions

Former Giles County 4-H members agreed that participating on agricultural judging teams influenced their knowledge of possible areas of study. However, they disagreed that it influenced their decision to attend college or their major area of study. Four-H activities, including judging teams, appear to offer to its members subject matter ideas about fields of study and potential areas for advanced degrees.

In assessing the influence judging participation had on respondents who "agreed" that it influenced their decision to attend college, it is logical that the variable, opportunity to visit a university, would have "considerable" influence on

the respondents. This may be true due to the fact that respondents actually got to attend a judging team contest and/or event which was conducted on a university or college campus.

In assessing those respondents who "agreed" that judging team participation had "considerable" influence on their major area of study, the respondents indicated that this influence was a result of the subject matter area of teams and the opportunity to visit a university. The subject matter area of the agricultural judging teams actually relates to specific majors offered through agricultural degrees. In addition, the opportunity to visit a university or college would certainly provide chances to see what fields of study are available. According to the mean scores, respondents apparently felt that 4-H agents had only "moderate" influence on their choice of a major as compared to other variables.

In assessing the respondents' perception of judging team participation influence on their knowledge of possible areas of study, the respondents indicated that all variables only "moderately" influenced their knowledge of possible areas of study. As demonstrated by their mean scores, respondents felt that 4-H agents had more influence on their knowledge of possible areas of study than their decision to attend college or their major area of study. Based on these results, respondents seem to be interested in 4-H agents only assisting in providing knowledge for possible areas of study. Perhaps

the respondents felt that their major area of study would be directed through a different means other than 4-H agents. Also 4-H agents make several ideas available on possible areas of study and do not try to emphasize specific major areas of study.

Of the four major dependent variables evaluated in the study, respondents indicated that judging teams had the least influence on their choice of a career and knowledge of possible careers. Respondents did indicate that judging team participation had "moderate" influence on their knowledge of possible careers. This could be due to the fact that the subject matter areas of some teams do relate to possible careers.

There is no doubt that the 4-H program including judging team participation has a pronounced effect upon the development of life skills in youth. Much of the research in the literature review indicated that 4-H participation had a great impact on the development of life skills. The respondents indicated that they agreed that all eleven life skills in the study were influenced through judging team participation. The final analysis of this study positively recognizes that 4-H judging team participation was very instrumental in developing life skills of former 4-H members.

Judging team participation had only "moderate" influence on the respondents' ability to acquire a job. The life skills developed as a result of participation seemed to have some

positive effect overall on former 4-H members acquiring a job.

As the number of years participating on agricultural judging teams increased, the more the respondents tended to agree that judging team participation influenced their decision to attend college, their major area of study, and their knowledge of possible areas of study. The longer 4-H members participate in activities such as judging teams the more likely they are to learn about college opportunities and major areas of study. Four-H members interested in college or other continued areas of study should participate as long as possible in an activity to gain the best understanding of potential college degrees and major fields of study.

Again, as the number of years participating on agricultural judging teams increased, so did the respondents' perception that judging team participation influenced their choice of a career and their knowledge of possible careers. Although this influence was to a lesser degree than the influence of judging team participation on the other dependent variables in the study. Only those participating five or six years indicated that judging team participation had "considerable" influence on their knowledge of possible careers. The longer 4-H members participate in activities the more likely 4-H will influence their choice of a career or knowledge of possible careers.

For the dependent variable, life skill development, as the number of years participating increased so did the

respondents' perception that life skills were developed with the exception of the three areas of: speaking with poise and confidence, developing leadership, and being a better consumer. Only minor differences existed between the number of years participating on judging teams and these three life skills. Of the four dependent variables in the study, the respondents indicated they agreed that judging team participation had the greatest influence on their development of all eleven life skills in the study. For one of the three exceptions, an interesting point can be made in that those respondents who participated two years or less perceived that judging participation had more influence on the development of leadership than did those who participated either three or four years. This is interesting since some of the 4-H studies in the Literature Review indicated that leadership development was a vital part of 4-H participation. One conclusion might be that those 4-H members participating either three or four years felt that they had not received the opportunity to provide leadership through either coaching a judging team or other opportunities. Another idea could be they felt no leadership skills were developed after the first couple of years of participation.

For the relationship of the number of years participating on judging teams and the perceived development of life skills on the ability to acquire a job, those respondents who participated either five or six years felt that judging had a

"considerable" influence on the development of life skills upon their ability to acquire a job. Again, it appears that judging team participation, especially over a period of years, does have a considerable effect on former 4-H member's ability to acquire a job.

The relationship of gender and the dependent variables indicates there are gender differences as a result of judging participation. The males perceived a higher degree of influence on the dependent variables decision to attend college and major area of study, choice of a career, and life skill development on their ability to acquire a job. In each of these dependent variables, males indicated only a slight increase on the influence of judging over females. Females indicated that judging had slightly more influence in life skill development than did males. Even though females indicated that judging team participation influenced the development of life skills more than males, males indicated that judging team participation had slightly more influence on the perceived development of life skills on their ability to acquire a job. Apparently females do not believe that the development of life skills has influenced their ability to acquire a job as much as males. Perhaps males feel that the skills developed are more useful and necessary to them in acquiring a job.

## IX. Recommendations for Program Improvement

The longer former 4-H members participated in 4-H judging activities the more likely they were to indicate it had a positive influence on their decision to attend college, their major area of study, choice of a career, life skill development, and perceived life skill development on the ability to acquire a job. Therefore, 4-H agents and volunteer leaders involved with the program should continue to encourage and motivate 4-H members' participation in the program over a period of years.

Former 4-H members "agreed" that judging team participation did influence their knowledge of possible areas of study. They indicated that 4-H agents had "moderate" influence on their knowledge. Agents need to continue to promote possible areas of study by providing judging opportunities in their county 4-H programs. These opportunities may eventually help 4-H members make a decision for a college major.

New forms of recognition, such as opportunities to visit college campuses and universities for possible training opportunities, are needed to encourage 4-H members to continue their participation in 4-H and develop ideas toward attending college and deciding on a major area of study.

Use of a career professional as a volunteer leader to coach a judging team or conduct a workshop could give 4-H



members the opportunity to work with someone trained in a subject area of their interest. Perhaps former 4-H members, such as those surveyed in this study, could serve as volunteer leaders and/or coaches for judging teams so they could relate the influence 4-H has had in their lives.

Over 70% of the respondents supported the idea of a collaborative group decision for one or more judging classes in a particular contest. Perhaps there is a need to develop a plan to incorporate a collaborative group decision for one or more judging contests. This could be done on an experimental basis, especially in district contests. If successful, the collaborative decision could be implemented as a part of judging contests in the future.

#### VIII. Recommendations for Further Study

In the relationship of the number of years participating on judging teams and the life skill, developing leadership, it was interesting that those participating three or four year did not perceive that this skill was influenced by judging as did those who participated two years or less. Even though the difference was very slight, it is normally perceived that the more involved in 4-H the more likely to continue developing leadership. In many of the previous studies viewed, they all indicated that leadership was developed as a result of participation. Further research might determine how

leadership is developed in youth as they continue their involvement (i.e. more years) in activities such as 4-H and which activities build leadership skills.

In addition, those participating on judging teams for five or six years indicated that judging had a significant influence on their ability to acquire a job. The scores for those participating five or six years were quite higher than those participating three or four years. Further study might indicate if 4-H activities have a considerable impact on the development of life skills on individuals ability to acquire a job.

According to the respondents, the variable "major areas of study" was least impacted by the opportunity to work with a 4-H agent within the judging activity. Further study is needed to determine how 4-H agents as well as the 4-H program impact participants decision to continue their education or what role the 4-H agents should play in helping 4-H members discover their major area of study.

Finally, a state-wide study of former judging team participants, similar to this study, may be more useful in determining the educational effectiveness of the judging program throughout the state. It may also be more beneficial for the group collaborative question, since the former Giles County 4-H members may not represent the views of other previous judging team participants from across the state.

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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**



(First Mailing)

Participant's Name  
Address  
City, State

Dear :

The 4-H program in Giles County reaches almost 1700 youth each year. As a 4-H alumni you are aware of a variety of activities available to these youth. In an attempt to determine the effectiveness of some of these activities, I am conducting a study on the benefits of participating in 4-H judging activities as perceived by former Giles County 4-H members such as yourself who participated on 4-H judging teams.

As a part of this study, I would like for you to take a few minutes and complete the enclosed questionnaire. Please answer each question that pertains to your situation and return the questionnaire by April 1st using the self-addressed stamped envelope.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. I would greatly appreciate your response in order to make sure our assessment of the program accurately represents those who participated. The return of your completed questionnaire will indicate your consent to participate in this study and give us permission to use your responses.

You will notice that your questionnaire is coded. This code will only be used to follow-up non-respondents to assure that they received this mailing and so as not to impose on those who have completed and returned their questionnaire. I assure you that your individual responses to the questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential and your name will never be linked to specific responses. Study data will be reported only in aggregate form.

Again, I would appreciate your time and support of this study. Any information obtained should be very useful in conducting and improving this part of the 4-H program for future participants. If you have questions regarding the study or any of the information requested, please call me at (615) 363-3523.

Sincerely,

Kevin L. Rose  
Assistant Extension Agent - 4-H  
Giles County Agricultural Extension Service

(Second Mailing)

Participant's Name  
Address  
City, State

Dear :

Recently I sent you a questionnaire concerning your experiences with 4-H judging team participation in Giles County. As of this letter, I have not received your response.

I know that this may be an extremely busy time of the year for you. However, it is very important that I receive as many completed surveys as possible due to the limited number of participants available.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and mail to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by June 3rd. If you find that this survey asks questions that are too personal or that it was sent to you by mistake, please mail back the questionnaire uncompleted. This will allow me to take your name off the participants list and not contact you again.

The purpose of this study is to determine the educational value of agricultural judging teams. Your responses could provide meaningful insight that could help to offer an even more educational program for future 4-H members in Giles County.

I would also remind you that your responses will be kept confidential and all results will be reported as aggregate data.

If you have already mailed in your responses, please disregard this letter.

Again, I thank you for your time and attention.

Yours truly,

Kevin L. Rose  
Assistant Extension Agent - 4-H  
Giles County Agricultural Extension Service

Code # \_\_\_\_\_

## 4-H AGRICULTURAL JUDGING QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions. (Use a check (✓) where appropriate.)

1. What is your current age? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your gender? Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many years were you enrolled in 4-H? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many years did you participate on 4-H agricultural judging teams? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Please CHECK which of the following agricultural judging teams you participated on and CIRCLE your **highest** level of participation (D=District, S=State, N=National). (Check all that apply)

		<u>Level</u>			<u>Level</u>
Livestock	_____	D S N	Wildlife	_____	D S N
Dairy	_____	D S N	Meats	_____	D S N
Poultry	_____	D S N	Soil	_____	D S N
Forestry	_____	D S N	Dairy Products	_____	D S N
Horse	_____	D S N	Plant & Seed ID (formerly crops)	_____	D S N

6. Did you ever coach and/or assist in coaching a 4-H judging team:
  - a. As a 4-H teen leader? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. As a 4-H adult volunteer leader? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
7. Did you participate on a collegiate judging team? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. What team(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Please indicate which of the following 4-H activities you participated in while enrolled in 4-H. (Check all that apply)

4-H Roundup	_____	Livestock Shows	_____
4-H Congress	_____	Camps	_____
Honor Club	_____	Interstate Exchange Program	_____
All Star	_____	Ag Engineering Events	_____
Public Speaking	_____	Other, please specify _____	

9. Please indicate the **highest** level of education you completed.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Some high school     | <input type="checkbox"/> d. College graduate      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. High school graduate | <input type="checkbox"/> e. Post graduate work    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Some college         | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Other (specify) _____ |

**IF YOU DID NOT ATTEND COLLEGE, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 12.**

10. If you attended college, please indicate your main area(s) of study. (Check all that apply.)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Agriculture(including Ag. Educ.) | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Home Economics        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Architecture                     | <input type="checkbox"/> l. Law                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Biological Sciences              | <input type="checkbox"/> m. Liberal Arts          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Business                         | <input type="checkbox"/> n. Mathematics           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e. Communications                   | <input type="checkbox"/> o. Physical Education    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> f. Computer Science                 | <input type="checkbox"/> p. Psychology            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> g. Education                        | <input type="checkbox"/> q. Public Relations      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> h. Engineering                      | <input type="checkbox"/> r. Social Sciences       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> i. Foreign Languages                | <input type="checkbox"/> s. Theology              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> j. Health Related                   | <input type="checkbox"/> t. Other (specify) _____ |

10b. If you selected **Agriculture** as your area of study, please indicate your major(s).

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Economics and Rural sociology  | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Food Technology and Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Education                      | <input type="checkbox"/> g. Engineering and Technology  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Animal Science                 | <input type="checkbox"/> h. OHL D                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Plant and Soil Science         | <input type="checkbox"/> i. Entomology and Plant Path.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e. Forestry, Wildlife & Fisheries | <input type="checkbox"/> j. other _____                 |

11. If you attended college, please answer the following series of questions by **circling** the correct response. Use the following scales to answer each set of questions.

Scales

SD = Strongly Disagree

D = Disagree

A = Agree

SA = Strongly Agree

0 = No Influence

1 = Some Influence

2 = Moderate Influence

3 = Considerable Influence

4 = Great Influence

- a. Judging team participation influenced my decision to attend college.      SD    D    A    SA

If you circled **A** or **SA** above, what influenced your decision?

No Influence <-----> Great Influence

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Subject matter area of teams                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Opportunity to visit a university            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Opportunity to work with 4-H agent           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Opportunity to work with a vol. leader/coach | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Other (specify) _____                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- b. Judging team participation influenced my major area of study in college.      SD    D    A    SA

If you circled **A** or **SA** above, what influenced your decision?

No Influence <-----> Great Influence

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Subject matter area of teams                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Opportunity to visit a university            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Opportunity to work with 4-H agent           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Opportunity to work with a vol. leader/coach | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Other (specify) _____                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

- c. Judging team participation influenced my knowledge of possible areas of study.      SD    D    A    SA

If you circled **A** or **SA** above, what influenced your decision?

No Influence <-----> Great Influence

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Subject matter area of teams                 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Opportunity to visit a university            | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Opportunity to work with 4-H agent           | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Opportunity to work with a vol. leader/coach | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Other (specify) _____                        | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |



16. As you know, the judging activity consists of 3 or 4 team members that score individually and the scores are summed to make the total team score. (On a 4 member team the lowest score is dropped.) Do you feel that a change on one or more classes of a particular contest to a group collaborative decision would be beneficial and enhance the learning that is provided through 4-Her's participation on judging teams? (In other words, for **some** classes the entire team would decide how to place the class they are judging.)

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Why or Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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17. Please indicate any other benefits of the 4-H judging activity that may not be considered by this survey. \_\_\_\_\_

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18. Please indicate any concerns or changes that would benefit the 4-H judging contests.

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Thank you!

**APPENDIX B**



**GROUP COLLABORATIVE DECISION OF THE 4-H JUDGING ACTIVITY**

The former judging team participants were asked to respond either "yes" or "no" to the question, "Do you feel that a change on one or more classes of a particular contest to a group collaborative decision would be beneficial and enhance the learning that is provided through 4-H'ers participation on judging teams?" Thirty-seven of the respondents indicated "yes" while only 15 indicated "no". In addition to answering "yes" or "no", the respondents were asked to discuss why or why not. The following comments were made by the former judging team participants.

**Yes**

"If a team is to be judged as a whole it could possibly stimulate the 4-H'er to put forth more effort in turn educating the 4-H'er more with responsibility and the subject."

"Each person could contribute their knowledge thus others benefit from their knowledge on the subject--Learn from one another."

"The entire team would have input and learn to make decisions as a group."

"For example, livestock judging, everyone has a view for all characteristics. One member can bring out better characteristics than others. When all of the different views add up, then you could have better placing."

"Because each member of the team would be able to give their reasons verbally for judging a particular way as well as hearing why other members judged the way they did."

"Those who are less experienced could evaluate the thought and selection process of someone who knows what they are doing."

"In life you have to work in group situations a lot. You and your group have to make collaborative decisions and I feel that doing this in judging teams would give young people some practice."

"In some cases a team decision would allow the members to discuss what each saw and then come to a common decision. It allows the members to learn from each other what they may be seeing differently."

"I think it would help young people to work together in a group situation, just as they will have to later in life."

"This would allow to develop communication skills and team work. In my experience in the job market these skills are very important to succeed."

"Allow the process on each class of livestock. I believe this would be beneficial primarily in the junior division."

"From my experience in judging, I feel that a group decision would make young members more comfortable with some help from others."

"Because as a team member those that have more knowledge of the situation may be able to help other team mates by pointing out the good and bad points. That may help others to make correct decisions in the future."

"A lot of time two or more opinions are better than one."

"Each person would bring a unique perspective in group collaboration, providing an individual insight from which other team members may learn."

"If the team is allowed to talk about the class when judging it teaches teamwork which is something that helps when seeking and maintaining a job."

"This would give the team a chance to learn and see the different aspects of the class judged through the other team members to get a over all view of the class being judged."

"Because just like in the true work place all is seen and judged and we must learn from team work."

"More and better opportunities to develop making decisions, communicating effectively, speaking with poise and confidence, listening effectively, developing leadership, and developing teamwork and cooperation."

"Gives you an opportunity to listen and evaluate other ideas and decide how they are better or worse than your own."

"One can always learn from a fellow team member due to different learning experiences."

"Depending on what you are judging, if as a group, the discussion of-for or against-could bring out a point some may not have thought about."

"I think the entire team should decide how to place the class."

### No

"Individual scoring within the team provides healthy competition which in turn provides improvement for weaker members."

"I believe each individual person should make his/her own decision about how to rank the subjects. That promotes individualism on decision making and the rewards are greater on a high score increasing confidence."

"A member of team may not be up to par and there is no reason to penalize the whole team if one member is having an off day."

"I like the way the judging teams were when I was involved. You had to know your own material, everyone knew that and didn't depend on a group decision."

"Not all people come to the same decision. One persons decision may influence another's decision."

"The larger the team, unfortunately, the less input each member gives. As you've probably heard, in committee meetings, only 20% of the people do 80% of the talking. So I feel the smaller the group, the more interaction and hence more learning."

"The team would have a tendency to rely on one particular team member for answers instead of having to produce their own individual conclusion."

"It is my opinion that the best three of four is sufficient. I think this gives the team the best chance of a good score."

"Some members will let the others make the decision and not put in any input."

"I think the fairest way for a group is to total their points. Is fine the way it is now."

**APPENDIX C**

#### OTHER SUGGESTED BENEFITS OF THE 4-H JUDGING ACTIVITY

The respondents were asked to indicate any other benefits of the 4-H judging activity that may not have been considered in this study. The following comments, not in any specific order, were made by the former judging team participants.

##### Benefits

"One large benefit I'll never forget is being able to meet kids my own age from different areas that had the same interest. Some of these I'll never forget."

"Enjoyed going to competition and exposure to new and different people and places."

"It takes work and study to be successful...you can't "bluff" your way through...knowledge opens the door."

"Great "icebreaker" at school when you tell your buddies that you were on the soil judging team."

"Judging teams are an opportunity for kids to get together for healthy fun and learning experience, but now as a parent, sometimes work schedules limit what you have time for your children to participate in."

"It was a happy, beneficial, and great learning experience."

"Creates a bond between the consumer and production agriculture. Stresses that product produce must be satisfactory to consumer."

"Although I didn't choose an ag related career, I was around some wonderful educators. They really influenced my choice in education. I was also taught many valuable life skills while participating in judging teams that make me a better consumer and wife."

"I enjoyed the chance to compete and travel to competitions. The soil judging experience has helped me on my small farm."

"The advantage of meeting people and other breeders in the livestock business. Seeing and learning about their operations and the connections you must make that can help you in the future aspect of your life."

"Judging activities provide many young people their first exposure to people and events outside their own particular county or school."

"A chance to learn subject matter being judged, interaction and communication with judging partners-learning from them, gaining more confidence in your own opinions and the ability to judge."

"This activity allows 4-H'ers to visit different parts of the state and to meet lots of new people. This is an experience you cannot get from a classroom or a textbook. It is a great learning by experience activity."

"Team work is the key. Your team has to click together in order to read each other."

"The introduction of the 4-H'er to areas of nature and basic life skills that are less common in everyday life today."

**APPENDIX D**



## SUGGESTED CONCERNS AND CHANGES OF THE 4-H JUDGING ACTIVITY

The respondents were asked to indicate any concerns or changes they felt would benefit the 4-H judging activity. The following comments, listed as either concerns or changes, were made by the former judging team participants.

### Concerns

"The most important thing to be concerned with is to keep informed with the current market to keep an accurate judging outlook on the animals being judged."

"Parents need to be more educated on 4-H and the life long effects it has on everyone."

"My personal feeling is that our training in judging was insufficient. This caused a handicap in state competition. This is why I chose demonstrations over judging teams as my main project."

"A concern would be getting more 4-H'ers involved with judging teams."

"Many benefits can be learned from judging, but they have to be brought out by the coach. I wasn't able to see this until college-my coach in 4-H never really taught us anything about why we were picking these animals. Some of us did not understand or know anything about the industry."

"Better incentives towards winning and participating."

"To make the public more aware of the judging teams and contests."

"You need to get more kids interested in it. When I was on judging teams, I worked to get a trip and even make the team. Today, 4-H is not geared toward agriculture to the young people and that is what 4-H is about. Not all this inter city junk. Lets get 4-H back to livestock, crops, soil, and the things that make this county what it is."

### Changes

"Keeping groups small and interaction as personal as possible. This is very important especially when kids are young in their formative years."

"Stress using agriculture professionals as main coaches. Require attendance at training meetings as a requirement. Stress oral and written communication."

"Middle Tennessee livestock teams could benefit from more contests. Maybe during warm up shows for Expo or during Expo."

"It would be good for people who lead judging teams to go to state training-(inservices) when changes are made in fields. I would also recommend carrying the judging training out all year!"

"To elevate the learning materials in the different agriculture areas covered to today's special ways of life. Continue to include the basics but include today's changes also. Try to work more closely with the county's school system in following the subject materials and classroom work on the subjects. Most teachers welcome X-credit projects and the time could be well used by the 4-H'er."

**VITA**

Kevin L. Rose was born on March 3, 1964. He was raised in a small, rural community of Southern Middle Tennessee known as Culleoka. He attended Culleoka High School where he was involved in FFA (formerly known as Future Farmers of America) and basketball. He graduated from high school in May, 1982.

Upon graduation from high school, he entered the agriculture program at Columbia State Community College, where he received an Associate of Science Degree in General Agriculture. From there, he enrolled at the University of Tennessee majoring in Agriculture-Business and minoring in Plant and Soil Science and General Business. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree in December, 1986.

He was employed by the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service on October 16, 1987 as an Assistant Extension Agent with responsibilities in 4-H agriculture. He has since been promoted to Associate Extension Agent.

In 1991, he enrolled in Extension Winter School at The University of Tennessee to pursue a Master's Degree in Extension Education.

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