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## **The image of 4-H as perceived by selected Tennessee seventh graders**

Deanna Lee Essington

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Deanna Lee Essington entitled "The image of 4-H as perceived by selected Tennessee seventh graders." 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 Agricultural and Extension Education.

Roy R. Lessly, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Randol Waters, Ben Powell

Accepted for the Council:

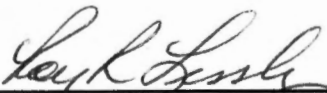
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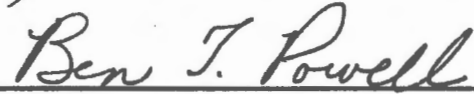
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Roy R. Lessly, Major Professor

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

**THE IMAGE OF 4-H AS PERCEIVED BY  
SELECTED TENNESSEE SEVENTH GRADERS**

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

Deanna Lee Essington

December 1995

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Thesis

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## ABSTRACT

The 4-H organization for youth ages 9-19, is the youth education program of the Cooperative Extension Service. Tennessee's 4-H program had 185,000-plus members in 1993-94, up from 171,685 in 1992-93. Even though there has been an overall increase in enrollment, there has been an average 38 percent decrease in membership from the sixth to seventh grades during the past five years. One reason which could have an effect on the decreasing membership is the perception of the image of 4-H to these students. The purpose of this study was to look at relationships between 4-H membership and selected personal and family characteristics, and respondents' attitudes regarding the image of 4-H; to study the relationships between selected demographic variables and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H; to study the relationship between the level of parental support and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H; and to determine nonmembers' and drop-out members' perceptions of why they did not join or dropped out of 4-H, respectively. A questionnaire was developed with these objectives in mind. The surveys were administered by 4-H agents to seventh grade students at one school in each of six randomly selected counties. The findings in this study indicated that 4-H'ers who were more involved in 4-H made better grades (A's and B's), lived on a farm, were influenced by a 4-H agent to join, and had strong parental support for their participation in 4-H. The

findings also indicated that 4-H members in general made better grades (A's and B's), had a mother/guardian working outside the home, had parents who were previous 4-H members, had friends who were 4-H members, and had positive attitudes toward 4-H. However, the findings also indicated that those 4-H members making better grades (A's and B's) were less likely to remain in 4-H—as were those 4-H members who were 14 or older. Findings also indicated the three main reasons nonmembers never joined 4-H and drop-out members left 4-H were: 4-H didn't meet their interests, they didn't have time, and there were "other reasons." Nonmembers also felt they didn't know enough about 4-H. Another finding was that more than 50 percent of the 4-H members either agreed with or were undecided about the statement that 4-H was boring. Based upon these findings, it is recommended that:

- 1) more activities be developed which deal with more current issues facing the 4-H members or needed life skills;
- 2) more activities be developed for the older 4-H members in order to retain their membership;
- 3) a more aggressive program be implemented where the older members provide leadership, activities, and support for the younger 4-H members;
- 4) family activities be provided to encourage parental support of 4-H; and
- 5) 4-H agents should work with 4-H members in this age group to see what aspects of 4-H the members feel are boring and obtain suggestions and ideas for improvement.



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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION

The 4-H organization is designed for youth ages 9-19, and has been the youth education program of the Cooperative Extension Service System since the passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914. Since then, more than 40 million youth from all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam have been involved in 4-H. (Wessel & Wessel, 1982). In a handbook for attendees to National 4-H Congress (1992), additional areas are listed as having 4-H programs: American Samoa, Micronesia, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

Sesow and VanCleaf (1988, p. 5) cited a statement from a 1984 USDA 4-H update report, that "in 1983, a total of 4,657,784 youth ages 9-19 participated in at least one 4-H program." And, according to more recent statistics (National 4-H Congress Handbook, 1992) in 1991, 5,657,657 youth between the ages of 9-19 participated in 4-H. Of these youth, the age-breakdown was: 22 percent—ages 5-8; 45 percent—ages 9-11; 23 percent—12-14; 10 percent—15-19.

Through the years, the 4-H organization has had to change with the changes in society. E. W. Aiton, a force behind the International Farm Youth Exchange, once said that the guideposts developed by the Extension Service's National Advisory Group on 4-H Postwar Programs in December 1944 were

the principal inspiration for 4-H work after 1945.

The guideposts stimulated 4-H clubs to help young people develop talents and attitudes for cooperation in work and play, choosing a career, creating better living environments, developing a sensitivity toward conserving natural resources, building a better America, sharing responsibilities for community development, and serving as citizens in maintaining world peace. Generally, the advisory group looked to 4-H as a means of contributing to the development of young people wherever they lived for whatever they chose to make of their lives (Wessel & Wessel, 1982, pp. 64-65).

The 4-H program in Tennessee has grown and has experienced changes. With the variety of projects available, the 185,000-plus Tennessee 4-H'ers can choose projects according to their present interests and/or to enhance their aspirations. Members of Tennessee's 4-H program meet in organized clubs, special interest groups, or school enrichment programs. The 4-H agents work with school personnel and volunteer leaders in delivering these programs to the youth. There are also opportunities for the 4-H'ers to attend 4-H camps and a variety of county, state, district, regional, and national events. Throughout all of the involvement in activities and events, the 4-H members, 4-H agents, volunteers, and parents never lose sight of the mission of 4-H: "to assist youth in acquiring knowledge, developing life skills, and forming attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, productive,

and contributing members of society" (Wessel & Wessel, 1982, p. 331).

### NEED FOR THE STUDY

In 1981, Paula Mullins, a college journalism major and long-time 4-H'er, wrote in an article for the National 4-H News, "One of these days they'll understand. The non-4-H'er that is. I'm not sure how many times I have had to explain to my non-4-H'er friends that '4-H ain't all cows and cooking'" (Wessel & Wessel, 1982, p. 195).

Perhaps Mullins captured the perception that many youth have toward 4-H. While it is important to remember the image of 4-H's history being cows and cooking, it is also important to realize that 4-H is dedicated to meeting the needs of today's youth. The traditional projects still exist, but there are also projects such as citizenship, public speaking, personal development, leadership, conservation, and consumer education to name a few.

Tennessee 4-H has a history of working primarily with rural youth, dating back to the boys' corn clubs first organized in 1910 (4-H: A Tennessee Tradition, 1986). As 4-H across the country changed, so did Tennessee's 4-H program, with the addition of new projects and increased enrollment.

During the period of Oct. 1, 1993, to Sept. 30, 1994, there were 185,800 members enrolled in the Tennessee 4-H program (Tennessee 4-H Enrollment Data Report, 1994). However, with the overall increases, there are still numerous decreases in enrollment between different grade levels.

Based on 4-H enrollment data for the past five years, there has been a significant drop in 4-H enrollment figures of members between the sixth and seventh grades. This is the break when 4-H members change between being members of the junior 4-H clubs to being members of the junior high 4-H clubs. A breakdown of membership for the past five years in these areas is as follows: 1989-90 - 32,670 sixth graders, 20,515 seventh graders; 1990-91 - 34,279 sixth graders, 20,299 seventh graders; 1991-92 - 33,097 sixth graders, 19,998 seventh graders; 1992-93 - 32,380 sixth graders, 19,665 seventh graders; and 1993-94 - 31,156 sixth graders, 20,153 seventh graders (Tennessee 4-H Enrollment Data Reports, 1990-94). These numbers indicate an average loss of members of 38 percent during the past five years in the transition from sixth to seventh grade.

The drop in enrollment could be explained by the number of 4-H clubs that meet at different schools, the increased involvement of youth in sports and other school-related activities, participation in other youth organizations, lack of family support, or the image of 4-H—which is the focus of this study.

In a 1990 final report of the communications audit that Marketing Resources, Inc., conducted for the National 4-H Council, one of the conclusions stated was “the strongest image of 4-H seemed to be an association with farming and agriculture, animals/livestock, and the state or county fair” (MRI Final Report, 1990, p. 5).

Player and Smathers (1989, p. 18) wrote an article defending that



agriculture is more than farming. They stated that “the first thing that comes to mind when children hear the word ‘agriculture’ is farming.” They are referring to the type of farming associated with production agriculture.

“Children are intimately acquainted with the image of ‘Old MacDonald’ and sounds that farm animals make.”

The authors contend that production agriculture is the foundation of agriculture science and agribusiness, and it is important for children to realize what impact agriculture has on society. “Today’s youth programs such as 4-H and FFA are gearing their programs to stress this message. Youth can now explore possible careers through involvement in positive, character-building programs offered by these organizations” (Player & Smathers, 1989, p. 19).

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to identify the demographic characteristics of 4-H members and nonmembers and compare their demographic profiles as they relate to their personal and family characteristics and their opinions regarding the image of 4-H. A number of demographic variables were studied to see if there were relationships between selected variables and the respondents’ level of participation in 4-H. The study looked at the relationship between the level of parental support and the 4-H members’ level of participation in 4-H. The study also looked at reasons respondents gave for dropping out, or not participating in the 4-H program.

## OBJECTIVES

The following objectives were developed for this study:

1. To look at the demographic profile of 4-H members and nonmembers to study the relationships between 4-H membership and a) selected personal and family characteristics, and b) respondents' attitudes regarding the image of 4-H.
2. To study the relationships between selected demographic variables and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H.
3. To study the relationship between the level of parental support and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H.
4. To determine nonmembers' perceptions of why they did not join 4-H, and to determine drop-out members' perceptions of why they left 4-H.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of this study, it is necessary to define certain terms which will be used throughout.

*4-H members:* those youth who are presently enrolled and actively involved in 4-H clubs and projects.

*Drop-out members:* those who were previously 4-H members.

*Nonmembers:* those who have never been associated with 4-H and/or those who are in a classroom when a 4-H meeting is being conducted, yet, are not active members.

*Urban counties:* those counties holding the center city of a metropolitan area as defined by the census—Davidson, Hamilton, Knox, Madison, Montgomery, Shelby, and Washington.

*Suburban counties:* those counties with a population of 30,000 plus or a city of 20,000 which borders one of the above mentioned urban counties and have a city population of 7,000 to 10,000—Gibson, Maury, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Tipton, Williamson, Wilson, Bradley, McMinn, Putnam, Anderson, Blount, Carter, Greene, and Sullivan.

*Rural counties:* those counties of any population of 30,000 or less, with a city population of 7,000 to 10,000—all other (72) counties.

*Level of Involvement:* An involvement score was computed to determine the level of involvement of the 4-H members. In the survey, there was a series of 19 4-H activities/events which 4-H members were to circle if they had participated. A score between 0-19 was computed for each respondent, with 19 being the highest and representing the highest level of involvement in 4-H.

*Level of Participation:* Three variables were considered in determining the level of participation in 4-H: the number of years in 4-H; whether the members planned to stay in 4-H; and their level of involvement (a computed involvement score).

## CHAPTER II.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review looks at how the history of 4-H has helped shape part of the present-day image of 4-H, and how the image of 4-H affects the participation and membership of 4-H. It also examines adolescents in general, characteristics of 4-H participants, and how influence from peers and support from parents impacts participation in 4-H.

### HISTORY AND TRADITION OF THE IMAGE OF 4-H

One cannot talk about the history of 4-H without thinking of how the term "4-H" and the clover-leaf symbol came into being. Simons (1962) provided the following insight into this history. In 1905, O. H. Benson, a school superintendent in Iowa, formed a boys' and girls' agricultural club called the 3-H club. There is documentation that A. B. Graham first explained the 3-H's in 1903 as being: head, heart, hand. Benson used the 3-leaf clover as a symbol with his 3-H club. With his transfer to the office of farm management to be in charge of boys' and girls' clubs in the northern and western states, went his use of the 3-H's and 3-leaf clover. Later, O. B. Martin, who was in charge of boys' and girls' clubs in the South, added another "H" to Benson's 3-leaf clover. This new "H" represented health. When the girls' clubs in the South wanted a label to use on their canned products, Martin

suggested putting the figure "4" in front of the "H" on a 4-leaf clover to represent head, heart, hand, and health.

When committees were formed prior to the passage of the 1914 Smith-Lever Act, Frank Lever's house committee stated "... this bill furnishes the machinery by which the farm boy and girl can be reached with real agricultural and home economics training ... " (Bliss, as cited in Working With our Publics-Module I, 1988, p. 23).

With the formal passage of the Smith-Lever Act and the growth of the Cooperative Extension Service throughout the nation, the 4-H clubs saw a growth in membership and activities.

In the World War I post-war years, "the organization and work of 4-H clubs became standardized and programs and supervision were more closely coordinated with Extension work for adults" (Simons, 1962, p. 46).

This history has helped shape the 4-H program into what it is, yet, it has also shaped the image of 4-H as being strong in agriculture. Research provides insight into this image:

The 4-H program is one of more than 300 national youth organizations that share a common mission—transferring parts of the nation's cultural heritage (beliefs, attitudes, skills, knowledge, values) to young Americans under adult guidance. For 4-H, that heritage is transferred through a curriculum embodied in the practical application of land grant university research in agriculture, home economics, and related

areas. Because of its close ties to the land grant university, the public image of 4-H remains one of helping farm youth develop farm skills (Erickson, as cited by Ladewig & Thomas, 1987, p. 20).

### PRESENT-DAY IMAGE AND AWARENESS OF 4-H

The Extension in the '80s report (1983) stated that 4-H is a mechanism for transferring the research information from the university to the youth for practical application. The youth are exposed to science and technology in their hands-on learning experiences. This hands-on learning and practical use of information has always been a part of 4-H.

"Four-H originated as a method of introducing useful, practical skills into academic rural education and expanded into skills useful in urban settings" (Reck, 1951, p. 10). However, even as recent as the 1980s, 4-H was known for reaching the youth living on farms. With the farm crisis in the '80s, Extension was aiding the farm families, thus enabling Extension's 4-H program to reach the youth of those families. However, Sauer (1990, p. 6) stated that in this decade of youth-at-risk, Extension is finding that these at-risk youth aren't a part of the traditional 4-H youth group—"predominately white, middle class, and residing in rural areas or small towns."

Sauer (1990, p. 6) contended that in trying to reach these non-traditional youth, Extension "shouldn't feel bound to conduct every program under the 4-H banner. In some cases, the 4-H label and traditional image may

be a major roadblock in reaching some youth most at risk." Even though the mission of 4-H has remained constant through the years—a value-oriented, practical program which strives to develop initiative, build self-esteem, and prepare youth to be productive citizens—the 4-H youth audience and potential audience has changed.

In a study of participation and non-participation of minority youth in Ohio's 4-H program, Cano and Bankston (1992) found that those in urban areas felt unable to participate in activities dealing with farm animals; thus, leading them to feel out of place at fairs and similar events.

In the final report on surveys from the MRI studies commissioned by the National 4-H Council (1990, p. 15), youth who chose not to participate in 4-H described their reasons as being: "farm/country organization, not cool, not fun/boring, not interested, involved in other activities, 4-H (is) just for whites." The final report on focus groups (MRI studies, 1990) concluded that total awareness of 4-H was high, however, very few knew what the four "H's" stood for (even those in 4-H) and 4-H still had a strong rural image.

Cano and Bankston (1992, p. 27) also found that parents of the minority youth "viewed the program as something for rural white kids that involved farm animals" and when they were growing up they knew that "4-H was for kids who lived in the country, because they raised pigs and rabbits and things like that ... and if you didn't have livestock, you didn't belong." Further, these parents also felt that present-day advertising even promoted white kids with

farm animals.

Perhaps this old-fashioned thinking is present in all states and is one cause for 4-H donors indicating a need for modernizing the 4-H program in Tennessee. (Bohannon, 1992). In fact, Cano and Bankston (1992) recommended that the Cooperative Extension Service take measures to make sure the judging events were open and fair to all 4-H participants regardless of race or color.

Kleinfeld and Shinkwin (1983, p. 5) reported in their research of Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and 4-H as educational environments that "scouting and 4-H evoke images of weekly meetings in the church basement, camping trips, cookie sales, and displays at state fairs. We see in them so much Norman Rockwell Americana that we fail to see these groups are creating new kinds of educational occasions ... occasions where young people can expand their relationships with adults other than teachers and parents; they can assume active, responsible roles they rarely have in school; they can learn practical skills and use school skills."

Kleinfeld and Shinkwin (1983, p. 19) also found that youth and parents surveyed in the study "saw these organizations as successful in developing leadership and planning activities, teaching youth the importance of helping the community, developing character and citizenship, and teaching new skills."

Acosta and Holt (1991) summarized the highlights of a survey in a



study of seventh- through 12th-grade 4-H'ers conducted by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. The study found that the participants had little interest in the 4-H base programs of health, safety, nutrition, grooming, time management, and consumerism. Instead, they preferred to see programs on fitness, drugs and alcohol, public speaking, leadership, independent living, money management, computers, peer pressure, decision-making skills, and parent-teen communication. While some of these areas overlap, the study suggested that the titles assigned to the concepts were alienating some of the audience and potential audience. The authors suggested that designing programs to meet the participants' felt needs was important in keeping youth from dropping out.

A Feasibility Study for the Missouri 4-H Foundation (1989) revealed that respondents (most were 4-H members, parents, relatives, volunteers, or advisors) felt 4-H had significant weaknesses such as their programs were not addressing current issues of youth, and the club was perceived to be a private one. The respondents in the study also felt the image of 4-H was still one of catering to the middle class, rural youth.

While 4-H still may have the image of being for farm kids, in fact, as reported by Williams (1991, p. 30), overall 4-H membership consists of: "41 percent from cities/suburbs; 31 percent from towns under 10,000 and open country; 22 percent from towns 10,000 - 50,000; and 6 percent from farms."

Although the statistics may show that 4-H membership has shifted

from the farm youth, awareness of who benefits from 4-H still favors the farm youth. The Gallop 4-H Awareness Study (1978) reported that 33 percent of the people surveyed as being aware of 4-H, said it was helpful to children with agriculture—teaching them to grow different things; teaching farming to boys; and another 21 percent mentioned homemaking skills for girls.

Gottlieb, Lewis, and Heinshon (1974) found that perhaps 4-H's square image accounts for some of the decrease in membership. They also found that 4-H was no longer providing programs, activities, or settings to meet the changing needs of young people. They contended that "the membership composition of 4-H; its tradition of being concerned primarily with select farm youth; its activities, symbols, and organizational structure all contribute to the 'goodie-goodie,' 'teacher's pet,' 'square' image" (Gottlieb et al., 1974, p. 38).

In addition to the farm image of 4-H, there are also other images of 4-H that have surfaced in studies. Ladewig and Thomas (1987) studied the impact of the farm image of 4-H on enrollment. While 4-H was rated as having a high, positive image when compared to other youth organizations, several factors emerged as being a hinderance to 4-H's image. For non-4-H'ers surveyed, their primary reason for not joining was they perceived 4-H as being unavailable in many areas. Another reason given was that 4-H was primarily for younger kids. Of the 4-H alumni surveyed, 59 percent had dropped out of 4-H because it no longer met their interests. Many of the 4-H

alumni indicated that leadership opportunities were too limited. At the same time, 42 percent of 4-H alumni said they thought youth would rank 4-H high in having prestige.

Hastings (1987) surveyed 152 residents in Blount County, Tennessee, to study the media use and public image of the 4-H program. When respondents were asked to name voluntary youth organizations, only 8 percent named 4-H. Upon prompting respondents as to whether they had heard of 4-H, 89 percent said they had. Those reporting a great deal of knowledge of 4-H believed that the organization wanted their members to develop homemaking skills, character, and agricultural skills.

The Gallup Polls (1974, 78) reported that the public had an 82 percent total awareness of 4-H and in their 1974 study, 91 percent of the respondents had a very favorable or fairly favorable attitude toward 4-H.

Hastings (1987) found that one of the main weaknesses was that people knew 4-H existed, but they did not know much about it. She contended that since the term "4-H" is highly recognizable, it should be used in the media or any other information source used to reach the public.

Smith (1982) studied selected factors related to 4-H membership, participation and retention of eighth grade students in Bradley County, Tennessee. She found that members were more likely than nonmembers to have the opinion that 4-H was a place to learn about farming, learn about homemaking, and learn to become leaders. Both groups agreed that winning

awards was an important and worthwhile aspect of 4-H. Interestingly, 24.2 of the members and 23.7 of the nonmembers said 4-H was for "country hicks" (Smith, 1982, p. 51).

Gottlieb et al. (1974, p. 38) found that "the image of 4-H held by most youth does reflect what they know about 4-H." There seems to be two prevalent images: "one is a vague or hazy image resulting primarily from a lack of real knowledge of 4-H. The other is an image of selectivity, where 4-H is seen as an organization for someone else. That someone else being young, female, affluent, white, and from a farm or rural setting."

### RESEARCH ON ADOLESCENTS IN GENERAL

A study of young adolescents and their parents by the Search Institute (1984) gives insight into the behavior of youth in general between fifth and seventh grades: there is a decrease in interest in school; peer influence increases and parental influence decreases (however, parental influence remains strongest); adolescents who have a higher interest in school tend to have higher achievement motivation, higher self-esteem, and less conflict with parents than those with a low interest in school.

Research shows that group experiences help individuals become involved with each other; help individuals identify more closely with others; develop a sense of belonging; stimulate thinking and self-expression; help individuals develop problem-solving skills; and increase their feelings of

competence and self-esteem. (Poppen, 1992).

One of the key reasons teens join organizations or are influenced to be involved in activities is because of the need for peer support (Search Institute, 1983). This may also be a significant factor in explaining why teens drop out of organizations or do not participate in activities.

Rude (1987) reported findings from a study by Burke that adolescent youth (ages 10-17) have a considerable need to affiliate; however, traditional youth agencies satisfy affiliation needs less as age increases.

Rude (1987) also reported that of the girls surveyed in the study, 83 percent who had once belonged to a youth organization were no longer affiliated, and the most common ages for dropping out were 12 and 13.

A report by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989) examined youth ages 10-15. The report concluded that this age group is a crucial time for these youth in that they are struggling with developing self-esteem, searching for trusting relationships with people, searching for a sense of belonging to a group and fitting in, searching for decisions on their paths for the future, yearning for mutual support from others, and striving to develop social skills. It is during this time of these adolescents' lives, there are increases in alienation, drug abuse, absenteeism from school, and dropping out of school.

Sesow and VanCleaf (1988) suggested that teachers, curriculum planners, and youth organizations should work together in preparing

activities for students. They stated that teachers should be aware of their students' non-school activities and should allow time in class for students to share their experiences as they relate to in-class social studies topics. Teachers, reported Sesow and VanCleaf, should encourage the parents of their students to let the students become involved in non-school activities.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS AND NONPARTICIPANTS — INCLUDING INFLUENCE AND SUPPORT

Several studies have reported findings which portray characteristics held by participants, as well as nonparticipants, of the 4-H program and other youth organizations. The studies also reflect that influence and support are major factors in determining participation.

Lewis and Gottlieb (as cited by Kleinfeld & Shinkwin, 1983, pp. 20-21) found that "the kind of young person who joins scouting and 4-H groups differs from those who do not. Several studies of 4-H members suggest that they tend to be more achievement- and task-oriented than the general population and to come from families more active in church and other community organizations."

Kleinfeld and Shinkwin (1983) described the typical participants in 4-H and scouts as predominately white, 11 to 14 years old, members of the group for more than a year, and have high attendance records at meetings.

Thomas and Ladewig (1987) conducted a study of adults and how they

perceived their adolescent learning experiences during participation in 4-H and other youth organizations. They studied three groups: former participants in 4-H, former participants in other youth organizations, and nonparticipants. Their significant findings were:

- former 4-H'ers were primarily white, lived in rural areas, grew up on farms or ranches, or in communities with less than 2,500 population;
- other youth participants had similar characteristics but had lived most of their lives in urban areas;
- the majority of nonparticipants were urban-reared and had the most racial mix;
- participants of other youth groups had college and professional degrees; nonparticipants had the least attainment;
- 53 percent of the 4-H alumni reported having had memberships in other youth organizations.

Their findings also suggested that from all groups surveyed, participation peaks during the adolescent years and starts to decline during the teen years.

Ladewig and Thomas (1987) found in their research of 4-H alumni that those who stayed in 4-H longer were most likely to have joined 4-H at an early age, resided in a rural area, lived in the South/North Central states, and were male.

Smith (1982) found that 4-H members had parents who were more

involved in providing transportation to meetings and events than nonmembers and the members' parents had also attended more meetings and clubs (civic, church, or social). Similarly, Maurer and Bokemeier (1984) found that another significant factor in retaining members in 4-H and other youth organizations, is if their parents are members of adult organizations. In a study of 4-H winners, Jenson, Young, Adams, and Schvaneveldt (1982) found that the number one reason they joined 4-H was from the encouragement of their parents (most were volunteer leaders). This parental encouragement and support was also found to be factor related to reenrollment in West Virginia's 4-H program. (Hartley, 1983).

Rude (1987) cited findings from studies which found that most youth surveyed joined 4-H because other family members wanted them to join. Also, declining participation is common among teenage youth, beginning at age 11 or 12.

In a study comparing eighth grade 4-H members and nonmembers in Bradley County, Tennessee, Smith (1982) came to several conclusions. Parental interest in 4-H was higher for members; members remained in 4-H because they valued the learning experiences, liked the meetings, expected to become better leaders and better citizens, and their friends were in 4-H; had been a member of a school paper or yearbook and an organized sports team; members' parents provided transportation to 4-H events, had attended 4-H meetings, had helped the members with projects, and had themselves been



members of a civic, church, or social club.

In an attempt to determine why there was so much loss of teenage 4-H members, Forbes (1992) found that the successful members thrived on the award system and competitions in 4-H. Those who dropped out seemed to be motivated more by being able to do a project for the sake of the project, rather than to win an award.

In a study on older members' satisfaction with 4-H, Norland and Bennett (1993) found that there was a significant positive relationship between members' satisfaction and 1) commitment, 2) responsibility, 3) working with younger members, 4) quality of 4-H club meetings, and 5) positive parental support.

Culbert (1983) suggested a profile of the typical 4-H dropout as being not involved in: 4-H camp, public presentations, leadership responsibilities, 4-H competitions, receiving awards, traveling to other areas, and community service projects. The reasons dropouts gave for dropping out were: they had too much else to do; they didn't feel like part of the group; they felt too old for 4-H; it was not fun anymore; the activities were always the same; they didn't like filling out the project books; the leader quit; the club disbanded; 4-H favored certain members over others; leader wasn't trained and/or didn't like the leader; transportation was a problem; and meeting times were inconvenient.

In a 1986 regional 4-H staff conference at the University of California-

Riverside, a psychologist, Timothy De Chenne, asked his audience why teens were dropping out of the 4-H program. Several issues came up as possible answers: older children were reluctant to have their parents as volunteer leaders; there was a mixing of younger ages with older ages, which took away from the need for youth to be with peers their own age; the members didn't like fitting into the conservative 4-H mold; members desired group activities rather than individual; "maybe 4-H isn't the neat thing to be in—its image isn't really that desirable or attractive for a teenager," and the 4-H leaders were reluctant to change (McAllister & Cress, 1986).

Gottlieb et al. (1974) studied 889 youth ages 12-19, who represented 4-H'ers, former 4-H'ers, and those who had never been members. Youth who had dropped out (former 4-H'ers) gave such reasons as their best friends dropped out, they felt they had outgrown 4-H, they were too busy with other activities, and they had gotten part-time jobs. Conversely, current members cited that most of their best friends were also in 4-H.

In a recent study of 4-H dropouts, Ritchie and Resler (1993) found that the most frequent reason for dropping out was the former members were dissatisfied with the 4-H clubs "ranging from boring meetings to not getting enough help with projects" (Ritchie & Resler, 1993, p. 37). Other reasons for dropping out were the youth were busy with sports or jobs.

## SUMMARY

The 4-H clubs have a rich history which is tied to agriculture and home economics. This history still finds its way into the present day image of 4-H. To some people, the term "4-H" evokes images of farming activities, livestock, cooking and canning, country fairs, etc. However, to those who are long-time members or satisfied 4-H alumni, the 4-H program represents leadership, citizenship, and a chance for youth to develop skills necessary for a productive future.

In an effort to explore perceptions of the image of 4-H, several items emerged. Studies show that there is a farm-type image of 4-H that prevents some youth from participating or may lead to their dropping out. Some youth have stated that the 4-H meetings and activities were boring and as the youth got older, there was little in 4-H to hold their interests. This leads to another reason often given, that 4-H is for younger kids. Thus, the image of 4-H encompasses many factors besides being for farm kids.

Studies which explored possible reasons for dropping out also touched on a very important factor, the more support the youth had from their parents, the less they dropped out of 4-H. The parents did not have to be former 4-H'ers themselves, or even be volunteer leaders. For many youth, just having supportive parents willing to give their time for transportation to and from 4-H meetings and events or willing to give their assistance in completing 4-H activities was enough for the youth to remain in 4-H.

## CHAPTER III.

### METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

#### SUBJECTS

For the purpose of this study, the 95 counties in Tennessee were categorized into urban, suburban and rural counties using 1990 census data. From these categories, two urban counties - Shelby and Hamilton, two suburban counties - Hamblen and Bradley, and two rural counties - Warren and Tipton, were randomly selected. For each county, a list of schools having both seventh grade and 4-H programs was developed. Then one school in each of the six counties was randomly selected. The sample of the study consisted of all of the seventh grade classes at those randomly selected schools. Of the 918 questionnaires taken to the schools, 822 (89.5%) were returned to comprise the sample.

#### INSTRUMENTATION

Following a literature review completed for this study, a questionnaire was developed to obtain demographic data about the students, to gather information regarding their perceptions about the image of the 4-H program, and to determine why previous 4-H members dropped out, and why some respondents never joined 4-H.

Since the sample was comprised of 4-H members and nonmembers, certain questions were specific for members, while nonmembers were routed to other questions. The questions for members were designed to obtain information regarding their level of participation in 4-H so an analysis between this variable and selected demographic variables could be made. In order to assess why some respondents never joined 4-H or why some respondents dropped out of 4-H, there was a question specific to each group prompting them to circle reasons they never joined or dropped out.

The last question of the survey was based on information gathered from reviewing other studies and contained statements expressed by youth in those studies. It determined the respondent's attitude regarding the image of 4-H. An analysis was done to compare the attitudes of 4-H members and nonmembers.

## PROCEDURES

Cooperation on behalf of a local Extension 4-H agent in each of the six counties was obtained once the questionnaire was developed. Permission was then obtained from each of the responding schools' principals for the Extension 4-H agents to meet with the seventh grade classes and administer the questionnaires. Once permission was granted, the 4-H agents coordinated with the classroom teachers to choose the best time to administer the questionnaires. The surveys were administered on-site in the classrooms by

Extension 4-H agents to all seventh graders present in the schools on the selected day. The surveys were color-coded by schools, and were numbered sequentially for tracking purposes. Since the identities of the respondents were not needed, the respondents were requested to not include identifying information in order to retain their confidentiality.

### DATA ANALYSIS

Data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed using the appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics. The main frame computer at The University of Tennessee Computing Center was used to analyze the data. An alpha level of .05 was established for all probability testing.

### OBJECTIVES

*Relationship between 4-H membership status and selected personal and family characteristics, and between 4-H membership status and respondents' attitudes regarding the image of 4-H*

Chi-square tests were used to analyze the relationship between the participants' 4-H membership status and their personal and family characteristics. Chi-square tests were also used to analyze the relationships between respondents' 4-H membership status and their attitudes toward the image of 4-H. Where necessary, the chi-square tests were Yates continuity corrected.

### ***Relationship Between Demographic Variables and 4-H Members' Level of Participation in 4-H***

For this objective, three variables were considered in describing the 4-H members' level of participation. These variables are: the number of years in 4-H; whether the members planned to stay in 4-H; and their level of involvement (a computed involvement score). An involvement score was computed to determine the 4-H members' level of involvement by summing a series of 19 4-H activities/events in which 4-H members could participate. A score between 0-19 was computed for each respondent, with 19 being the highest and representing the highest level of involvement in 4-H.

Chi-square tests were used to analyze the relationship between selected demographic variables and the number of years they have been in 4-H, whether they plan to stay in 4-H, and their level of involvement. T-tests were used to analyze the relationship between gender and their level of involvement and between the source of influence and 4-H members' level of involvement. Analysis of variance tests were used to test the relationship between age and the level of involvement in 4-H, between residence and the level of involvement in 4-H, and between grades in school and the level of involvement in 4-H.

### ***Relationship Between the Level of Parental Support and the 4-H Members' Level of Participation in 4-H***

For this objective, as in the previous objective, three variables were

considered in describing the level of participation: the number of years in 4-H; whether the members planned to stay in 4-H; and the level of involvement (a computed involvement score).

Chi-square tests were used to analyze the relationship between the level of parental support and the number of years participants have been in 4-H, and between the level of parental support and whether 4-H'ers plan to stay in 4-H. T-tests were used to analyze the relationship between the level of parental support and the level of involvement in 4-H.

#### *Nonmembers Reasons for Never Joining 4-H, and Drop-out Members*

##### *Reasons for Leaving 4-H*

Demographic data were obtained to determine nonmembers' reasons for never joining 4-H, and to determine drop-out members reasons for leaving 4-H. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the reasons listed for both nonmembers and drop-out members.



## CHAPTER IV.

### DISCUSSION OF DATA

The questionnaires were administered during school hours to seventh grade students at the six randomly selected schools. The surveys were color coded for the different schools. There were 822 out of 918 surveys returned (89.5%). Prior to recording the data, the surveys were numbered sequentially for recordkeeping purposes. No identifying information was requested from the participants, so their identities would remain confidential.

The data were analyzed and are presented according to the objectives which were established for the study:

1. To look at the demographic profile of 4-H members and nonmembers to study the relationships between 4-H membership and a) selected personal and family characteristics, and b) respondents' attitudes regarding the image of 4-H.
2. To study the relationships between selected demographic variables and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H.
3. To study the relationship between the level of parental support and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H.
4. To determine nonmembers' perceptions of why they did not join 4-H, and to determine drop-out members' perceptions of why they left 4-H.

## FINDINGS

### *Relationship between 4-H membership status and selected personal and family characteristics, and between 4-H membership status and respondents' attitudes regarding the image of 4-H*

The first objective of the study was to look at the demographic profile of 4-H members and nonmembers and describe the relationship between their 4-H membership status and personal and family characteristics, and between 4-H membership status and their attitudes regarding the image of 4-H. Data in the following two tables illustrated selected personal and family characteristics and the corresponding frequency data for members and nonmembers, and examined the relationship between 4-H membership status and the respondents' attitudes toward 4-H. The data in these tables are discussed in the following two subsections.

#### **Relationship Between 4-H Membership Status and Selected Personal and Family Characteristics**

According to the findings in Table 1, the data indicated there was no significant relationship between gender, age, residence, who participants live with, whether father/guardian works outside the home, and if brothers/sisters were in 4-H; and 4-H membership status. However, data indicated there was a significant relationship between grades in school, whether mother/guardian works outside the home, if father/guardian was a

Table 1. Relationship between selected Tennessee seventh graders' personal and family characteristics and their 4-H membership status.

Selected Personal and Family Characteristics	4-H Membership Status					
	Member		Nonmember		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n**	%
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	264	73.7	94	26.3	358	100.0
Female	314	78.7	85	21.3	399	100.0
	*Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 2.30$ ; df = 1; P = .13					
<b>Age</b>						
12 & under	212	80.9	50	19.1	262	100.0
13	285	73.3	104	26.7	389	100.0
14 & over	79	76.0	25	24.0	104	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 5.07$ ; df = 2; P = .08					
<b>Where do you live?</b>						
Farm	64	82.1	14	17.9	78	100.0
Rural Non-Farm	248	74.7	84	25.3	332	100.0
City/Town	257	77.4	75	22.6	332	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 2.09$ ; df = 2; P = .35					
<b>Grades in school</b>						
A's and B's	262	79.2	69	20.8	331	100.0
B's and C's	215	79.6	55	20.4	270	100.0
C's and D's	101	67.3	49	32.7	150	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 9.82$ ; df = 2; P = <.01					
<b>Who do you live with?</b>						
Both Parents	365	76.8	110	23.2	475	100.0
Mother Only	153	74.6	52	25.4	205	100.0
Father Only	16	69.6	7	30.4	23	100.0
Guardian	33	80.5	8	19.5	41	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 1.36$ ; df = 3; P = .72					
<b>Does father/guardian work outside the home?</b>						
Yes	489	76.2	153	23.8	642	100.0
No	53	73.6	19	26.4	72	100.0
	*Statistical Test $\chi^2 = .11$ ; df = 1; P = .74					
<b>Does mother/guardian work outside the home?</b>						
Yes	428	78.4	118	21.6	546	100.0
No	138	70.8	57	29.2	195	100.0
	*Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 4.21$ ; df = 1; P = .04					

Table 1. Continued.

Selected Personal and Family Characteristics	4-H Membership Status					
	Member		Nonmember		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n**	%
<b>Was father/guardian a 4-H member?</b>						
Yes	65	91.5	6	8.5	71	100.0
No	139	69.8	60	30.2	199	100.0
Don't Know	362	77.0	108	23.0	470	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 13.91; df = 2; P = < .01$					
<b>Was mother/guardian a 4-H member?</b>						
Yes	103	85.8	17	14.2	120	100.0
No	131	74.0	46	26.0	177	100.0
Don't Know	336	75.3	110	24.7	446	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 6.78; df = 2; P = .03$					
<b>Do you have brothers/ sisters who were in 4-H?</b>						
Yes	336	78.7	229	73.6	427	100.0
No	91	21.3	82	26.4	311	100.0
*Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 2.29; df = 1; P = .13$					
<b>Are most of your friends 4-H members?</b>						
Yes	482	90.6	50	9.4	532	100.0
No	85	41.3	121	58.7	206	100.0
*Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 200.30; df = 1; P = < .01$					

\* Yates Corrected

\*\* Some totals differ due to nonresponses.

4-H member, if mother/guardian was a 4-H member, and if most of the participants' friends were 4-H members; and 4-H membership status.

Grades in school. As reported in Table 1, 79.2 percent (262) of those making A's and B's, compared 67.3 percent (101) of those making C's and D's, were 4-H members. Only 20.8 percent (69) of those who made A's and B's, compared to 32.7 percent (49) who made C's and D's, were nonmembers. Students who made better grades were more likely to be 4-H members than those who made lower grades.

Does mother/guardian work outside the home? Approximately 78 percent (428) of the respondents whose mother/guardian worked outside the home, compared to 70.8 percent (138) of those who were 4-H members whose mother/guardian did not work outside the home, were 4-H members. Approximately 22 percent (118) of those whose mother/guardian worked outside the home, compared to 29.2 percent (57) of those whose mother/guardian did not work outside the home, were nonmembers. Respondents whose mother/guardian worked outside the home were more likely to be 4-H members than those whose mother/guardian did not work outside the home.

Was father/guardian a 4-H member? Approximately 92 percent (65) of the respondents who indicated their father/guardian was a 4-H member, compared to 69.7 percent (139) whose father/guardian was not a 4-H member, were 4-H members. It should be noted that 77 percent (362) of respondents

who didn't know if their father/guardian was in 4-H, were also 4-H members. Approximately 9 percent (6) of the respondents whose father/guardian was a 4-H member, compared to 30.2 percent (60) whose father/guardian was not a 4-H member, were nonmembers. Those respondents whose father/guardian was a 4-H member, were more likely to be 4-H members themselves.

Was mother/guardian a 4-H member? Almost 86 percent (103) of the respondents whose mother/guardian was a 4-H member, compared to 74 percent (131) whose mother/guardian was not a 4-H member, were 4-H members. Interestingly, 75 percent (336) of respondents who didn't know if their mother/guardian was in 4-H, were also 4-H members. Only 14.2 percent (17) of the respondents whose mother/guardian was a 4-H member, compared to 26 percent (46) of those whose mother/guardian was not a 4-H member, were nonmembers. Respondents whose mother/guardian was a 4-H member, were more likely to be 4-H members themselves.

Are most of your friends 4-H members? Approximately 91 percent (482) of respondents whose friends were 4-H members, compared to 41.3 percent (85) of respondents whose friends weren't 4-H members, were 4-H members. Only 9.4 percent (50) of respondents whose friends were 4-H members, compared to 58.7 percent (121) whose friends weren't in 4-H, were nonmembers. Respondents whose friends were 4-H members, were more likely to be 4-H members themselves.

## **Relationship Between 4-H Membership Status and Respondents' Attitudes Regarding the Image of 4-H**

Data in Table 2 examined the relationship between 4-H membership status and respondents' attitudes toward 4-H. For the computation of the table, the respondents' answers were collapsed into three categories: strongly agree and agree = "agree"; "undecided"; and disagree and strongly disagree = "disagree." Based on the findings in Table 2, the data indicated there was no significant relationship between 4-H membership status and the four attitude categories of: 4-H is for younger kids, there's too much competition in 4-H, 4-H is not popular at my school, and adults have too much control over 4-H. However, the data indicated a significant relationship between 4-H membership status and the nine attitudes: 4-H helps build self-confidence, 4-H helps develop leadership skills, 4-H helps individuals set goals, 4-H meetings are fun, 4-H activities are interesting, 4-H activities are boring, 4-H is for farm kids, you don't have to live on a farm to be in 4-H, and 4-H helps young people prepare for the future.

4-H helps build self-confidence. Approximately 65 percent (353) of the 4-H members, compared to 46.5 percent (72) of the nonmembers, agreed that 4-H helps build self-confidence. Almost 13 percent (70) of the members, compared to 18.7 percent (29) of the nonmembers, disagreed that 4-H helps develop self-confidence. The 4-H members were more likely than nonmembers to agree that 4-H helps build self-confidence.

Table 2. Relationship between 4-H membership status and attitudes toward 4-H.

Attitude	4-H Membership Status			
	Member		Nonmember	
	n *	%	n *	%
<b>4-H helps build self-confidence</b>				
Agree	353	64.4	72	46.5
Undecided	125	22.8	54	34.8
Disagree	70	12.8	29	18.7
Total	548	100.0	155	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 16.34; df = 2; P = < .01$			
<b>4-H helps develop leadership skills</b>				
Agree	409	74.5	90	59.2
Undecided	80	14.6	38	25.0
Disagree	60	10.9	24	15.8
Total	549	100.0	152	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 13.95; df = 2; P = < .01$			
<b>4-H helps individuals set goals</b>				
Agree	361	66.0	81	52.6
Undecided	121	22.1	45	29.2
Disagree	65	11.9	28	18.2
Total	547	100.0	154	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 9.57; df = 2; P = < .01$			
<b>4-H meetings are fun</b>				
Agree	258	47.2	36	23.1
Undecided	131	24.0	47	30.1
Disagree	157	28.8	73	46.8
Total	546	100.0	156	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 30.79; df = 2; P = < .01$			



Table 2. Continued.

Attitude	4-H Membership Status			
	Member		Nonmember	
	n *	%	n*	%
<b>4-H activities are interesting</b>				
Agree	299	54.6	49	31.6
Undecided	118	21.5	54	34.8
Disagree	131	23.9	52	33.5
Total	548	100.0	155	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 25.91; df = 2; P = < .01$			
<b>4-H activities are boring</b>				
Agree	182	33.5	74	48.1
Undecided	103	19.0	42	27.3
Disagree	258	47.5	38	24.7
Total	548	100.0	154	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 25.61; df = 2; P = < .01$			
<b>4-H is for farm kids</b>				
Agree	137	25.0	34	22.1
Undecided	82	15.0	40	26.0
Disagree	328	60.0	80	51.9
Total	547	100.0	154	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 10.09; df = 2; P = .01$			
<b>You don't have to live on a farm to be in 4-H</b>				
Agree	427	78.6	112	71.4
Undecided	49	9.0	28	17.8
Disagree	67	12.4	17	10.8
Total	543	100.0	157	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 9.67; df = 2; P = .01$			
<b>4-H helps young people prepare for the future</b>				
Agree	326	60.0	68	44.1
Undecided	132	24.3	56	36.4
Disagree	85	15.7	30	19.5
Total	543	100.0	154	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 12.88; df = 2; P = .01$			

Table 2. Continued.

Attitude	4-H Membership Status			
	Member		Nonmember	
	n *	%	n *	%
<b>4-H is for younger kids</b>				
Agree	150	27.6	46	30.3
Undecided	112	20.6	39	25.7
Disagree	282	51.8	67	44.0
Total	544	100.0	152	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 3.14; df = 2; P = .21$			
<b>There's too much competition in 4-H</b>				
Agree	114	20.9	39	25.2
Undecided	156	28.6	53	34.2
Disagree	276	50.5	63	40.6
Total	546	100.0	155	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 4.74; df = 2; P = .09$			
<b>4-H is not popular at my school</b>				
Agree	210	39.3	72	47.1
Undecided	167	31.2	43	28.1
Disagree	158	29.5	38	24.8
Total	535	100.0	153	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 3.07; df = 2; P = .22$			
<b>Adults have too much control over 4-H</b>				
Agree	186	34.2	66	42.6
Undecided	152	27.9	41	26.4
Disagree	206	37.9	48	31.0
Total	544	100.0	155	100.0
Statistical Test	$\chi^2 = 4.03; df = 2; P = .13$			

\* Some totals differ due to nonresponses.

4-H helps develop leadership skills. Approximately 75 percent (409) of the members, compared to 59.2 percent (90) of the nonmembers, agreed that 4-H helps develop leadership skills. Almost 11 percent (60) of the members, compared to 15.8 percent (24) of the nonmembers, disagreed that 4-H helps develop leadership skills. The 4-H members were more likely than nonmembers to agree that 4-H helps develop leadership skills.

4-H helps individuals set goals. Sixty-six percent (361) of the members, compared to 52.6 percent (81) of the nonmembers, agreed that 4-H helps individuals set goals. Almost 12 percent (65) of the members, compared to 18.2 percent (28) of the nonmembers disagreed that 4-H helps individuals set goals. The 4-H members were more likely than nonmembers to agree that 4-H helps individuals set goals.

4-H meetings are fun. Interestingly, only 47.2 percent (258) of the members, compared to 23.1 percent (36) of the nonmembers, agreed that 4-H meetings are fun. Almost 30 percent (157) of the 4-H members, compared to 46.8 percent (73) of the nonmembers disagreed that 4-H meetings are fun. While the percentage in both categories is low, members were more likely than nonmembers to agree that 4-H meetings are fun.

4-H activities are interesting. Approximately 55 percent (299) of the members, compared to 31.6 percent (49) of the nonmembers, agreed that 4-H activities are interesting. Almost 24 percent (131) of the members, compared to 33.5 percent (52) nonmembers, disagreed that 4-H activities are interesting.

The 4-H members were more likely than nonmembers to agree that 4-H activities are interesting.

4-H activities are boring. Approximately 34 percent (182) of the 4-H members, compared to 48.1 percent (74) of the nonmembers, agreed that 4-H activities are boring. Conversely, 47.5 percent (258) of the 4-H members, compared to 24.7 percent (38) nonmembers, disagreed with the statement that 4-H activities are boring. The 4-H members were more likely than nonmembers to disagree that 4-H activities are boring.

4-H is for farm kids. Twenty-five percent (137) of the 4-H members in the study, compared to 22.1 percent (34) of the nonmembers agreed that 4-H is for farm kids. Sixty percent (328) of the members, compared to 51.9 percent (80) disagreed with the statement that 4-H is for farm kids. While 26 percent of the nonmembers indicated they were undecided about the statement that 4-H is for farm kids, 4-H members were more likely than nonmembers to disagree with the attitude that 4-H is for farm kids.

You don't have to live on a farm to be in 4-H. Almost 79 percent (427) of the 4-H members, compared to 71.4 percent (112) of the nonmembers agreed that you don't have to live on a farm to be in 4-H. A little more than 12 percent (67) of the members, compared to 10.8 percent (17) of the nonmembers disagreed with the statement. The 4-H members were more likely than nonmembers to agree that you don't have to live on a farm to be in 4-H.

4-H helps young people prepare for the future. Sixty percent (326) of the 4-H members, compared to 44.1 percent (68) of the nonmembers, agreed that 4-H helps young people prepare for the future. Only 15.7 percent (85) of the 4-H members, compared to 19.5 percent (30) of the nonmembers disagreed that 4-H helps young people prepare for the future. The 4-H members were more likely than nonmembers to agree that 4-H helps young people prepare for the future.

*Relationship Between Selected Demographic Variables and the Level of Participation in 4-H*

The second objective of the study was to look at the relationship between selected demographic variables and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H. For this objective, three variables were considered in describing the 4-H members' level of participation. These variables were: the number of years in 4-H; whether the members planned to stay in 4-H; and their level of involvement (a computed involvement score). An involvement score was computed to determine the 4-H members' level of involvement by summing a series of 19 4-H activities/events in which 4-H members could participate. A score between 0-19 was computed for each respondent, with 19 being the highest and representing the highest level of involvement in 4-H. These data are presented in the following seven tables, and are discussed in the following seven subsections.

### Number of Years in 4-H

The data in Table 3 showed the relationship between certain characteristics of selected Tennessee 4-H'ers and the number of years they have been in 4-H. The data indicated no significant relationship between the three characteristics of: gender, teacher influenced you to join 4-H, and other person influenced you to join 4-H; and number of years in 4-H. The data did indicate a relationship between the six characteristics of: age, where do you live?, your grades in school, classmate influenced you to join 4-H, friend influenced you to join 4-H and 4-H agent influenced you to join 4-H; and number of years in 4-H.

Age. Almost 8 percent (16) of the members aged 12 & under, compared to 14.2 percent (11) of the members aged 14 & over, had been in 4-H for one year. Almost 64 percent (133) of the members aged 12 & under, compared to 41 percent (32) of the members aged 14 & over had been in 4-H for four or more years. The older the members were, the less likely they have been involved for four years or more in 4-H.

Where do you live? Of the 4-H members in their first year of 4-H, 6.3 percent (4) lived on a farm, compared to 5.3 percent (13) who lived in a rural non-farm area, and 16.2 percent (41) who lived in a city/town. Approximately 69 percent (44) of the members in 4-H for four or more years lived on a farm, compared to 64.6 percent (159) who lived in a rural non-farm area, and 47 percent (119) who lived in a city/town. The 4-H members living on a farm

Table 3. Relationship between certain characteristics of selected Tennessee 4-H'ers and the number of years they have been in 4-H.

Characteristics	Number of Years in 4-H									
	1		2		3		4 or more		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n*	%
<b>Gender</b>										
M	25	9.6	43	16.5	46	17.7	146	56.2	260	100.0
F	35	11.1	41	13.1	57	18.2	181	57.6	314	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 1.57$ ; df = 3; P = .67									
<b>Age</b>										
12 & under	16	7.6	27	12.9	34	16.2	133	63.3	210	100.0
13	34	12.0	37	13.1	53	18.7	159	56.2	283	100.0
14 & over	11	14.2	20	25.6	15	19.2	32	41.0	78	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 16.06$ ; df = 6; P = .01									
<b>Where do you live?</b>										
Farm	4	6.3	6	9.3	10	15.6	44	68.8	64	100.0
Rural Non-Farm	13	5.3	27	11.0	47	19.1	159	64.6	246	100.0
City/Town	41	16.2	50	19.8	43	17.0	119	47.0	253	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 32.47$ ; df = 6; P = < .01									
<b>Your grades in school</b>										
A's & B's	24	9.2	29	11.1	41	15.7	168	64.0	261	100.0
B's & C's	28	13.2	37	17.5	35	16.5	112	52.8	212	100.0
C's & D's	9	9.0	17	17.0	27	27.0	47	47.0	100	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 16.03$ ; df = 6; P = .01									
<b>Classmate influenced you to join 4-H</b>										
Yes	2	5.3	11	28.9	10	26.3	15	39.5	38	100.0
No	59	11.0	73	13.6	93	17.2	313	58.2	538	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 10.65$ ; df = 3; P = .01									
<b>Friend influenced you to join 4-H</b>										
Yes	9	13.6	17	25.8	8	12.1	32	48.5	66	100.0
No	52	10.2	67	13.2	95	18.6	296	58.0	510	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 9.36$ ; df = 3; P = .02									
<b>Teacher influenced you to join 4-H</b>										
Yes	15	9.0	23	13.8	31	18.6	98	58.6	167	100.0
No	46	11.2	61	14.9	72	17.6	230	56.3	409	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = .87$ ; df = 3; P = .83									

Table 3. Continued.

Characteristics	Number of Years in 4-H								Total	
	1		2		3		4 or more		n*	%
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
<b>4-H agent influenced you to join 4-H</b>										
Yes	20	9.5	20	9.5	34	16.2	137	64.8	211	100.0
No	41	11.3	64	17.5	69	18.9	191	52.3	365	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 10.65$ ; $df = 3$ ; $P = .01$									
<b>Other person influenced you to join 4-H</b>										
Yes	6	11.8	3	5.9	15	29.4	27	52.9	51	100.0
No	54	10.3	81	15.5	88	16.8	301	57.4	524	100.0
	Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 7.31$ ; $df = 3$ ; $P = .06$									

\* Some totals differ due to nonresponses.



were more likely than those who lived in the city to be involved in 4-H four years or more.

Your grades in school. Approximately 9 percent (24) of members who were in their first year of 4-H made A's and B's, compared to 9 percent (9) who made C's and D's. Sixty-four percent (168) of the members who had been in 4-H four years or more made A's and B's, compared to 47 percent (47) who made C's and D's. The 4-H members who made better grades were more likely to be involved in 4-H four years or more.

Classmate influenced you to join 4-H. Approximately 5 percent (2) of the members who were in their first year of 4-H were influenced by a classmate to join, compared to 11 percent (59) of the members who were not influenced by a classmate. Almost 40 percent (15) of the members in 4-H four years or more were influenced by a classmate to join, compared to 58.2 percent (313) members who were not. The 4-H members who were influenced by a classmate to join were less likely to have been in 4-H four years or more.

Friend influenced you to join 4-H. Approximately 14 percent (9) of the members who were in their first year of 4-H were influenced by a friend to join, compared to 10 percent (52) of the members who were not influenced by a friend. Almost 49 percent (32) of the members in 4-H four years or more were influenced by a friend to join, compared to 58 percent (296) members who were not. The 4-H members who were influenced by a friend to join were less likely to have been in 4-H four years or more.

4-H agent influenced you to join 4-H. Approximately 10 percent (20) of members in their first year of 4-H were influenced by a 4-H agent to join, compared to 11.3 percent (41) who weren't influenced by a 4-H agent to join. Almost 65 percent (137) of members in 4-H four years or more were influenced by a 4-H agent to join, compared to 52.3 percent (191) who were not influenced by a 4-H agent. The 4-H members who were influenced by a 4-H agent to join were more likely to have been in 4-H four years or more.

#### **4-H'ers Plans to Remain in 4-H**

Data in Table 4 examined the relationship between certain characteristics of selected Tennessee 4-H'ers and whether they plan to stay in 4-H. There was no evidence to suggest a relationship between the nine characteristics of: gender, age, where do you live?, other relative influenced you to join, classmate influenced you to join, friend influenced you to join, teacher influenced you to join, 4-H agent influenced you to join, or other person influenced you to join; and whether the members planned to stay in 4-H. The data did indicate a relationship between the characteristic of grades in school and whether the members planned to stay in 4-H.

Your grades in school. Almost 70 percent (171) of the 4-H members who made A's and B's planned to stay in 4-H, compared to 77.6 percent (76) who made C's and D's. Almost 31 percent (75) of the 4-H members who made A's and B's did not plan to stay in 4-H, compared to 20.1 percent (41) who

Table 4. Relationship between certain characteristics of selected Tennessee 4-H'ers and whether they plan to stay in 4-H.

Characteristics	Do You Plan to Stay in 4-H?					
	Yes		No		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n**	%
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	188	74.9	63	25.1	251	100.0
Female	222	74.7	75	25.3	297	100.0
	*Statistical Test		$x^2 = <.01; df = 1; P = 1.00$			
<b>Age</b>						
12 & under	155	77.1	46	22.9	201	100.0
13	200	74.6	68	25.4	268	100.0
14 & over	54	70.1	23	29.9	77	100.0
	Statistical Test		$x^2 = 1.47; df = 2; P = .48$			
<b>Where do you live?</b>						
Farm	51	79.7	13	20.3	64	100.0
Rural Non-Farm	183	78.2	51	21.8	234	100.0
City/Town	171	70.4	72	29.6	243	100.0
	Statistical Test		$x^2 = 4.79; df = 2; P = .09$			
<b>Your grades in school</b>						
A's and B's	171	69.5	75	30.5	246	100.0
B's and C's	163	79.9	41	20.1	204	100.0
C's and D's	76	77.6	22	22.4	98	100.0
	Statistical Test		$x^2 = 6.86; df = 2; P = .03$			
<b>Other relative influenced you to join</b>						
Yes	9	90.0	1	10.0	10	100.0
No	405	74.6	138	25.4	543	100.0
	*Statistical Test		$x^2 = .55; df = 1; P = .46$			
<b>Classmate influenced you to join</b>						
Yes	29	76.3	9	23.7	38	100.0
No	385	74.8	130	25.2	515	100.0
	*Statistical Test		$x^2 = <.01; df = 1; P = .98$			
<b>Friend influenced you to join</b>						
Yes	52	78.8	14	21.2	66	100.0
No	362	74.3	125	25.7	487	100.0
	*Statistical Test		$x^2 = .10; df = 1; P = .53$			
<b>Teacher influenced you to join</b>						
Yes	121	77.1	36	22.9	157	100.0
No	293	74.0	103	26.0	396	100.0
	*Statistical Test		$x^2 = .41; df = 1; P = .52$			

Table 4. Continued.

Characteristics	Do You Plan to Stay in 4-H?					
	Yes		No		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n**	%
<b>Extension agent influenced you to join</b>						
Yes	153	76.1	48	23.9	201	100.0
No	261	74.1	91	25.9	352	100.0
*Statistical Test	x <sup>2</sup> = .17; df = 1; P = .68					
<b>Other person influenced you to join</b>						
Yes	35	67.3	17	32.7	52	100.0
No	379	75.8	121	24.2	500	100.0
*Statistical Test	x <sup>2</sup> = 1.39; df = 1; P = .24					

\*Yates Corrected

\*\* Some totals differ due to nonresponses.

made B's and C's and 22.4 percent (22) who made C's and D's. While 70 percent or more of the respondents indicated they planned to stay in 4-H, 4-H members who made C's and D's were more likely to stay in 4-H than those members who made A's and B's.

#### **4-H Members' Gender and Their Level of Involvement**

Data in Table 5 presented the relationship between 4-H members' gender and their level of involvement. An involvement score was computed to determine the level of involvement of the 4-H members. In the survey, there was a series of 19 4-H activities/events which 4-H members were to circle if they had participated. A score between 0-19 was computed for each respondent, with 19 being the highest and representing the highest level of involvement in 4-H. According to the T-test, there was no evidence to suggest a relationship between gender and 4-H'ers level of involvement. Females were no more likely to participate in 4-H activities than were males.

#### **4-H'ers Source of Influence to Join 4-H and Their Level of Involvement**

Data in Table 6 presented the relationship between 4-H'ers source of influence to join 4-H and their level of involvement. The T-test provided no evidence to suggest a relationship between the six source of influence variables of: other relative influenced you to join, classmate influenced you to join, friend influenced you to join, teacher influenced you to join, 4-H

Table 5. Relationship between gender and level of involvement.

Selected Demographic Variable	Level of Involvement		
	n	$\bar{x}$	sd
Gender			
Male	264	3.77	3.35
Female	314	4.08	3.42
Statistical Test	t = -1.11; df = 576; P = .27		

Table 6. Relationship between source of influence and level of involvement.

Selected Variables	Level of Involvement		
	n	$\bar{x}$	sd
Other relative influenced you to join			
Yes	10	6.30	5.74
No	573	3.88	3.34
Statistical Test	t = 1.33; df = 9; P = .22		
Classmate influenced you to join			
Yes	39	3.87	3.24
No	544	3.93	3.42
Statistical Test	t = -.10; df = 581; P = .92		
Friend influenced you to join			
Yes	67	3.52	3.42
No	516	3.98	3.40
Statistical Test	t = -1.03; df = 581; P = .30		
Teacher influenced you to join			
Yes	167	4.26	2.95
No	416	3.79	3.56
Statistical Test	t = 1.62; df = 367; P = .11		
4-H agent influenced you to join			
Yes	212	3.92	3.51
No	371	3.93	3.34
Statistical Test	t = -.01; df = 581; P = .99		
Other person influenced you to join			
Yes	53	4.70	4.28
No	529	3.86	3.30
Statistical Test	t = 1.39; df = 58; P = .17		

agent influenced you to join, and other person influenced you to join; and their level of involvement.

#### **4-H Members' Age and Their Level of Involvement in 4-H**

Data in Table 7 showed findings regarding the relationships between 4-H members' age and their level of involvement in 4-H. Analysis of variance was used to determine the level of significance, and the Duncan's Multiple Range Test was used to determine which group is different than the others when analyzing this relationship. The ANOVA showed there was no significant relationship between 4-H'ers age and their level of involvement in 4-H.

#### **4-H Members' Residence and Their Level of Involvement in 4-H**

Data in Table 8 presented findings regarding the relationships between 4-H members' residence and their level of involvement in 4-H. Analysis of variance was used to determine the level of significance, and the Duncan's Multiple Range Test was used to determine which group is different than the others when analyzing this relationship. The ANOVA showed there was a significant relationship between 4-H members' place of residence and their level of involvement ( $f = 26.62$ ;  $df = 2, 566$ ;  $P = <.01$ ). The data suggested that those members whose residence was a farm were more involved in 4-H than those living in a rural (non-farm) area or a city/town.

Table 7. Relationship between age and the level of involvement in 4-H.

Age	n	$\bar{x}^*$	sd
14	79	3.28	3.19
13	285	3.91	3.49
12	212	4.25	3.29

Statistical Test  $f = 2.39$ ;  $df = 2, 573$ ;  $P = .09$

Table 8. Relationship between residence and the level of involvement in 4-H.

Where do you live?	n	$\bar{x}^*$	sd	
City/Town	257	2.90	2.99	A
Rural	248	4.58	3.34	B
Farm	64	5.64	3.95	C

Statistical Test  $f = 26.62$ ;  $df = 2, 566$ ;  $P = <.01$

\* Means followed by different letters are significantly different at the  $P = 0.05$  level by Duncan's Multiple Range Test.



#### **4-H Members' Grades in School and Their Level of Involvement in 4-H**

Data in Table 9 presented findings regarding the relationships between 4-H members' grades in school and their level of involvement in 4-H. Analysis of variance was used to determine the level of significance, and the Duncan's Multiple Range Test was used to determine which group is different than the others when analyzing this relationship. The ANOVA showed there was a significant relationship between 4-H members' grades in school and their level of involvement ( $f = 6.22$ ;  $df = 2, 575$ ;  $P = <.01$ ). The data suggested that those members who made A's and B's were more involved in 4-H than those members who made B's & C's or C's and D's.

#### ***Relationship Between the Level of Parental Support and the Level of Participation in 4-H***

The third objective of the study was to examine the relationship between the level of parental support and the level of participation in 4-H. The level of participation consisted of three factors: the number of years in 4-H; whether the members planned to stay in 4-H; and the level of involvement (a computed involvement score). The data, illustrated in the next three tables, are discussed in the following three subsections.

#### **Level of Parental Support and the Number of Years in 4-H**

The data in Table 10 examined the relationship between the level of

Table 9. Relationship between grades in school and the level of involvement in 4-H.

Grades in school	n	$\bar{x}^*$	sd	
C's & D's	101	3.23	2.54	B
B's & C's	215	3.60	3.08	B
A's & B's	262	4.44	3.82	A

Statistical Test  $f = 6.22$ ;  $df = 2, 575$ ;  $P = <.01$

\*Means followed by different letters are significantly different at the  $P = 0.05$  level by Duncan's Multiple Range Test.

Table 10. Relationship between the level of parental support and the number of years in 4-H.

Support	Number of Years in 4-H										
	1		2		3		4 or more		Total		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Parents provide transportation											
Yes	8	6.1	17	12.9	13	9.8	94	71.2	132	100.0	
No	53	11.9	67	15.1	90	20.3	234	52.7	444	100.0	
	Statistical Test		$\chi^2 = 15.96$ ; $df = 3$ ; $P = <.01$								

parental support and the number of years in 4-H. The findings suggested a significant relationship between the support variable - parents provide transportation and number of years in 4-H.

Parents provide transportation. According to the data, 6.1 percent (8) of members whose parents provided transportation, compared to 11.9 percent (53) of members whose parents did not provide transportation, were in their first year of 4-H. Approximately 71 percent (94) of members whose parents provided transportation, compared to 52.7 percent (234) whose parents did not provide transportation, had been in 4-H four years or more. Those members whose parents provided transportation were more likely to be involved in 4-H four years or more.

#### **Level of Parental Support and Whether 4-H'ers Plan to Stay in 4-H**

The data in Table 11 examined the relationship between the level of parental support and whether 4-H'ers plan to stay in 4-H. The findings suggested no significant relationship between the three support variables: parent/guardian influenced you to join, parents teach or assist with project group, and parents attend 4-H meetings; and whether the 4-H'ers planned to stay in 4-H. The findings did suggest a significant relationship between if parents provided transportation and whether the 4-H'ers planned to stay in 4-H.

Table 11. Relationship between the level of parental support and whether 4-H'ers plan to stay in 4-H.

Support Characteristics	Do You Plan to Stay in 4-H?					
	Yes		No		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Parent/guardian influenced you to join</b>						
Yes	22	75.9	7	24.1	29	100.0
No	392	74.8	132	25.2	524	100.0
	*Statistical Test $\chi^2 = <.01; df = 1; P = 1.00$					
<b>Parents provide transportation</b>						
Yes	109	83.2	22	16.8	131	100.0
No	305	72.3	117	27.7	422	100.0
	*Statistical Test $\chi^2 = 5.78; df = 1; P = .02$					
<b>Parents teach or assist with project group</b>						
Yes	19	70.4	8	29.6	27	100.0
No	395	75.1	131	24.9	526	100.0
	*Statistical Test $\chi^2 = .11; df = 1; P = .75$					
<b>Parents attend 4-H meetings</b>						
Yes	27	81.8	6	18.2	33	100.0
No	387	74.4	133	25.6	520	100.0
	*Statistical Test $\chi^2 = .55; df = 1; P = .46$					

\*Yates Corrected

Parents provide transportation. Approximately 83 percent (109) of the members whose parents provided transportation, compared to 72.3 percent (305) of the members whose parents did not provide transportation, planned to stay in 4-H. Almost 17 percent (22) of members whose parents provided transportation, compared to 27.7 percent (117) whose parents did not provide transportation, did not plan to stay in 4-H. The 4-H members whose parents provided transportation were more likely to remain in 4-H.

#### **Level of Parental Support and the Level of Involvement in 4-H**

Table 12 reported findings from a T-test for significance between the level of parental support and the level of involvement in 4-H. The test indicated no significance between the variables: parents attend 4-H meetings, and parents coach or assist with 4-H judging teams; and the level of involvement. However, there was a significant relationship between parent/guardian influenced you to join and the level of involvement ( $t = 2.26$ ;  $df = 29$ ;  $P = .03$ ); between parents volunteer and the level of involvement ( $t = 3.33$ ;  $df = 9$ ;  $P = <.01$ ); between parents provide transportation and the level of involvement ( $t = 7.35$ ;  $df = 186$ ;  $P = <.01$ ); and between parents teach/assist with project group and the level of involvement ( $t = 2.09$ ;  $df = 581$ ;  $P = .04$ ). The data suggested a strong relationship between positive parental support and the level of involvement. Those members whose parents supported them in 4-H, were more likely to be more involved in 4-H.

Table 12. Relationship between the level of parental support and the level of involvement in 4-H.

Support Characteristics	Level of Involvement		
	n	$\bar{x}$	sd
Parent or guardian influenced you to join			
Yes	29	5.97	5.04
No	553	3.83	3.27
	Statistical Test $t = 2.26$ ; $df = 29$ ; $P = .03$		
Parents volunteer			
Yes	10	9.70	5.56
No	552	3.83	3.29
	Statistical Test $t = 3.33$ ; $df = 9$ ; $P < .01$		
Parents provide transportation			
Yes	136	5.96	3.88
No	447	3.31	2.98
	Statistical Test $t = 7.35$ ; $df = 186$ ; $P < .01$		
Parents teach or assist with project group			
Yes	27	5.26	3.74
No	556	3.86	3.38
	Statistical Test $t = 2.09$ ; $df = 581$ ; $P = .04$		
Parents attend 4-H meetings			
Yes	33	5.09	4.49
No	550	3.86	3.32
	Statistical Test $t = 1.55$ ; $df = 34$ ; $P = .13$		
Parents coach/assist with 4-H judging teams			
Yes	14	6.57	5.37
No	569	3.86	3.32
	Statistical Test $t = 1.88$ ; $df = 13$ ; $P = .08$		

***Nonmembers' Perceptions of Why They Did Not Join 4-H, and Drop-out Members' Perceptions of Why They Left 4-H***

The fourth objective for the study was to look at reasons nonmembers gave for never joining 4-H, and reasons drop-out members gave for leaving 4-H. Of the 822 respondents in the sample, 136 were identified as being nonmembers and 63 were identified as being drop-out members. The data for this objective are illustrated in following two tables, and are discussed in the next two subsections.

**Nonmembers' Perceptions of Why They Did Not Join 4-H**

The frequency data in Table 13 illustrated the number of nonmember respondents who answered yes or no to each of the reasons listed in the questionnaire for never joining 4-H.

4-H is not available at my school. Only one respondent (.7 percent) gave this as the reason for never joining 4-H.

4-H does not meet my interests. Sixty-five (47.8 percent) of the nonmembers gave this as the reason for never joining 4-H, while 71 (52.2 percent) did not.

I don't know enough about 4-H. Twenty-four (17.6 percent) of the nonmembers answered yes to this reason, and 112 (82.4 percent) said no.

My friends aren't members. Only 10 (7.4 percent) gave this as a reason for not joining 4-H; the remaining 126 (92.6 percent) did not.

Table 13. Nonmembers' reasons for never joining 4-H.

Reasons for Never Joining 4-H	Respondents	
	n	%
4-H is not available at my school		
Yes	1	.7
No	135	99.3
Total	136	100.0
4-H does not meet my interests		
Yes	65	47.8
No	71	52.2
Total	136	100.0
I don't know enough about 4-H		
Yes	24	17.6
No	112	82.4
Total	136	100.0
My friends aren't members		
Yes	10	7.4
No	126	92.6
Total	136	100.0
I don't have the money to participate		
Yes	5	3.7
No	131	96.3
Total	136	100.0
4-H is for farm kids		
Yes	5	3.7
No	131	96.3
Total	136	100.0
I don't know how to enroll		
Yes	9	6.6
No	127	93.4
Total	136	100.0



Table 13. Continued.

Reasons for Never Joining 4-H	Respondents	
	n	%
4-H is for younger children		
Yes	4	2.9
No	132	97.1
Total	136	100.0
It (4-H) is not challenging		
Yes	6	4.4
No	130	95.6
Total	136	100.0
It (4-H) is too competitive		
Yes	2	1.5
No	134	98.5
Total	136	100.0
My parents don't want me to be in 4-H		
Yes	4	2.9
No	132	97.1
Total	136	100.0
I don't have time		
Yes	33	24.3
No	103	75.7
Total	136	100.0
Other reasons I'm not a member		
Yes	29	21.3
No	107	78.7
Total	136	100.0

I don't have the money to participate. Five (3.7 percent) of the nonmembers answered yes to this being the reason they never joined 4-H; 131 (96.3 percent) did not.

4-H is for farm kids. Again, 5 (3.7 percent) of the nonmembers answered yes to this, and 131 (96.3 percent) said no.

I don't know how to enroll. Nine (6.6 percent) of the nonmembers chose this as their reason for never joining 4-H; 127 (93.4 percent) did not.

4-H is for younger kids. Four (2.9 percent) felt this was their reason for never joining 4-H, while the remaining 132 (97.1 percent) did not.

It (4-H) is not challenging. Six (4.4 percent) of the nonmembers agreed this was their reason for never joining 4-H, and 130 (95.6 percent) did not.

It (4-H) is too competitive. Only 2 (1.5 percent) of the nonmembers reported this is why they never joined 4-H, and the remaining 134 (98.5 percent) did not.

My parents don't want me to be in 4-H. There were 4 (2.9 percent) who gave this as their reason for never joining 4-H; 132 (97.1 percent) did not.

I don't have time. Thirty-three (24.3 percent) of the nonmembers gave this as their reason for never joining 4-H; the remaining 103 (75.7 percent) did not.

Other reasons I'm not a member. Twenty-nine (21.3 percent) of the nonmembers indicated there were reasons other than the ones listed that they never joined 4-H; 107 (78.7) did not.

The largest number of nonmembers (65) indicated that 4-H does not meet my interests as being the reason they never joined 4-H; followed by I don't have time (33); other reasons I'm not a member (29); and I don't know enough about 4-H (24).

### **Drop-out Members' Perceptions of Why They Left 4-H**

The frequency data in Table 14 illustrated the number of respondents who were drop-out members who answered yes or no to each of the reasons listed in the questionnaire for dropping out of 4-H.

4-H is not available at my school. Only one respondent (1.6 percent) gave this as the reason for dropping out of 4-H.

4-H does not meet my interests. Thirty-three (52.4 percent) of the drop-out members gave this as the reason for dropping out of 4-H, while 30 (47.6 percent) did not.

I don't know enough about 4-H. Only 2 (3.2 percent) of the drop-out members chose this as their reason for dropping out of 4-H, and 61 (96.8 percent) did not.

My friends aren't members. Eight (12.7 percent) gave this as a reason for dropping out of 4-H; the remaining 55 (87.3 percent) did not.

I don't have the money to participate. Only one respondent (1.6 percent) gave this as the reason for dropping out of 4-H.

4-H is for farm kids. Four (6.3 percent) of the drop-out members

Table 14. Former members' reasons for dropping out of 4-H.

Reasons for Dropping Out of 4-H	Respondents	
	n	%
<b>4-H is not available at my school</b>		
Yes	1	1.6
No	62	98.4
Total	63	100.0
<b>4-H does not meet my interests</b>		
Yes	33	52.4
No	30	47.6
Total	63	100.0
<b>I don't know enough about 4-H</b>		
Yes	2	3.2
No	61	96.8
Total	63	100.0
<b>My friends aren't members</b>		
Yes	8	12.7
No	55	87.3
Total	63	100.0
<b>I don't have the money to participate</b>		
Yes	1	1.6
No	62	98.4
Total	63	100.0
<b>4-H is for farm kids</b>		
Yes	4	6.3
No	59	93.7
Total	63	100.0
<b>4-H is for younger children</b>		
Yes	4	6.3
No	59	93.7
Total	63	100.0

Table 14. Continued.

Reasons for Dropping Out of 4-H	Respondents	
	n	%
It (4-H) is not challenging		
Yes	6	9.5
No	57	90.5
Total	63	100.0
It (4-H) is too competitive		
Yes	4	6.3
No	59	93.7
Total	63	100.0
I don't have time		
Yes	29	46.0
No	34	54.0
Total	63	100.0
Other reasons		
I'm not a member		
Yes	19	30.2
No	44	78.7
Total	63	100.0

answered yes to this, and 59 (93.7 percent) said no.

4-H is for younger kids. Again, 4 (6.3 percent) felt this was their reason for dropping out of 4-H, while the remaining 59 (93.7 percent) did not.

It (4-H) is not challenging. Six (9.5 percent) of the drop-out members reported this was their reason for dropping out of 4-H, and 57 (90.5 percent) did not.

It (4-H) is too competitive. Four (6.3 percent) of the drop-out members reported this is why they dropped out of 4-H, and the remaining 59 (93.7 percent) did not.

I don't have time. Twenty-nine (46 percent) of the drop-out members gave this as their reason for dropping out of 4-H; the remaining 34 (54 percent) did not.

Other reasons I'm not a member. Nineteen (30.2 percent) of the drop-out members indicated there were reasons other than the ones listed that they dropped out of 4-H; 44 (78.7) did not.

While the reasons were varied, the largest number of drop-out members indicated that their reasons for dropping out of 4-H were: 4-H doesn't meet my interests (33), I don't have time (29), and other reasons I'm not a member (19).

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### SUMMARY

The 4-H organization for youth ages 9-19, is the youth education program of the Cooperative Extension Service. Tennessee's 4-H program had 185,000-plus members in 1993-94, up from 171,685 in 1992-93. Even though there has been an overall increase in enrollment, there has been an average 38 percent decrease in membership from the sixth to seventh grades during the past five years. One reason which could have an effect on the decreasing membership is the perception of the image of 4-H to these students.

The objectives of this study were to identify the demographic characteristics of 4-H members and nonmembers and compare their demographic profiles as they relate to their personal and family characteristics and their opinions regarding the image of 4-H. A number of demographic variables were studied to see if there were relationships between selected variables (e.g. gender, age, residence, ...) and the respondents' level of participation in 4-H. This study also examined the relationship between the level of parental support and the level of participation in 4-H. Moreover, this study examined the reasons respondents gave for dropping out, or not participating in the 4-H program.

The specific objectives for this study were to:

1. look at the demographic profile of 4-H members and nonmembers to study the relationships between 4-H membership and a) selected personal and family characteristics, and b) respondents' attitudes regarding the image of 4-H;
2. study the relationships between selected demographic variables and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H;
3. study the relationship between the level of parental support and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H; and
4. determine nonmembers' perceptions of why they did not join 4-H, and determine drop-out members' perceptions of why they left 4-H.

For the purpose of this study, Tennessee's counties were categorized into urban, suburban and rural counties using 1990 census data. From these categories, two urban counties - Shelby and Hamilton, two suburban counties - Hamblen and Bradley, and two rural counties - Warren and Tipton, were randomly selected. For each county, a list of schools having both seventh grade and 4-H programs was developed. Then one school in each of the six counties was randomly selected. The sample of the study consisted of all of the seventh grade classes at the six randomly selected schools.

Cooperation on behalf of a Extension 4-H agent in each of the six counties was obtained once the questionnaire was developed. Based upon findings of previous studies, the questionnaire was developed to obtain



demographic data about the students, to gather information regarding their perceptions about the image of the 4-H program, and to determine why previous 4-H members dropped out, and why some respondents never joined 4-H. Permission was then obtained from each of the responding schools' principals for the Extension 4-H agents to go into the seventh grade classrooms and administer the questionnaires. Once permission was granted, the 4-H agents coordinated with the classroom teachers, and the surveys were then administered on-site in the classrooms by Extension 4-H agents to all seventh graders present in the schools on the selected day. The surveys were color-coded by schools, and were numbered sequentially for tracking purposes. Since the identities of the respondents were not needed, the respondents were requested to not include identifying information in order to retain their confidentiality. Of the 918 questionnaires taken to the schools, 822 (89.5%) were completed and returned.

Since the sample was comprised of 4-H members and nonmembers, certain questions were specific for members, while nonmembers were routed to other questions. The questions for members were designed to obtain information regarding their level of participation in 4-H so an analysis between this variable and selected demographic variables could be made. In order to assess why some respondents never joined 4-H or why some respondents dropped out of 4-H, there was a question specific to each group to circle reasons they never joined or dropped out.

The last question of the survey was based on information gathered from previous studies, and contained statements that had been expressed by youth in those studies, and measured the respondent's attitude regarding the 4-H image. An analysis was done to compare the attitudes of 4-H members and nonmembers.

In considering the demographic profiles of members and nonmembers, chi-square tests were used to determine the relationship between the participants' personal and family characteristics and their 4-H membership status. Chi-square tests were also used to determine the relationships between respondents' attitudes toward the image of 4-H and 4-H membership status. Where necessary, the chi-square tests were Yates continuity corrected.

The analysis of the data in the study revealed that respondents were more likely to be 4-H members if they made better grades (A's and B's), if their mother/guardian worked outside the home, if their mothers and fathers were previous 4-H members, and if their friends were 4-H members. It was also found that 4-H members were more likely than nonmembers to agree that: 4-H helps build self-confidence, 4-H helps develop leadership skills, 4-H helps individuals set goals, 4-H has fun and interesting activities, 4-H helps young people prepare for the future, and you don't have to live on a farm to be involved in 4-H. The 4-H members were also more likely than nonmembers to disagree that 4-H activities are boring, and 4-H is for farm kids.

For understanding the relationship between demographic variables and the 4-H members' level of participation in 4-H, three variables were considered in describing the 4-H members' level of participation. These variables were: the number of years in 4-H; whether the members planned to stay in 4-H; and their level of involvement (a computed involvement score). An involvement score was computed to determine the 4-H members' level of involvement by summing a series of 19 4-H activities/events in which 4-H members could participate. A score between 0-19 was computed for each respondent, with 19 being the highest and representing the highest level of involvement in 4-H. Chi-square tests were used to analyze the relationship between selected demographic variables and the number of years members have been in 4-H, whether they plan to stay in 4-H, and their level of involvement. T-tests were used to analyze the relationship between gender and the level of involvement and between the source of influence and 4-H members' level of involvement. Analysis of variance tests were used to test the relationship between age and the level of involvement in 4-H, between residence and the level of involvement in 4-H, and between grades in school and the level of involvement in 4-H.

The data suggested that the older the members were, the less likely they were to have been involved in 4-H for four years or more, and those members who were influenced by a classmate to join 4-H were less likely to have been involved in 4-H for four years or more. Analysis of the data

indicated the following: those 4-H members living on a farm were more likely than those who lived in the city to be involved in 4-H for four years or more; members who made better grades were more likely to be involved in 4-H for four years or more; and members who were influenced by a 4-H agent to join were more likely to be involved in 4-H for four years or more.

Members in 4-H whose residence was a farm were found to be more involved in 4-H than those who did not live on a farm. While those who made better grades (A's and B's) were more likely to be involved in 4-H, they were also found to be less likely to remain in 4-H than those making lower grades (C's and D's). But, those who made better grades (A's and B's) were also found to be more involved in 4-H than those who made lower grades (C's and D's).

In examining the relationship between parental support and 4-H members' participation in 4-H, three variables were considered in describing the level of participation: the number of years in 4-H; whether the members planned to stay in 4-H; and the level of involvement (a computed involvement score). Chi-square tests were used to analyze the relationship between the level of parental support and the number of years participants have been in 4-H, and between the level of parental support and whether 4-H'ers plan to stay in 4-H. T-tests were used to analyze the relationship between the level of parental support and the level of involvement in 4-H.

An analysis of the data found that members whose parents provided transportation were more likely to be involved in 4-H for four years or more

and were more likely to remain in 4-H than those members whose parents did not provide transportation for them. Also, members whose parents supported them in their 4-H activities were more likely to have a higher level of involvement in 4-H than those members whose parents did not support them in their 4-H activities.

In considering reasons for not being in 4-H, demographic data were obtained to determine nonmembers' reasons for never joining 4-H, and to determine drop-out members reasons for leaving 4-H. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the reasons listed for both nonmembers and drop-out members.

In looking at the reasons nonmembers gave for never joining 4-H, the largest number indicated that 4-H did not meet their interests, followed by they didn't have time, there were "other reasons" for not joining, and they didn't know enough about 4-H.

In looking at the reasons drop-out members gave for dropping out of 4-H, the largest number indicated that 4-H didn't meet their interests, followed by they didn't have time, and there were "other reasons" they dropped out.

### COMPARISONS WITH OTHER STUDIES

According to data from the survey, the two main reasons given by dropout members for leaving 4-H and respondents who never joined 4-H

were: 4-H didn't meet their interests and they didn't have time to be in 4-H. This finding is similar to what was found in the MRI studies (1990, p. 15) of youth who chose not to participate in 4-H who also found 4-H not interesting and they were involved in other activities. In another study, Ladewig and Thomas (1987) found that a majority of the 4-H alumni surveyed had dropped out of 4-H because it no longer met their interests.

Data also indicated that those 4-H members living on a farm were more likely than those who lived in a city/town to be involved in 4-H four years or more, and were more involved in 4-H than those in a city/town. These findings are similar to one of Ladewig and Thomas (1987) who found in their research of 4-H alumni that those who stayed in 4-H longer were most likely to have resided in a rural area.

Data in this study indicated parental support is very important to the involvement of 4-H members in 4-H. Findings which support the involvement of parents as being very important were: members whose parents provided transportation were more likely to be involved in 4-H four years of more; members whose parents provided transportation were more likely to remain in 4-H; members whose parents supported them in 4-H were more likely to be more involved in 4-H; and respondents were more likely to be 4-H members if their parents were former members. These findings are similar to findings of previous studies. Smith (1982) found that 4-H members had parents who were more involved in providing transportation to

meetings and events. Also, the encouragement and support of parents was a factor related to reenrollment in West Virginia's 4-H program. (Hartley, 1983).

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings in this study indicated that 4-H'ers who were more involved in 4-H made better grades (A's and B's), lived on a farm, were influenced by a 4-H agent to join, and had strong parental support for their participation in 4-H. The findings also indicated that 4-H members in general made better grades (A's and B's), had a mother/guardian working outside the home, had parents who were previous 4-H members, had friends who were 4-H members, and had positive attitudes toward 4-H. However, the findings also indicated that those 4-H members making better grades (A's and B's) were less likely to remain in 4-H—as were those 4-H members who were 14 or older. Findings also indicated the three main reasons nonmembers never joined 4-H and drop-out members left 4-H were: 4-H didn't meet their interests, they didn't have time, and there were "other reasons." Nonmembers also felt they didn't know enough about 4-H. Another finding of the study was more than 50 percent of the 4-H members either agreed with or were undecided about the statement that 4-H was boring.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations can be made:

1. While a higher percentage of members themselves didn't believe

that 4-H is for farm kids, those more heavily involved in 4-H did live on farms. Perhaps the more popular activities are farm-related in nature and for that reason are drawing the participation of those who live on farms. The 4-H activities should be structured so residence is not as critical a factor in participation in activities, and more non-farm related activities should be developed for all 4-H members. It is recommended that more activities be developed which deal with current issues facing the 4-H members or needed life skills.

2. Those 4-H members who made A's and B's had a higher level of involvement in 4-H activities, yet, indicated they were less likely to remain in 4-H. The activities in 4-H are attracting the participation of those making better grades, but do not appear to be interesting enough to retain their membership in 4-H. As these members get older, they are tending to drop out of 4-H. Many of them become more involved in other activities; thus, 4-H is dropped in lieu of "other activities." Also, the members who have dropped out of 4-H and those who never joined indicated the main reason as being that 4-H didn't meet their interests. These students represent potential 4-H'ers who weren't interested enough in the 4-H program to remain in or become members. More activities should be developed for the older 4-H members in order to retain their membership. Many of these older members become more involved with work, school sports and clubs, and other extra-curricular activities. Perhaps by offering the older 4-H members a different



type of program than is offered to the younger members would promote their retention in 4-H. Since the older 4-H members have experience in 4-H, a more aggressive program where these older members provide leadership, activities, and support for the younger 4-H members could be implemented.

3. As parental support, including providing transportation, was an important factor in 4-H membership, 4-H agents should examine how more parents could become involved in the 4-H program. Many of the parents whose children are in 4-H may not have been members themselves. Agents should provide 4-H activities after school or outside parents' work hours to encourage the parents' participation. Family activities could be provided to enable the parents to become more knowledgeable and supportive of 4-H.

4. Since more than 50 percent of the 4-H members either agreed or were undecided that 4-H was boring, the 4-H agents should work with 4-H members in this age group to see what aspects of 4-H the members feel are boring, and obtain suggestions and ideas for improvement. This might help retain membership in 4-H at this level, and perhaps other levels.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations for future research are made.

1.) According to data in the Tennessee 4-H Enrollment Data Reports from 1989 to 1994, there was a significant drop in enrollment figures between

the eighth and ninth grades. This is the break when 4-H members change from being members of the junior high clubs to being members of the senior high clubs. A study should be conducted to determine why so many 4-H members are dropping out at this level.

2.) A study should be done to determine why membership at the senior high level is lower than the other levels. The survey should include current 4-H members, dropout members, and those who never joined 4-H to evaluate their reasons for remaining in 4-H, dropping out, or never joining 4-H; and to determine their perception of the activities offered in 4-H.

3.) Various age groups of current 4-H members, as well as other youth, should be studied to a greater extent to determine what types of 4-H activities they are involved in or what activities they would be interested in if offered.

4.) A study should be conducted on the different ways the 4-H programs across the state are structured and determine if there are some more successful than others, and why.

5.) A study should be developed to determine the parents' views of 4-H. Parents of current 4-H members and those of dropout members could provide some insight into their views of their children being in 4-H, or why their children dropped out of 4-H.

6.) A marketing brochure or flyer for 4-H should be developed and made available to all of the Tennessee schools with active 4-H programs. The schools could then have each teacher include it in the materials they send

home to parents with the students at the beginning of each school year. Since many of the 4-H programs are carried out during the school hours, many parents may not be aware of the 4-H program and what it has to offer. If the parents were made available, they might be more supportive of their children becoming actively involved.

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**APPENDICES**

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**APPENDIX A**

Table A-1. Selected demographics of selected Tennessee seventh graders.

Demographics	Respondents	
	n	%
<b>School</b>		
Covington Middle School	104	12.7
Bradley Jr. High	362	44.0
East Ridge Middle School	194	23.6
Centertown School	40	4.9
Arlington Elementary School	38	4.6
Alton Park Middle School	84	10.2
Total	822	100.0
<b>Are you a 4-H member?</b>		
Yes	583	70.9
No	180	21.9
Missing	59	7.2
Total	822	100.0
<b>Do you plan to stay in 4-H?</b>		
Yes	419	51.0
No	150	18.2
Missing	253	30.8
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you served as a 4-H officer?</b>		
Yes	284	34.5
No	497	60.5
Missing	41	5.0
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you exhibited livestock or other animals?</b>		
Yes	37	4.5
No	746	90.8
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you been a member of a judging team?</b>		
Yes	44	5.4
No	739	89.9
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you entered a 4-H breadbaking contest?</b>		
Yes	269	32.7
No	514	62.6
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0

Table A-1. Continued.

Demographics	Respondents	
	n	%
<b>Have you entered a 4-H poster contest?</b>		
Yes	334	40.6
No	449	54.7
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you entered a 4-H public speaking contest?</b>		
Yes	283	34.5
No	500	60.8
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you given a 4-H demonstration?</b>		
Yes	208	25.3
No	575	70.0
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you been in a 4-H district event?</b>		
Yes	66	8.1
No	717	87.2
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you attended 4-H camp?</b>		
Yes	77	9.4
No	706	85.9
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you been a member of a project group?</b>		
Yes	71	8.7
No	712	86.6
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you completed a project book?</b>		
Yes	153	18.7
No	630	76.6
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0

Table A-1. Continued.

Demographics	Respondents	
	n	%
Have you received a local club award?		
Yes	187	22.7
No	596	72.6
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
Have you received a county award?		
Yes	74	9.0
No	709	86.3
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
Have you received a district award?		
Yes	27	3.3
No	756	92.0
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
Have you been a member of an honor club?		
Yes	17	2.1
No	766	93.2
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
Have you attended a specialized camp?		
Yes	16	1.9
No	767	93.4
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
Have you helped plan a meeting or program?		
Yes	88	10.7
No	695	84.5
Missing	39	4.8
Total	822	100.0
Have you traveled to another city/state for an event?		
Yes	37	4.5
No	746	90.8
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0

Table A-1. Continued.

Demographics	Respondents	
	n	%
<b>Have you been involved in a 4-H community service project?</b>		
Yes	44	5.4
No	739	89.9
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0
<b>Have you ever been a 4-H member?</b>		
Yes	647	78.7
No	136	16.5
Missing	39	4.7
Total	822	100.0

Table A-2. Tennessee 4-H annual enrollment summary.

	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94*
K-3 grades	1,476	232	0	453	0
4th	42,102	47,416	47,409	46,863	50,123
5th	40,096	41,621	42,119	41,526	45,865
6th	32,670	34,279	33,097	32,380	31,156
7th	20,515	20,299	19,998	19,665	20,153
8th	16,375	17,449	17,718	17,280	16,678
9th	4,736	4,519	4,610	5,135	5,111
10th	3,475	3,352	3,275	3,616	3,624
11th	2,566	2,680	2,561	2,578	2,772
12th	1,859	1,904	2,213	2,145	2,142
Special Ed.	580	1,027	261	44	0
TOTAL	166,450	174,778	173,261	171,685	185,800

**APPENDIX B**



(letter sent to all school principals of schools selected for they study)

October 26, 1993

< >  
< >  
< >  
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Dear < >:

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service is attempting to study the image of 4-H as perceived by selected Tennessee seventh graders.

Your school was chosen through a random selection process as one from which we would like to obtain information. Since you are familiar with the 4-H program and 4-H activities are presently being conducted in your school, we hope you will permit us to collect this information from your seventh grade students.

A copy of the survey is attached for your review. As you can see, the survey is non-threatening to the students, and their participation is strictly voluntary. The identities of the students will remain confidential, as we will not ask for names to be put on the surveys.

< >, Extension agent in < > County is assisting us with the collection of data for this study. < > will be working with you and the seventh grade teacher(s) involved in selecting the most appropriate time to conduct the survey. We have pretested this survey and have found that it should take no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete.

Since we are planning to use these data as part of a university study, we are required to obtain your permission prior to conducting the survey. To meet the university requirements, we need a brief letter written on your school's letterhead indicating your approval that the study be conducted in your school. For your convenience, we have enclosed a self-addressed stamped envelope.

If you would like to have a summary of the results, please indicate so in your letter. Also, if you have any questions, please feel free to call Deanna Atkins at (615) 974-7360, or < > at < >. Thank you for your cooperation in this study.

Sincerely,

Roy R. Lessly  
Professor & Head,  
Agricultural & Extension Education

Deanna M. Atkins  
Extension Assistant,  
Extension Communications

c: < >

Dear Seventh Graders,

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service is conducting this survey in order to find out what you know or think about the 4-H program. Information from this study, titled "The Image of 4-H as Perceived by Selected Tennessee Seventh Graders," will be used to help improve the 4-H program in your school and throughout Tennessee.

Completion of this survey should take no more than 10 to 15 minutes of your time. In order to assure that no one knows how you responded to the questions, we are asking that you not put your name or any other identifying marks on the survey form. Individual survey forms will be destroyed once responses are tabulated.

We do not believe that your responses to any of the questions on the survey will cause any type of discomfort on your part; however, if you decide not to answer any of the questions, that is okay.

We hope you will assist us by completing the attached survey; however, your participation is strictly voluntary. If you choose not to complete the questionnaire, or after starting decide not to finish filling out the survey, you will not be penalized in any way.

The return of the completed questionnaire will give us your permission to use your responses for our study.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Deanna M. Atkins  
Extension Assistant,  
The University of Tennessee  
Agricultural Extension Service

1. What is your sex? (circle number of your answer)
  - 1 boy
  - 2 girl
  
2. How old are you? (circle number of your answer)
  - 1 11
  - 2 12
  - 3 13
  - 4 14
  - 5 other \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Which best describes where you live? (circle number of your answer)
  - 1 farm
  - 2 rural area, but not on a farm
  - 3 city/town
  
4. Which best describes the grades you make in school? (circle number of your answer)
  - 1 all A's
  - 2 A's and B's
  - 3 all B's
  - 4 B's and C's
  - 5 all C's
  - 6 C's and D's
  
5. Is 4-H available in your school? (circle number of your answer)
  - 1 yes
  - 2 no
  - 3 I don't know
  
6. Where do the 4-H clubs meet? (circle number of your answer)
  - 1 in school facilities during school hours
  - 2 before or after school hours using school facilities
  - 3 somewhere else
  - 4 I don't know
  
7. Are you 4-H member? (circle number of your answer)
  - 1 yes
  - 2 no (If Not a 4-H member, skip to question #13)
  
8. How many years have you been a 4-H member? (circle number of your answer)
  - 1 first year in 4-H
  - 2 2 years
  - 3 3 years
  - 4 4 years
  - 5 more than 4 years

9. Who influenced you to join 4-H? (circle number of all that apply)
- 1 parent(s)/guardian
  - 2 relative (other than parents)
  - 3 classmate
  - 4 friend
  - 5 teacher
  - 6 4-H Extension agent
  - 7 other \_\_\_\_\_
10. Approximately how many members are in your 4-H club? (circle number of your answer)
- 1 fewer than 20
  - 2 21-35
  - 3 36-50
  - 4 more than 50
11. Do you plan to stay in 4-H? (circle number of your answer)
- 1 yes
  - 2 no
12. As a 4-H member have you ever? (circle number of all that apply)
- 1 served as a 4-H club officer
  - 2 exhibited livestock or other animals at a 4-H show
  - 3 been a member of a judging team
  - 4 entered a 4-H breadbaking contest
  - 5 entered a 4-H poster contest
  - 6 entered a 4-H public speaking contest
  - 7 given a 4-H demonstration at a contest
  - 8 entered or participated in a district 4-H event
  - 9 attended a 4-H camp
  - 10 been a member of a 4-H project group
  - 11 completed a 4-H project book
  - 12 received a medal or other 4-H award a local 4-H club event
  - 13 received a medal or other 4-H award at a county 4-H event
  - 14 received a medal or other 4-H award at a district 4-H event
  - 15 been a member of the 4-H honor club
  - 16 attended a specialized 4-H camp (Electric Camp, Jr. High Academic conference)
  - 17 helped plan a 4-H meeting or program
  - 18 traveled to another county or state for a 4-H event
  - 19 gotten involved in a community service project through 4-H

13. If never a 4-H member, what is the reason you haven't joined? (circle number of all that apply)
- 1 not available at my school
  - 2 does not meet my interests
  - 3 I don't know enough about 4-H
  - 4 my friends aren't members
  - 5 I don't have the money to participate
  - 6 4-H is for farm kids
  - 7 I don't know how to enroll
  - 8 4-H is for younger children
  - 9 it is not challenging
  - 10 it is too competitive
  - 11 my parents don't want me to be in 4-H
  - 12 4-H does not meet during school hours
  - 13 I don't have time
  - 14 other \_\_\_\_\_
14. If you used to be a 4-H member, but have dropped out, which reasons listed best describe why you dropped out? (circle number of all that apply)
- 1 not available at my school
  - 2 does not meet my interests
  - 3 I don't know enough about 4-H
  - 4 my friends aren't members
  - 5 I don't have the money to participate
  - 6 4-H is for farm kids
  - 7 I don't know how to enroll
  - 8 4-H is for younger children
  - 9 it is not challenging
  - 10 it is too competitive
  - 11 my parents don't want me to be in 4-H
  - 12 4-H does not meet during school hours
  - 13 I don't have time
  - 14 other \_\_\_\_\_
15. Which best describes who you live with: (circle number of your answer)
- 1 both parents
  - 2 mother only
  - 3 father only
  - 4 guardian
16. Does your father/guardian work outside the home? (circle number of your answer if appropriate)
- 1 yes
  - 2 no
17. Does your mother/guardian work outside the home? (circle number of your answer if appropriate)
- 1 yes
  - 2 no

18. Was your father/guardian a 4-H member? (circle number of your answer)
- 1 yes
  - 2 no
  - 3 I don't know
19. Was your mother/guardian a 4-H member? (circle number of your answer)
- 1 yes
  - 2 no
  - 3 I don't know
20. Is your father/guardian a 4-H volunteer leader? (circle number of your answer)
- 1 yes
  - 2 no
  - 3 used to be, but not anymore
  - 4 I don't know
21. Is your mother/guardian a 4-H volunteer leader? (circle number of your answer)
- 1 yes
  - 2 no
  - 3 used to be, but not anymore
  - 4 I don't know
22. Do you have brothers or sisters who are or have been 4-H members? (circle number of your answer)
- 1 yes
  - 2 no
23. Are your parents or guardians involved in the following: (circle number of all that apply)
- 1 provide transportation for you to attend 4-H events and/or meetings
  - 2 provide transportation for other 4-H'ers to attend events/meetings
  - 3 teach or assist with a 4-H project group
  - 4 attend 4-H meetings
  - 5 coach or assist with a 4-H judging team
24. Are most of your friends 4-H members? (circle number of your answer)
- 1 yes
  - 2 no
25. Are you a member or are you involved in the following youth organizations/activities? (circle number of all that apply)
- 1 4-H
  - 2 scouts
  - 3 church
  - 4 YMCA/YWCA
  - 5 boys/girls clubs
  - 6 recreational sports
  - 7 school sports team
  - 8 school band
  - 9 foreign language club
  - 10 choral club
  - 11 school paper or yearbook staff
  - 12 other

26. What organizations/activities are your closest friends involved in? (circle number of all that apply)

- 1 4-H
- 2 scouts
- 3 church
- 4 YMCA/YWCA
- 5 boys/girls clubs
- 6 recreational sports
- 7 school sports team
- 8 school band
- 9 foreign language club
- 10 choral club
- 11 school paper or yearbook staff
- 12 other \_\_\_\_\_

27. Listed below are some statements that other youth have said about 4-H. Please indicate if you Strongly Agree (SA), Agree(A), Undecided(U), Disagree(D), Strongly Disagree(SD) with each statement by circling your answer.

Example: 4-H is fun      SA        U    D    SD

4-H helps build self-confidence.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4-H helps develop leadership skills.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4-H helps individuals set goals.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4-H meetings are fun.	SA	A	U	D	SD
The activities in 4-H are interesting.	SA	A	U	D	SD
The activities in 4-H are boring.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4-H is for farm kids.	SA	A	U	D	SD
You don't have to live on a farm to be in 4-H.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4-H helps young people prepare for their future.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4-H is for younger kids.	SA	A	U	D	SD
There is too much competition in 4-H.	SA	A	U	D	SD
I like the competition in 4-H.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4-H is popular at my school.	SA	A	U	D	SD
4-H is not popular at my school.	SA	A	U	D	SD
Adults have too much control over the 4-H program.	SA	A	U	D	SD

Thank you for participating in this survey.

## VITA

Deanna Lee Essington was born on Feb. 26, 1962, in Oak Ridge, Tenn. She graduated from Morristown Hamblen High School-West in 1980, and from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in June 1985, with a bachelor of science degree in communications. She first joined The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service in 1986 as senior editorial assistant in communications. She is presently an Extension assistant in communications. She is a member of Gamma Sigma Delta and Phi Kappa Phi national honor societies, and the Epsilon Sigma Phi national honorary extension fraternity.

She is married to Michael E. Essington, an assistant professor with the UT Agricultural Experiment Station, Department of Plant and Soil Science. They have two daughters, Chelsea and Meghan.



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