

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RETENTION OF 4-H
VOLUNTEERS IN NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA AS
PERCEIVED BY 4-H VOLUNTEERS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Membership in 4-H has a highly positive image among former members and the American public in general. According to studies completed in the late 1980's, 4-H is educating young Americans for effective participation in the complex, technology-driven world of today (Rasmussen, 1989, p. 172).

4-H is a dynamic organization of youth that requires a strong corp of volunteers to provide for the needs of these youth. Much time and effort of Cooperative Extension professionals is devoted to the recruitment and training of volunteers. It is therefore of interest to these professionals to retain these volunteers rather than to recruit and train replacement volunteers.

In 1914, the Smith-Lever Act created the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) by which practical information could be taken from land-grant colleges and universities and the Department of Agriculture to the people in their local environment (Albrecht, 1980). 4-H is the youth development program of the Cooperative Extension Service.

The original goal of 4-H was to provide for the needs of rural youth. Since that time, the mission has changed to include "non-traditional" audiences such as urban youth and school enrichment programs. These changes, along with the increasing youth population, have shown a marked increase in 4-H participation by youth. At the same time, budgetary considerations have decreased

the number of professional staff members available to meet the needs of the 4-H program.

Edmonson (1991) stated that:

Since the 4-H program began more than 75 years ago, they have grown in size and in number of students participating. Therefore, in conjunction with budget constraints, this growth has vastly outnumbered the number of CES 4-H agents available (p. 1).

Due to the gap that has developed between numbers of 4-H members and numbers of available professionals, the need for volunteers to bridge this gap has become self-evident.

Volunteer responsibilities vary from county to county. Kruse (1976) outlined a plan that described a multi-level volunteer program. Volunteer position titles ranged from local club assistants to county coordinators.

While elements of this plan are in place, there is tremendous variation between counties as to volunteer responsibilities. In most cases, volunteers are charged with differing responsibilities. These include recruitment of members and other volunteers, member supervision, educational programs, liaison with county staff and transportation of members. Depending on the specific program, these responsibilities may be shared by a group of volunteers or be the sole responsibility of one volunteer.

Recruitment of these needed volunteers has been an active part of the responsibilities of CES professionals. However, in the opinion of the researcher, the retention of volunteers has been inadequately addressed by CES. Perceived influences on retention

are regularly addressed in the performance appraisal process. These include recognition and training of volunteers. The potential benefits received by CES professionals by retention of volunteers are vast.

The need for repeated orientation is lessened. Retained volunteers are proven resource persons in the area of volunteer training and orientation. One of the most overlooked benefits is the continuity that retained volunteers lend to a program. Professionals tend to move from position to position, but the clientele remains somewhat static. Retention of volunteers allows for the program to continue in times of personnel change in professional staff. Additionally, in a tradition laden program such as 4-H, history is important. It is the volunteer population which carries on the tradition.

Statement of the Problem

The development of an effective corps of volunteers is dependent upon recruitment, training and retention. Research has been conducted determining the recruitment and training needs of CES in relation to volunteers; however, it would appear little research has been completed in the area of volunteer retention. Volunteer retention is essential in order to staff and provide leadership to the 4-H program as well as to provide for continuity within the 4-H program.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the relative importance of selected factors as perceived by 4-H volunteers for the retention of 4-H volunteers.

Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following objectives were established:

1. To profile volunteers who assisted with 4-H programming in the Northeast District in 1989-90.
2. To identify the extent to which selected factors influence people to become volunteers.
3. To identify the extent to which selected external factors influence volunteer retention.
4. To identify the extent to which selected internal factors influence volunteer retention.
5. To identify factors which may improve volunteer retention.

Assumptions of the Study

For the purpose of the study, the following assumptions were accepted by the researcher.

1. That the respondents indicated honest expressions of their opinions.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study included all 4-H volunteers in the Northeast Oklahoma Extension District for the year 1989-90. These volunteers were verified by use of volunteer enrollment records from the Oklahoma 4-H office. Each county was sampled randomly with each county being represented in a number proportional to the amount of volunteers in each county. The primary limitation of the study was that it only included those volunteers who were officially recognized by the Oklahoma 4-H program.

Definitions

The following definitions are presented as they apply to this study.

4-H Volunteer - An individual who donates their time to the 4-H program as a leader, helper, resource person, or other position, and is listed on the 4-H volunteer rolls.

Northeast District - The 21 Oklahoma counties which comprise the Northeast Extension District (See Appendix A).

Cooperative Extension Service (CES) - An agency of the federal government which disseminates research based information developed through land grant universities.

CES Professional - Person employed by the Cooperative Extension Service to provide educational programs to clientele.

4-H - The youth development branch of the CES which provides informal educational programs to youth.

Retention - The act of continuing ones association with an organization.

Perception - An individuals mental grasp of or understanding of his/her surroundings.

External Factors - Factors that are derived from another individual such as praise, awards and money.

Internal Factors - Factors that are derived from one's self such as pride, enjoyment and satisfaction.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present a review of literature deemed relevant to the study. This literature was compiled in such a way as to show the importance of the 4-H program, characteristics of volunteers, how volunteerism is changing and factors found to influence the retention of volunteers. In order to do this, the review of literature was divided into the following sections:

1. Introduction
2. 4-H and volunteerism
3. Why people volunteer
4. Trends in volunteerism
5. Retention of volunteers
6. Summary

4-H and Volunteerism

No single Extension-sponsored organization is more widely recognized than the 4-H clubs. The technique of organizing boys and girls into clubs which Extension programs could be conducted was one of the early innovations--and it succeeded admirably. The 4-H clubs gave identity to program activity that enhanced the basic competitive nature of the project work and they established a formal vehicle for involvement of adults (Albrecht, 1978, p. 12).

The establishment of a formal vehicle for adult participation defines one of the main building blocks of the 4-H program - volunteers. Wessell and Wessell (1982) stated:

The vast array of projects and activities available to young people in 4-H would have been an empty promise without the help and guidance of an army of professional extension agents and volunteer leaders.

4-H had always depended on the interest and goodwill of local people to help organize clubs, supervise projects and chaperone events. At the same time extension workers and volunteers tried to make 4-H a family venture. For thirty years that rare combination of interested adults, professional expertise, and enthusiastic young people maintained one of the most successful educational efforts the nation had experienced (p. 107).

The overall importance of volunteers to the 4-H program cannot be overstated. Rasmussen (1989) said:

Volunteers are the heart of the 4-H program. In the traditional county Extension office, one professional staff person or one-half of a professional staff worker is devoted to 4-H. That person must have assistance to carry out an effective program, which has traditionally come from volunteers (p. 179).

The Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (1976) identified volunteer leaders as the key to the success of the 4-H program.

Rasmussen (1989) observed:

. . . much of the work with 4-Hers is carried out by adult and teen leaders. In 1987, Cooperative Extension Service reported that it had more than 600,000 volunteer 4-H leaders (p. 10).

The strength of the 4-H volunteer corp is important when the competition for youth organization volunteers is considered.

Boyle and Douglas (1964) reported

Annually over two million adults serve in voluntary leadership capacities for educational youth organizations in the United States. Such groups as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, 4-H clubs, Farm Youth Organizations and Young Adult Church Groups rely almost exclusively on lay people in the community to provide adult leadership for their organizations (p. 209).

The escalating demands on the volunteer population, teamed with the personal demands on current volunteers dictates that the retention of volunteers is of major importance in a competitive environment.

Why People Volunteer

Volunteers have been characterized in different ways. Smith (1989) observed:

Volunteers are individuals who reach out beyond the confines of their paid employment and their normal responsibilities to contribute time and service to a not-for-profit cause in the belief that their activity is beneficial to others as well as themselves (p. 4).

Morrison (1983) made the point:

There are some things that belong to us that are so precious we can't sell them; we must share them with others--so it is with our volunteer efforts . . . effort that will make a difference. In contemporary society the problems are complex, the solutions more involved, and the satisfaction more obscure. It is these very challenges which spark the interest and involvement of 20th century volunteers. This involvement meets the inner needs and brings happiness (p. 9).

Volunteerism is traditionally regarded in an altruistic sense. When viewed theoretically, researchers have differing opinions on why people do the things they do including volunteering. Hampton, Summer and Weber (1973) cited McClelland and Atkinson's expectation

motivation theory in which human behavior is driven by one of three needs: the need for achievement, the need for affiliation, or the need for power. Henderson (1981) applied this to 4-H volunteers and found that 84 percent were motivated by affiliation, 12 percent by achievement and 4 percent by power. Young (1985) confirmed this, saying "the most valued outcomes of 4-H are affiliative in nature." Young's study found that the highest rated outcome is the opportunity to be with family or children.

Thomas (1951) identified four wish/needs (security, new experiences, responses and recognition) as the motivation forces instigating all behavior. Maslow (1954) developed upon Thomas' theory, formulating his hierarchy of needs. The hierarchy of needs presents a model in which human needs are arranged in an order in which one level must be met before the next level can be obtained. These needs are 1) physical, 2) safety, 3) social, 4) esteem and 5) self-actualization. Maslow's theory can be related to McClelland and Atkinson in that affiliative and social needs are similar, power and esteem are similar and achievement and self-actualization are similar. The main difference is that the expectation motivation theory does not dictate a hierarchial process making expectation motivation somewhat horizontal in nature while Maslow presents a vertical model.

Of a more applied nature, Henderson (1981) stated:

Within the past 15 years, a number of studies have been conducted on why people volunteer. Here are some of the more commonly mentioned reasons:

- To help people
- Out of sense of duty

- One couldn't refuse
- A child was in the program
- There was nothing else to do
- Enjoyment of volunteer work
- Volunteering might lead to a paying job
- To improve the community
- For self growth
- Because volunteering was a good use of free (leisure) time
- To feel needed or useful
- For a cause
- To meet personal social needs (p. 19).

Brown and Boyle (1964) found that the chief motivator of 4-H volunteers was their children. Parrot (1977) found the major factors influencing 4-H volunteerism to be: 1) want to help people, 2) sense of duty, 3) child in the program, and 4) enjoying the volunteer experience. Harlow (1973) indicated the primary reason people volunteer with the 4-H program as they had been associated with the 4-H program and realized the benefit their children could receive from being a 4-H member. The common thread of these studies was that volunteers felt a sense of duty, especially in cases where their children were concerned.

Edmonson (1991) showed the reason people volunteer in the 4-H program (as perceived by 4-H agents) to be to help others (14.7 percent), sense of belonging (1.4 percent), child in program (82.5 percent) and couldn't say no (1 percent). Conversely, Edmonson found the reasons people do not volunteer to be lack of time (80 percent), don't know how to work with children (5.3 percent), lack of basic skills (3 percent) and other factors (8 percent). Time constraints are perceived to be a major stumbling block to volunteerism. Rowland (1990) studied the perceptions of volunteers in regard to time constraints. The study compared 43

volunteers and 192 non-volunteers. Both groups perceived that they had enough time to do the things they wanted. There was a significant difference between the groups in their perceptions of having 1) enough time for leisure activities, 2) enough time for household work, 3) enough time for others and 4) all of the above. This would verify the adage that "If you want something done, give it to a busy person."

Trends in Volunteerism

The world of volunteerism is changing. With the increasing number of women in the workforce, the traditional volunteer population is decreasing, however, with a growing amount of people with additional leisure time, the pool may be getting larger.

Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt (1971) observed:

The trends and changes emerging in the world of voluntarism are exciting because they indicate voluntarism is becoming one of the major means of providing human services. That is, agencies and institutions, both private and public, are extending their activities, programs, and services through a greatly increased use of volunteer personpower. Administration has made it clear that voluntarism is one of the ways in which the citizens of this country can increase their help to others and to themselves, and thus make the democratic system work more effectively (p. 34).

The typical volunteer has been described in a number of ways. Harlow (1973) identified the main source of 4-H volunteer leaders to be housewives, 30-39 years old, a former 4-H member, high school graduate and a parent of a 4-H member. Rodriguez (1983) concluded that while the traditional volunteer (white, mature, female and middle class) was still predominate, the volunteer population was

changing and becoming more representative of the population.

Trends in volunteerism are always changing. Wessell and Wessell (1982) pointed out:

With the loss of paid club leaders after World War I, the need for local volunteer leadership became even more crucial. Some states already relied on local farm parents to conduct club affairs, but after 1919, it was imperative to find local people willing to accept the responsibility. To state and federal officials it seemed obvious that a greater reliance on volunteer leadership could be made an integral part of the clubs movement (p. 41).

Whaples and Bordelon (1983) observed:

The role of the lifetime volunteer is fading, and our future volunteers will be recruited in greater numbers. The challenge of the volunteer coordinator will be to involve more people. Long range planning and use of short term volunteers are patterns that will blend well with employed volunteers (p. 9).

Rasmussen (1989) concurs with this saying:

Today, more women - the traditional volunteer work force--than ever before are employed in full-time jobs and family structures are changing. There simply are not as many people from traditional sources who have the available time to serve as volunteers as there were in earlier years (p. 179).

With the changes in the volunteer work force, special attention must be paid to the management of volunteer programs. Smith (1989) addressed the changing roles of volunteer managers in the coming years:

The Volunteer 2000 study concluded that in the environment we can predict for the next decades, the following principles will need to underlie any successful volunteer program:

1. Defining who is a volunteer in an ethical yet inclusive manner.
2. Removing barriers to volunteering so as to broaden the potential volunteer pool.
3. Recognizing that volunteers are not free.

4. Appreciating that volunteers contribute more than the sum of their labors.
5. Moving away from the concept of the volunteer as an amateur.
6. Assuring that mutual expectations of volunteers and their organization are met.
7. Developing, not using, volunteers.
8. Involving volunteers in management.
9. Looking beyond volunteer numbers.
10. Looking to collaboration among non-profit organizations as a means to maximize volunteer opportunities and effectiveness (p. 3).

Retention of volunteers is an integral part of volunteer management. Wilson (1976) described the emerging field of volunteer management by saying:

This is truly an exciting time to be engaged in this field. What has been an undefined profession for a good many years is emerging at this moment in time. It has been there for years, but now we are finally seeing that it has an entity, professional status, literature and character all its own (p. 23).

Naylor (1973) summed the changing volunteer field thusly:

New areas of volunteer services are opening in the United States today, and favorite assumptions about volunteers are being jolted. Attitudes and ways of work are being refashioned. The distinction between public and private service is no longer sharp. Our image of a volunteer is taking new form (p. 11).

Volunteer Retention

"The greatest challenge to Extension Agents is retaining the volunteers they recruit" (Gilliland, 1977, p. 10).

Retention of 4-H leaders is an ongoing procedure that falls under the responsibility of CES agents. Brog and Couch (1965) wrote:

The high percentage of 4-H leaders who drop out each year is a continuing problem for Extension. Sabrosky reports that about one-third of the volunteer leaders

of 4-H clubs discontinue at the end of one year. In a Michigan survey, Allen found a 27 percent drop out after one year. Because of the high dropout rate, extension agents spend a considerable amount of time recruiting new leaders (p. 110).

Among factors associated with volunteers not continuing in

the 4-H program, Rhonemus (1965) identified the major reasons as:

- 1) Conflict with work at home or occupational duties.
- 2) The amount of time required to be an advisor.
- 3) Ill health of the advisor or someone in the advisor's family.
- 4) Lack of parent cooperation.
- 5) Lack of interest of the 4-H members.
- 6) The 4-H club program is too involved.
- 7) Moved from the community.
- 8) Failure of the local club to be reorganized.
- 9) Lack of training offered to advisors.
- 10) Personal expense involved (p. 44).

Bartlet (1965) identified four major factors which influenced volunteers dropping out as conflict with job, their children dropped out of the program, the project group was too small, and they were not asked to volunteer again. Cosner (1978) found ten factors that had influence on termination of volunteer service. "Busy with other activities" was found to have some influence. Those with very little influence were:

- 1) conflict with work at home
- 2) time requirements
- 3) conflict with job duties
- 4) lack of assistance from parents
- 5) lack of training
- 6) lack of support from extension agents
- 7) children grew up beyond 4-H age
- 8) moved from area
- 9) was not asked to be leader again (p. 60).

Cosner also found that volunteers are most likely to terminate service after one year.

Smith and Bigler (1986) showed four major findings in relation to volunteer retention:

- 1) There is a significant difference in continuing and non-continuing volunteers in the area of geographic location, number of children in the family and the number of children who had participated in 4-H.
- 2) Continuing 4-H volunteers expressed the fact that they received more tangible recognition and had greater attendance at recognition programs.
- 3) Orientation had little effect on retention.
- 4) There is a significant difference in retention when volunteers regularly attended training sessions (p. 12).

Bigler (1982) found that number of years served, geographic location and number of children in the family had the greatest influence on volunteer retention. Balliette and Smith (1990) showed that by increasing the volunteer involvement in the program, retention was increased. Rodriguez (1983) found that retention of volunteers within a program increases in direct proportion to the volunteers perceived satisfaction with the organization. Tajeu (1989) found that EFNEP helpers were more likely to transfer into a long-term role when they perceived institutional support for volunteers, high quality training and positive feelings toward the EFNEP program.

In a study by Kwarteng, Smith and Miller (1987), perceptions of volunteers and agents were looked at in the area of retention. The research looked at six areas of volunteer development. Agents ranked retention second behind training in importance. Volunteers ranked retention third behind training and supervision. The other factors were recruiting, motivation and recognition. Of the seven items related to retention, professional support by 4-H agent was

ranked highest by both groups. While agents ranked recognition high (tied for first), volunteers ranked it sixth. Volunteers ranked support from key leaders and program assistants second and involvement in the total program third. Both groups agreed that monetary reimbursement had the smallest effect on retention.

Summary

The review of literature showed the importance of volunteers to the overall 4-H program. In order to understand why a person remains a volunteer, it is important to consider why they became leaders in the first place. In many cases, it is for the same reason that they began to volunteer that they continue to volunteer.

The review did indicate previous research in the area of volunteer retention. This research did not differentiate between internal and external factors to a great degree; however, research in regard to volunteer motivation did make this distinction in some studies.

It is obvious that the field of volunteerism is a changing field due to the changing nature of society. The "typical" volunteer is not necessarily the same person as it was ten years ago. It can be argued that there is no "typical" volunteer. Retention of volunteers is important in a competitive world of volunteerism, but it also is important to utilize the volunteer within the constraints the volunteer feels. It is the role of the volunteer manager, in this case the CES agent, to utilize volunteers to the best of their potential.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods and procedures used to conduct this study. The design and conduct of this study were dictated by both the purpose and objectives of the study.

In order to obtain the information necessary to complete the study, it was necessary to complete the following steps:

- 1) Determine the geographic area of the population of the study.
- 2) Develop a suitable instrument that would furnish the needed information.
- 3) Secure the names and addresses of the population to be used.
- 4) Select the most appropriate method for analyzing the data collected.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Federal regulations and Oklahoma State University policy require review and approval of all research studies that involve human subjects before research can begin. The Oklahoma State University Office of University Research Services and the IRB

conduct this review to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in biomedical and behavioral research. In compliance with the above mentioned policy, this study received the proper surveillance, and was granted permission to continue, and assigned the following research number: AG-93-016. The IRB approval appears as Appendix D.

Population

The selection of a geographic area for this study was accomplished through consultation with the researcher's advisor and the Oklahoma State 4-H staff. It was determined that volunteer enrollments from 1989 would be utilized. The reasoning behind this was twofold. First, by using a previous years enrollment, there would be a chance that some of the sample would no longer be volunteers which should yield data on why these people chose not to continue the volunteer experience. Second, 1989 was the earliest year with total volunteer enrollment data available.

The next step was to identify the geographic area to be used. The Northeast Extension District of Oklahoma was chosen because this was the district the researcher preferred. Appendix A shows the counties represented in the study.

By consulting the Northeast District Extension office, an average figure of 1500 volunteers within the district was obtained. A sample size of 306 was determined by consulting a chart based on the Krejcie and Morgan formula.

Upon receiving the volunteer enrollment records, an actual enrollment for the 1989-90 year of 1,232, was established by counting. The sample size of 306 was still deemed to be useable by the researcher.

Each county's actual volunteer enrollment was divided by the total enrollment (1,232) to obtain a percentage of volunteers from each county within the district. This percentage was multiplied by the sample size (306) for each county to determine the number of questionnaires to be sent to each county. Using this formula, the individual counties received the following number of questionnaires: Adair-10; Cherokee-37; Craig-11; Creek-19; Delaware-11; Lincoln-12; McIntosh-3; Mayes-12; Muskogee-21; Nowata-8; Okfuskee-17; Okmulgee-10; Osage-9; Ottawa-17; Pawnee-8; Payne-13; Rogers-12; Sequoyah-18; Tulsa-36; Wagoner-6; and Washington-16. A random sample of volunteers corresponding to each county's number was taken to determine who would receive questionnaires.

Development of the Instrument

While planning the study, a mailed questionnaire was determined to be the instrument which would be used in the data gathering phase of the study. The statements used on the instrument were devised with the aid of state and district 4-H staff members in Oklahoma, professors of Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University and from other studies which dealt with similar topics.

A rough draft of the instrument was distributed to state and district 4-H staff members for changes and suggestions. The

instrument was checked for validity by professors of Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University. All comments and suggestions were taken into consideration in the formulation of the final questionnaire.

Data Collection

The questionnaires were mailed March 11, 1993, to each of the 306 members of the sample. A cover letter explaining the study and the value of each person's response was included in the mailing. Copies of the questionnaire and cover letter appear as Appendix B and C respectively. With each questionnaire, a self-addressed, stamped envelope was included.

As of April 8, 1993, a total of 126 questionnaires had been returned. A follow-up letter was sent at that time. The letter was sent April 9, to non-respondents and included another copy of the questionnaire and a cover letter. The second cover letter appears as Appendix D. An additional 16 questionnaires were returned after the follow-up mailing.

Analysis of Data

The method of analysis of data in this study, to best describe and interpret the data, were to calculate average ratings of questionnaire items, frequency count and percentages. Frequency count and percentages were used to analyze demographic information.

The questionnaire developed used a five point Likert-type scale in which numerical values were assigned to the following responses:

1-strongly disagree

2-disagree

3-neutral

4-agree

5-strongly agree.

The weighting of the scale and subsequent calculations of mean responses are detailed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The primary purpose of this study was to determine what factors contributed to the retention of 4-H volunteers in Northeast Oklahoma. In order to achieve this purpose, the following specific objectives were formulated:

1. To profile volunteers who assisted with 4-H programming in the Northeast District in 1989-90.
2. To identify the extent to which selected factors influence people to become volunteers.
3. To identify the extent to which selected external factors influence volunteer retention.
4. To identify the extent to which selected internal factors influence volunteer retention.
5. To identify factors which may improve volunteer retention.

Population of the Study

The population of the study was comprised of 1,232 4-H volunteers and former volunteers in the Northeast Oklahoma Extension District as indicated by the 1989-90 Oklahoma 4-H volunteer enrollment rolls. A sample of 306 was selected from these rolls in

a proportional manner such that each county in the Northeast District was represented in a number proportional to volunteer enrollment in that county. This was accomplished by use of the following procedure. The volunteer enrollment of each county was divided by the total district enrollment (1,203). This yielded a percentage of total volunteers for each county. These percentages were then multiplied by the sample size (306) to determine the number of questionnaires to be sent to each county. A random sample from each county was then taken from each county's volunteer enrollment list. Of the 306 questionnaires mailed out, 142 were returned. Four (4) were returned unanswered, leaving a total of 138 for use in the study. The overall response rate was 46 percent; however, the usable response rate was 45 percent. Table I indicates the summary of responses to the questionnaire.

TABLE I
RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE

Number Mailed	3-11-93	306
Number returned by	4- 8-93	126
Number mailed in second mailing	2- 9-93	183
Number returned after second mailing		16
Total return		142
Non-useable returns		4
Total usable responses		138
Return percentage		46%
Unseable return percentage		45%

Profile of Respondents

A total of 138 respondents answered a question which sought data regarding volunteer status, tenure and current roles. From the responses, it was found that 67 (48.5 percent) were currently serving as 4-H volunteers and 71 (51.5 percent) were not currently serving as 4-H volunteers.

Of the 71 respondents who were not currently 4-H volunteers, 71 of them (100 percent) had served as 4-H volunteers in the past. Tenure for current volunteers ranged from three to 50 years with an average of 14.05 years. Those not currently serving as volunteers averaged 6.54 years of tenure with a range of one to 25 years. A determination of the current status of all volunteers revealed that 23 (12 percent) were organizational leaders, 19 (10 percent) were project leaders, 15 (8 percent) were activity leaders, 37 (19 percent) were general helpers, 29 (16 percent) were resource persons and 65 (35 percent) were not presently 4-H volunteers. There was a total of 188 responses to this question with some respondents marking more than one reply. Table II contains these responses.

Table III is a report of the makeup of the respondents in terms of gender, age, cultural background and education level. Twenty-six (19 percent) of the respondents were male and 112 (81 percent) were female. The average age was 45.8 years old with a range of 18-81 years. The cultural makeup showed 118 (86.2 percent) were white, one (0.7 percent) was African American, one (0.7 percent) was Asian American and 17 (12.4 percent) were American Indians. Educational levels varied with 39 (29 percent) responding that high school or a

TABLE II

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS IN REGARD TO CURRENT 4-H VOLUNTEER
STATUS, TENURE, AND CURRENT VOLUNTEER ROLE

Currently a 4-H volunteer	Yes: 67	No: 71
If not currently a 4-H volunteer, were you ever a 4-H volunteer	Yes: 71	No: 0
Average tenure of current 4-H volunteers	Years: 14.05 Range: 3-50	
Average tenure of those not currently 4-H volunteers	Years: 6.54 Range: 1-15	
Current volunteer status:	N	Percent
Organizational Leader	23	12
Project Leader	19	10
Activity Leader	15	8
General Helper	37	19
Resource Person	29	16
Not presently a 4-H volunteer	65	35

Note: Some respondents replied more than once to the current status item

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS IN REGARD TO GENDER, AGE, CULTURAL
BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION LEVEL

	N	Percent
Gender		
Male	26	19
Female	112	81
Average Age		
	45.8 years	
	Range: 18-81	
Cultural Background		
White	118	86.2
African American	1	0.7
Asian American	1	0.7
Native American	17	12.4
Hispanic	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
Educational Level		
High School/GED	39	29.0
Vo-Tech/Technical School	14	10.0
Junior College	18	13.0
Bachelor's Degree	31	22.0
Master's Degree	25	18.0
Doctoral Degree	5	4.0
Other	6	4.0

Note: Not all respondents answered all questions

GED was the highest level attained. Fourteen (10 percent) had completed vo-tech or a technical school education. Eighteen (13 percent) were junior college graduates. Bachelors degrees were held by 31 (22 percent), masters degrees by 25 (18 percent) and doctoral degrees by five (4 percent). Six respondents (4 percent) listed

other degrees of education which included business school, eighth grade and not a high school graduate.

The occupational makeup of the sample is shown in Table IV. Only 129 of the respondents listed an occupation. Of these, 35 (27 percent) were educators. Homemakers made up the second largest group with 23 (18 percent). Twenty (15 percent) respondents were listed in the professional group. Nine (7 percent) were clerical and seven (5 percent) were retired. School support, technical and production agriculture each had six respondents (5 percent for each). Public service and health care each had five responses (4 percent). Sales had four responses (3 percent) and student had three responses (2 percent).

TABLE IV
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS IN REGARD TO OCCUPATION

Occupation	N	Percent
Clerical	9	7
Teacher/Education	35	27
School Support	6	5
Professional	20	15
Technical	6	5
Sales	4	3
Public Service	5	4
Homemaker	23	18
Retired	7	5
Production Agriculture	6	5
Health Care	5	4
Student	3	2
	<u>129</u>	<u>100</u>

Note: Not all respondents replied to this item

Respondents were asked to show the degree of influence certain factors had on their decision to become 4-H volunteers. The following scale was used on all questions which asked for respondents to show the degree of influence of certain factors: 1-none; 2-little; 3-some; 4-much and 5-great. To facilitate interpretation of numerical mean responses, real limits were set for each category and are given as follows:

- 1.0 - 1.49: None
- 1.5 - 2.49: Little
- 2.5 - 3.49: Some
- 3.5 - 4.49: Much
- 4.5 - 5.00: Great

Table V was developed to provide insight as to why the respondents became 4-H volunteers in the first place. The overwhelming reason was "having a child involved in 4-H". One-hundred six (82 percent) rated the degree of influence of having a child in 4-H as being "much" or "great" in regard to their becoming 4-H volunteers. The mean response to this item was 4.19, or "much". Respondents indicated that on the average, all of the other factors were of "some" influence on their decision to become 4-H volunteers.

However, in spite of being in the same category, there some differences in the magnitude of the numerical means for these factors. These differences by factor are as follows: "Grew up in 4-H" - 3.13; "Asked by another parent/volunteer" -3.06; "Asked by County Extension staff member" -2.76; and "Asked by a 4-H member" - 2.53. When asked about other possible influential factors, the following were named by the indicated number of respondents: "Being a 4-H volunteer is part of my job" - 8; "Saw a need for 4-H

TABLE V

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR THE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OF CERTAIN
FACTORS AS TO WHY RESPONDENTS BECAME 4-H VOLUNTEERS
N=138*

Factors	Distribution by Degree of Influence										Mean Response
	None		Little		Some		Much		Great		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Child was involved	13	9	4	3	8	6	26	20	80	62	4.19 much
Asked by another parent/ volunteer	26	24	6	5	30	28	26	25	19	18	3.06 some
Asked by 4-H member	35	38	9	10	25	27	10	11	13	14	2.53 much
Asked by County Extension Staff member	36	36	7	7	18	18	21	21	17	18	2.76 some
"Grew up in 4-H"	42	37	1	1	12	11	14	13	43	38	3.13 some
Overall											3.13 some

Note: All respondents did not reply to all items

volunteers" - 4; "Had interest in project area" - 2; "Formation of new 4-H club" - 2; "Positive 4-H experience" -1; "FFA" - 1; "Parents were 4-H leaders" - 1; "My child asked" -1; and "Because of spouse" - 1.

Long-term Relationships

Respondents were asked to rate how important it is for volunteers to establish a long term relationship with the 4-H program. No respondents replied that there is not any importance. Four (3 percent) responded that there is little importance. Twenty-four (18 percent) said there is some importance. Forty-six (34 percent) found there to be much importance and 60 (45 percent) felt it was of great importance for volunteers to establish a long term relationship with the 4-H program. Table VI was developed to provide a summary of these responses. The average response to this question was 4.21, or "much" importance.

Why Volunteers Remain Volunteers

In finding the degree of influence of certain external and internal factors on volunteers remaining in the 4-H program, eight external and nine internal factors were identified for respondents to rate. Among the external factors displayed in Table VII, "Having a child in the program" was the response with the greatest degree of influence on volunteer retention. Ninety-two respondents (69 percent) felt this had a great influence on remaining a volunteer. Twenty-nine respondents (22 percent) said that this had much

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS IN REGARD TO THE DEGREE OF
 IMPORTANCE OF LONG TERM VOLUNTEER RELATIONSHIPS
 N=134*

	<u>Distribution by Degree of Influence</u>										Mean Response
	None		Little		Some		Much		Great		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
How important is it for volunteers to establish a long term relationship with the 4-H program?	0	0	4	3	24	18	46	34	60	45	4.21 much

Note: All respondents did not reply to this question

TABLE VII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR THE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OF CERTAIN
EXTERNAL FACTORS IN THE DECISION TO CONTINUE AS A 4-H VOLUNTEER
N=138*

General Factors	Distribution by Degree of Influence										Mean Response
	None		Little		Some		Much		Great		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Child in program	2	1	2	1	9	7	29	22	92	69	4.54 great
Because of friends	14	11	22	17	50	39	34	27	8	6	2.94 some
Because of recognition they receive	37	28	46	36	29	22	8	6	10	8	2.29 little
Notoriety of being a leader	53	42	47	37	23	18	1	1	2	2	1.86 little
To "Get out of the house"	59	46	30	24	35	28	1	1	1	1	1.85 little
Encouragement from the County Extension Agent	21	16	19	15	60	46	23	28	7	5	2.82 some
Encouragement from other volunteers	17	13	12	9	54	42	39	30	8	6	3.05 some
Monetary gain	102	82	11	8	5	4	4	3	2	1	1.33 none
Overall											2.59 some

Note: All respondents did not reply to all items

influence. Nine (7 percent) replied some, two (1 percent) said little and two (1 percent) felt having a child in the program had no influence on the decision to remain a volunteer. The average response for this factor was 4.54 or a "great" degree of influence.

The second most influential external factor was encouragement from other volunteers. While only eight (6 percent) of respondents found this to be of "great" influence, 93 (72 percent) listed this as of "some" or "much" influence. It received an average rating of 3.05, which fell into the "some" category.

The factor "because of friends" had an average response of 2.94 while "encouragement from the from the County Extension Agent" had an average response of 2.82. Because of these mean responses, these three factors had "some" degree of influence. "Because of the recognition they receive" (average rating 2.29), "notariety of being a leader" (1.86) and "to get out of the house" (1.85) showed "little" degree of influence.

Monetary gain was the only factor which respondents felt had no degree of influence on being a 4-H volunteer. One-hundred two (82 percent) said the degree of influence was "none". Eleven (8 percent) replied "little", five (4 percent) said "some", four (3 percent) said "much" and two (1 percent) said monetary gain was of great influence in the decision to remain a 4-H volunteer. The average response for this factor was 1.33 or none.

Respondents were also asked to add other facotrs to this list. The most common added factor was "to help youth/members" which had ten responses. Other external factors were "community involvement"

(2 responses), "former member", "so few are willing", "parental support", "being a project leader", "helping others succeed" and "part of the job".

The overall average response for all external factors as they influence the decision to remain a volunteer was 2.59. This would indicate that, taken together, the identified external factors have "some" degree of influence on the retention of volunteers.

Table VIII was structured to illustrate responses as to the degree of influence selected internal factors had on the decisions of 4-H volunteers to continue in that capacity. Of the internal factors identified, "satisfaction of working with 4-H members" had an average rating of 4.19, or "much". One-hundred ten responses (85 percent) fell into either the "great" or "much" category. "4-H is a unique learning experience" and "like being affiliated with 4-H" had virtually the same degree of influence with an average rating of 4.03 and 4.02 respectively, both of which were interpreted as "much". "It is an interesting experience" had a rating of 3.91, while "enjoyment of volunteer work" rated 3.89. All of the above internal factors had "much" influence on the decision to remain a 4-H volunteer.

"Enjoyment of competitive events" and "loyalty to the organization" were both found to have "some" degree of influence with average responses of 3.44 and 3.43 respectively. "Someone has to do it" was of "little" influence with a 2.44 response as was "like to be in charge" with a 1.86 response. The overall average response to the selected internal factors was 3.47 which falls into

TABLE VIII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR THE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OF CERTAIN INTERNAL
FACTORS IN THE DECISION TO CONTINUE AS A 4-H VOLUNTEER
N=138*

Internal Factors	Distribution by Degree of Influence										Mean Response
	None		Little		Some		Much		Great		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
It is an interesting experience	1	1	6	5	30	23	59	46	33	25	3.91 much
Like being affiliated with 4-H	0	0	1	1	25	30	72	56	30	23	4.02 much
Satisfaction of working with 4-H members	0	0	3	2	17	13	62	48	48	37	4.19 much
Some has to do it	33	26	38	30	29	23	19	15	7	6	2.44 little
Loyalty to the organization	8	6	15	12	41	31	45	35	21	16	3.43 some
Enjoyment of volunteer work	1	1	6	4	32	24	62	47	32	24	3.89 much
4-H is a unique learning experinece	0	0	10	8	24	18	50	38	48	36	4.03 much
Enjoyment of competitive events	7	5	15	12	44	34	42	32	22	17	3.44 some
Like to be in charge	56	44	36	28	31	25	2	2	1	1	1.86 little
Overall											3.46 some

*Note: All respondents did not reply to all items

the "some" degree of influence category.

Other factors that respondents shared were "fulfillment/pleasure" (8 responses), "love of youth" (2), "enjoyment", and "to learn useful things".

Why Volunteers Discontinue Serving

In trying to determine why volunteers choose not to continue in the 4-H program, eight external (Table IX) and seven internal (Table X) factors were identified which the respondents rated on the degree of influence of each one.

As can be determined by inspection of data in Table IX, the most influential external factor related to volunteers leaving the 4-H program was for their child to leave the program. Sixty-four respondents (48 percent) said this had a "great" degree of influence, while 41 (29 percent) said it had "much" influence. The average response was 4.17, or "much". Lack of time was the second most influential factor with 90 responses (69 percent) falling in the "much" or "great" category. The average response was 4.00, again "much". Employment factors - the person went to work or was working more - had an average rating of 3.78, or "much". The same was true for lack of support by other parents/volunteers with a rating of 3.70; and ill health showed a response of 3.53. All of the five highest rated factors were felt to have "much" influence on the decision to not remain a 4-H volunteer.

Of "some" degree of influence were lack of support from county staff (average rating 2.86) and lack of quality training. Lack of

TABLE IX

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR THE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OF CERTAIN EXTERNAL
FACTORS IN THE DECISION TO NOT CONTINUE AS A 4-H VOLUNTEER
N=138*

External Factors	<u>Distribution by Degree of Influence</u>										Mean Response
	None		Little		Some		Much		Great		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Went to work (or working more)	12	9	5	4	27	21	41	32	44	34	3.78 much
Child leaves program	2	1	6	5	23	17	38	29	64	48	4.17 much
Ill health	11	9	11	9	40	32	28	22	36	28	3.53 much
Lack of support from county staff	12	9	14	11	50	40	30	24	20	16	2.86 some
Lack of support from other parents/volunteers	7	5	11	9	36	27	37	28	40	31	3.70 much
Lack of time	3	2	4	3	34	26	39	30	51	39	4.00 much
Lack of formal recognition	44	35	57	46	15	12	5	4	4	3	1.90 little
Lack of quality training	24	19	41	33	41	33	9	7	11	8	2.54 some
Overall											3.31 some

Note: All respondents did not replay to all items

TABLE X

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES FOR THE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OF CERTAIN INTERNAL
FACTORS IN THE DECISION TO NOT CONTINUE AS A 4-H VOLUNTEER
N=138*

Internal Factors	Distribution by Degree of Influence										Mean Response
	None		Little		Some		Much		Great		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Lost interest	4	3	24	19	56	44	24	19	20	15	3.25 some
Too many responsibilities	6	4	16	12	48	35	40	30	25	19	3.46 some
Did not enjoy the volunteer experience	23	18	40	31	38	30	15	12	12	9	2.63 some
Became disappointed with the 4-H program	20	16	35	27	44	34	14	11	15	12	2.76 some
Too much competition	38	30	48	37	29	23	10	8	3	2	2.16 little
Too little competition	48	38	54	43	21	17	0	0	3	2	1.86 little
Did not feel comfortable with the volunteer experience	33	27	39	31	33	27	10	8	9	7	2.38 little
Overall											2.64 some

Note: All respondents did not reply to all items

formal recognition (1.94) was of "little" influence. The overall average response for external factors' influence on the decision to discontinue as a 4-H volunteer was 3.32 which translates to "some" degree of influence.

Other factors noted by respondents were "friction among parents", "friction among members" (2 responses), "lack of interest", "one parent families", "parents who take over the entire program", "no learning experiences", "lack of help", "conflict with other parents" and "lack of orientation".

Data collected regarding degree of influence of certain internal factors on decisions to discontinue service as a 4-H volunteer are reported in Table X. With an overall average response of 2.64 (some), internal factors showed a lower degree of influence on the decision not to remain a 4-H volunteer. Too many responsibilities had a mean rating of 3.46, or "some", with 48 frequent responses as grouped by the researcher with responding (35 percent) "some" and 40 respondents (30 percent) indicating "much". The loss of interest had a rating of 3.25, "some". "Disappointment with the 4-H program" with a 2.76 mean response and "lack of enjoyment from the volunteer experience" with a 2.63 mean response showed "some" degree of influence. "Not feeling comfortable with the volunteer experience" had "little" influence on the decision not to remain a 4-H volunteer as indicated by the mean response of 2.38. There were two factors relating to competition. Both were found to have "little" influence on volunteer retention. "Too much competition" had a response of 2.16 and "too little competition" had a response of 1.86.

Other factors shared by volunteers were "burn out", "was not appreciated", "conflict with other parents" and "other responsibilities".

Volunteers were asked to identify the most important reason why people continue to serve as volunteers. The most frequent categories of responses as summarized by the researcher and number providing each were:

- Children involved - 35 responses
- Satisfaction of working with 4-H members - 34
- To help children - 16
- Dedication to youth - 9
- Benefits to youth - 6
- Rewarding experience - 4
- Loyalty to the program - 3
- Family involvement - 3
- Importance of the 4-H program - 3
- Enjoy 4-H - 3

Volunteers were also asked to identify the most important reason why people discontinue serving as 4-H volunteers. The most frequent responses as grouped by the researcher were:

- Child leaves program - 47 responses
- Lack of time - 28
- Lack of support - 16
- Burn out - 7
- Lack of interest - 6
- Employment concerns - 6
- Overbearing leaders - 5
- Different volunteer work - 3
- Competition is unfair - 3

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the study and to report selected factors that influenced volunteer retention in Northeast Oklahoma 4-H volunteers. Also presented are conclusions and recommendations which are based upon the analysis of data collected and impressions from the conduct of the study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the relative importance of selected factors as perceived by 4-H volunteers for the retention of volunteers.

Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following objectives were established:

1. To profile volunteers who assisted with 4-H programming in the Northeast District in 1989-90.
2. To identify the extent to which selected factors influence people to become 4-H volunteers.
3. To identify the extent to which selected external factors influence volunteer retention.
4. To identify the extent to which selected internal factors influence volunteer retention.

5. To identify factors which improve volunteer retention.

Need for the Study

The development of an effective volunteer corp is dependent upon recruitment, training and retention. Research has been conducted determining the recruitment and training needs of CES in relation to volunteers, however, it would appear little research has been completed in the area of volunteer retention. Volunteer retention is essential in order to staff and provide leadership to the 4-H program as well as provide for continuity within the 4-H program.

Design and Conduct of the Study

The design and conduct of this study were dictated by both the purpose and objectives of the study. In order to obtain the information necessary to complete the study, it was necessary to complete the following steps:

- 1) Determine the geographic area of the population of the study.
- 2) Develop a suitable instrument that would furnish the needed information.
- 3) Secure the names and addresses of the population to be used.
- 4) Select the most appropriate method for analyzing the data collected.

The population of the study consisted of 4-H volunteers in the Northeast Oklahoma Extension District who were registered on the Oklahoma 4-H volunteer rolls for the 1989-90 4-H year. A sample of 306, proportional for each county, was selected. A mailed questionnaire was sent to each person in the sample asking them to rate the degree of influence of certain factors on volunteer retention. They were also asked to provide certain demographic information. One-hundred thirty-eight (138) useable responses were received for the study.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

From the analysis of responses, it was found that:

- 1) 48.5 percent of those who were 4-H volunteers in 1989-90 were still volunteers in the spring of 1993.
- 2) The average tenure for those who were still volunteers was 14.05 years, while the average tenure for those who were no longer volunteers was 6.54 years.
- 3) Eighty-one percent of all volunteers were female; 86.2 percent were white.
- 4) The average age of volunteers was 41.8 years in 1989.
- 5) Fifty-three percent of 4-H volunteers had at least a bachelors degree.
- 6) Twenty-seven percent of volunteers were are employed in the field of education, either as a teacher or administrator. 18 percent were homemakers.

7) Having a child involved in the 4-H program was of much or great influence to 82 percent of the respondents.

8) Being asked by another parent/volunteer, asked by a 4-H member, asked by the County Extension Staff and growing up in 4-H had some influence on becoming a leader.

Importance of Long Term Relationship with 4-H

1) Respondents said that it is of "much" importance for volunteers to establish a long term relationship with the 4-H program.

External Factors that Influence Volunteer Retention

The external factors as they relate to volunteers remaining in the program are listed below by rank order with the average response to each:

Great Influence

1. Child in program (4.54).

Some Influence

1. Encouragement from other volunteers (3.05).
2. Because of friends (2.94).
3. Encouragement from County Extension Staff (2.82).

Little Influence

1. Because of recognition they receive (2.29).
2. Notoriety of being a leader (1.86).

3. To get out of the house (1.85).

No Influence

1. Monetary gain (1.33).

The external factors as they relate to volunteers discontinuing service with the 4-H program are listed below by rank order with the average response to each:

Much Influence

1. Child leaves program (4.17).
2. Lack of time (4.00).
3. Went to work or working more (3.78).
4. Lack of support from other parents/volunteers (3.70).
5. Ill health (3.53).

Some Influence

1. Lack of support from county staff (2.86).
2. Lack of quality training (2.54).

Little Influence

1. Lack of formal training (1.94).

Internal Factors That Influence

Volunteer Retention

Internal factors had a higher degree of influence on volunteers remaining with the 4-H program than on volunteers leaving the 4-H program. The internal factors as they relate to volunteers remaining in the program are listed below by rank order with average responses listed:

Much Influence

1. Satisfaction of working with 4-H members (4.19).
2. 4-H is a unique learning experience (4.03).
3. Like being affiliated with 4-H (4.02).
4. It is an interesting experience (3.91).
5. Enjoyment of volunteer work (3.89).

Some Influence

1. Enjoyment of competitive events (3.44).
2. Loyalty to the organization (3.43).

Little Influence

1. Someone has to do it (2.44).
2. Like to be in charge (1.86).

The internal factors as they relate to volunteers leaving the 4-H program are listed below by rank order with average responses listed:

Some Influence

1. Too many responsibilities (3.46).
2. Lost interest (3.25).
3. Became disappointed with the 4-H program (2.76).
4. Did not enjoy the volunteer experience (2.63).

Little Influence

1. Did not feel comfortable with the volunteer experience (2.38).
2. Too much competition (2.16).
3. Too little competition (1.86).

In asking respondents to identify the most important reasons for volunteers to remain volunteers, the two main factors were having a child in the program and satisfaction of working with 4-H members. When asked the most important reason for discontinuing 4-H volunteer service, having a child leave the program and lack of time were the most important factors.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were made based on the analysis of data from this study:

- 1) The typical 4-H volunteer was white, female, 41 years old and either a teacher or a homemaker.
- 2) People are most likely to become volunteers if they have a child in the program.
- 3) Extension personnel should work to increase traditional enrollment in the 4-H program which in turn should provide a larger number of potential 4-H volunteers.
- 4) While the "lifetime" volunteer is important, the tenure of the typical volunteer is usually for as long as he/she has a child in the program.
- 5) External factors have a larger degree of influence on the whole than internal factors in regard to volunteers discontinuing 4-H volunteer service.
- 6) Having a child in the program is the most important external factor that relates to volunteer retention.

7) Internal factors that contribute greatly to volunteer retention include satisfaction of working with members, affiliation and the uniqueness of the learning experience.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were based on the analysis of data obtained from the study, the review of literature and the personal experiences of the writer as an extension agent working with the 4-H program.

- 1) Conduct similar studies to this one in other districts in Oklahoma to determine the reliability of this study.
- 2) Extension agents and administrators should continue efforts to recruit and retain volunteers, keeping in mind that the most influential factors concerning volunteer retention relate to volunteers having a child in the program.
- 3) Extension agents should strive to provide a high quality program that will provide volunteer satisfaction.
- 4) Extension agents should target non-volunteer parents in volunteer recruitment efforts.
- 5) CES should put more emphasis on the 4-H program and its' volunteer programs.

TABLE XI

SUMMARY COMPARISON OF DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OF SELECTED
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS ON CONTINUED SERVICE
AS A 4-H VOLUNTEER

Degree of influence	Factors and Mean Ratings	
	<u>External</u>	
Great	Child in program -	4.54
Some	Encouragement of other volunteers -	3.05
	Because of friends - 2.94	
	Encouragement from County Extension Staff -	2.82
Little	Because of recognition they receive -	2.29
	Notoriety of being a leader -	1.86
	To "Get out of the House" -	1.85
None	Monetary gain -	1.33
	<u>Internal</u>	
Much	Satisfaction of working with 4-H members -	4.19
	4-H is a unique learning experience -	4.03
	Like being affiliated with 4-H -	4.02
	4-H is an interesting experience -	3.91
	Enjoyment of volunteer work -	3.89
Some	Enjoyment of competitive events -	3.44
	Loyalty to the organization -	3.43
Little	Someone has to do it -	2.44
	Like to be in charge -	1.86

TABLE XII

SUMMARY COMPARISON OF DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OF SELECTED INTERNAL
AND EXTERNAL FACTORS ON DISCONTINUING SERVICE
AS A 4-H VOLUNTEER

Degree of influence	Factors and Mean Ratings	
	<u>External</u>	
Much	Child leaves program -	4.17
	Lack of time -	4.00
	Went to work or working more -	3.78
	Lack of support from other parents/volunteers -	3.70
	Ill health -	3.53
Some	Lack of support from county staff -	2.86
	Lack of quality training -	2.54
Little	Lack of formal recognition -	1.94
	<u>Internal</u>	
Some	Too many responsibilities -	3.46
	Lost interest -	3.25
	Became disappointed with 4-H -	2.76
	Did not enjoy the volunteer experience -	2.63
Little	Did not feel comfortable with the volunteer experience -	2.38
	Too much competition -	2.16
	Too little competition -	1.86

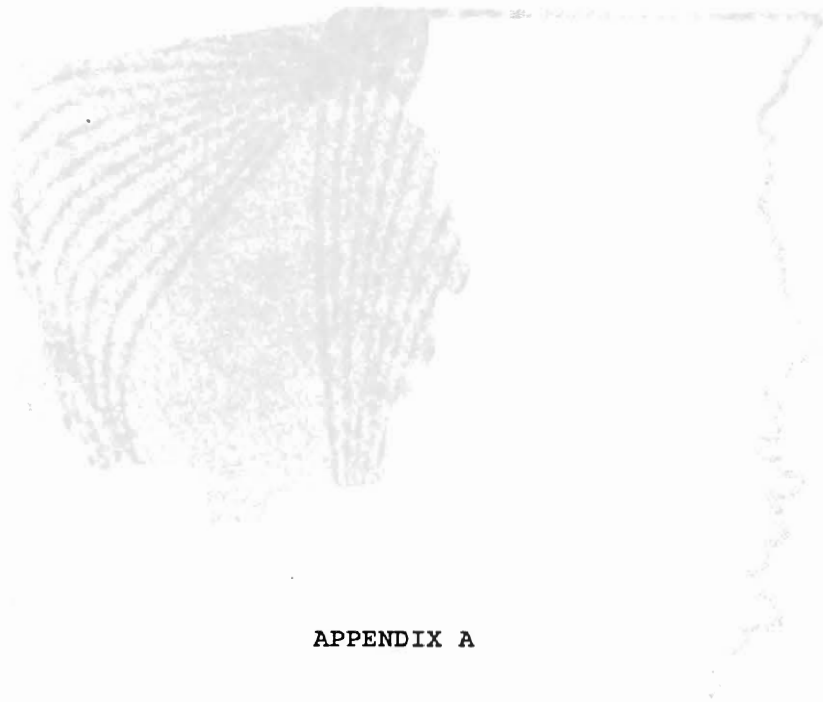
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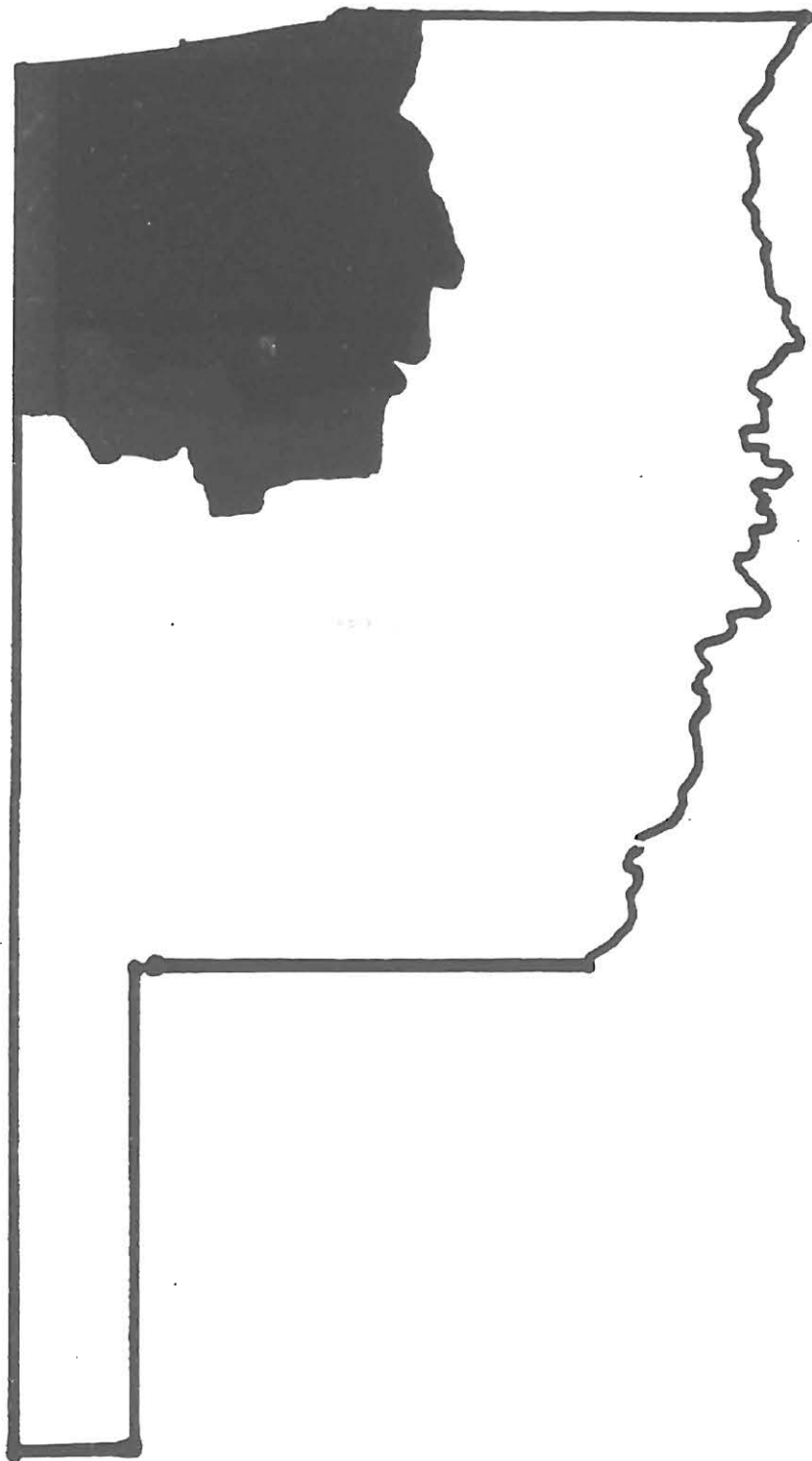
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APPENDIXES



APPENDIX A

NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA EXTENSION DISTRICT



APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

Volunteer Retention Questionnaire

4-H Volunteer: "Anyone who gives their time and effort to benefit the 4-H program."

This questionnaire is made up of three sections. The first section deals with general questions about you as a volunteer. Section II deals with specific questions about volunteer retention. The third section has to do with demographics so that we can build a profile of all respondents. Section III is optional. All replies will be compiled and then the individual questionnaires will be destroyed in order to maintain confidentiality.

Section I

1. Are you currently a 4-H volunteer? yes no
 If "yes", how long have you been a volunteer? _____
 If "no", were you ever a 4-H volunteer? yes no
 If "yes", how long were you a volunteer? _____

2. What degree of influence did the following have on you becoming a 4-H volunteer?

	none	little	some	much	great
a. My child was involved	___	___	___	___	___
b. I was asked by another parent or volunteer	___	___	___	___	___
c. I was asked by a 4-H member	___	___	___	___	___
d. I was asked by a member of the county extension staff	___	___	___	___	___
e. I "Grew up in 4-H"	___	___	___	___	___
f. Other (list) _____	___	___	___	___	___

3. How important is it for volunteers to establish a long-term relationship with the 4-H program?

	none	little	some	much	great
	___	___	___	___	___

4. What is your present 4-H volunteer role?
 - organizational leader
 - project leader
 - activity leader
 - general helper
 - resource person
 - not presently a 4-H volunteer

Section II

This section deals with why people remain volunteers or chose not to continue in the 4-H volunteer program. After each question is a list of statements. Indicate your feelings toward each statement using the scale provided.

1. The following is a list of external factors which relate to volunteerism. To what extent do you feel each affects a person to CONTINUE serving as a 4-H volunteer?

	none	little	some	much	great
a. Having a child in the program	___	___	___	___	___
b. Because of friends	___	___	___	___	___
c. Because of the recognition they receive	___	___	___	___	___

Section II, question 1 continued

- | | none | little | some | much | great |
|--|------|--------|------|------|-------|
| d. Notariety of being a leader | — | — | — | — | — |
| e. To "Get out of the house" | — | — | — | — | — |
| f. Encouragement from the County Extension Agent | — | — | — | — | — |
| g. Encouragement from other volunteers | — | — | — | — | — |
| h. Monetary gain | — | — | — | — | — |
| i. Other (please specify) _____ | — | — | — | — | — |
2. The following is a list of internal factors which relate to volunteerism. To what extent do you feel each affects a person to CONTINUE serving as a 4-H volunteer?
- | | none | little | some | much | great |
|---|------|--------|------|------|-------|
| a. It is an interesting experience | — | — | — | — | — |
| b. Like being affiliated with 4-H | — | — | — | — | — |
| c. Satisfaction of working with 4-H members | — | — | — | — | — |
| d. Someone has to do it | — | — | — | — | — |
| e. Loyalty to the organization | — | — | — | — | — |
| f. Enjoyment of volunteer work | — | — | — | — | — |
| g. 4-H is a unique learning experience | — | — | — | — | — |
| h. Enjoyment of competitive events | — | — | — | — | — |
| i. Like to be in charge | — | — | — | — | — |
| j. Other (please specify) _____ | — | — | — | — | — |
3. The following is a another list of external factors. To what extent do you feel each affects a person to DISCONTINUE serving as a 4-H volunteer?
- | | none | little | some | much | great |
|--|------|--------|------|------|-------|
| a. Went to work (or working more) | — | — | — | — | — |
| b. Child leaves program | — | — | — | — | — |
| c. Ill health | — | — | — | — | — |
| d. Lack of support from county staff | — | — | — | — | — |
| e. Lack of support from other parents and volunteers | — | — | — | — | — |
| f. Lack of time | — | — | — | — | — |
| g. Lack of formal recognition | — | — | — | — | — |
| h. Lack of quality training | — | — | — | — | — |
| i. Other (please specify) _____ | — | — | — | — | — |
4. The following is another list of internal factors. To what extent do you feel each affects a person to DISCONTINUE serving as a 4-H volunteer?
- | | none | little | some | much | great |
|---|------|--------|------|------|-------|
| a. Lost interest | — | — | — | — | — |
| b. Too many responsibilities | — | — | — | — | — |
| c. Did not enjoy the volunteer experience | — | — | — | — | — |
| d. Became disappointed with the 4-H program | — | — | — | — | — |
| e. Too much competition | — | — | — | — | — |
| f. Too little competition | — | — | — | — | — |
| g. Did not feel comfortable with the volunteer experience | — | — | — | — | — |
| h. Other (please specify) _____ | — | — | — | — | — |

5. Please list the most important reason why people continue serving as 4-H volunteers. _____
6. Please list the most important reason why people discontinue serving as 4-H volunteers. _____

Section III

This section deals with information that will assist us in forming a profile of all respondents. This section is optional.

1. Gender: male female
2. Birth year: _____
3. Cultural background: white african american asian american
 native american hispanic other
4. Occupation: _____
5. Highest education level completed:
 - high school/GED
 - vo-tech/technical school
 - junior college
 - college- highest degree received: _____
 - other (please specify) _____

Thank you very much for your responses. Please return this questionnaire to:

Randy Burris
County Extension Agriculture Agent
P.O. Box 191
Eufaula, OK 74432

APPENDIX C

CORRESPONDENCE

Chandler, OK

Dear Present/Former 4-H Volunteer,

My name is Randy Burris and I am a County Extension Agent and a graduate student at OSU. As part of my Masters studies, I am conducting a study on volunteer retention in the 4-H program. The main focus is on why people remain 4-H volunteers and why some chose not to remain. Enclosed you will find a questionnaire dealing with volunteer retention. I would appreciate it if you would fill it out and return it to me.

In order to maintain confidentiality, please do not sign the form. If you notice, the return envelopes are numbered, but this is only so that I can keep track of who has responded. I will not in any way try to match the responses to individual persons. When you are finished, please place the survey in the enclosed stamped envelope and drop it in the mail. Even if you chose not to respond, please return the form so that I know that you received it.

Now, in case you wonder how you were chosen to take part in this study, your name was randomly chosen from the 1989-90 4-H volunteer roles for the Northeast District.

In closing, I would like to point out that as far as I know, this is the first study that has ever looked at volunteer retention in Oklahoma from the volunteer's point of view. Hopefully this information will be used to develop better volunteer training. I thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,




Randy Burris
9087 Gibson Place
Chandler, OK 74834

March 26, 1993
Chandler, OK 74834

Dear Present/Former 4-H Volunteer,

I just wanted to follow up on the letter I sent you a couple of weeks ago. I have received quite a few questionnaires back. If you have not returned yours, I would appreciate it if you would go ahead and do so. (I have even enclosed another one just in case you misplaced the other one) If you have already sent yours back, thank you very much. I feel that the information provided by this survey will be very useful in the future.

Sincerely,


Randy Burris
9087 Gibson Place
Chandler, OK 74834

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF DALLAS
I, _____, Clerk of the County of Dallas, Texas, do hereby certify that the within and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original as the same appears in the records of the County of Dallas, Texas.

APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

Date: 03-03-93

IRB#: AG-93-016

Proposal Title: FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RETENTION OF 4-H
VOLUNTEERS IN NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA AS PERCEIVED BY 4-H VOLUNTEERS

Principal Investigator(s): Robert Terry, Randell W. Burris

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW
BOARD AT NEXT MEETING.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A
CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR
BOARD APPROVAL. ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO
BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for
Deferral or Disapproval are as follows:

Comments:

A cover letter should be attached to the questionnaire which
explains the purpose and procedures, confidentiality, and
benefits of the study.

Signature:

Maria S. Tilley
Chair of Institutional Review Board

Date: March 5, 1993

VITA ²

Randell Wayne Burris

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RETENTION OF 4-H VOLUNTEERS IN
NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA AS PERCEIVED BY 4-H VOLUNTEERS

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Norman, Oklahoma, September 29, 1958
the son of Claud and Naomi Burris. Married to Robyn K.
Burris with one daughter, Chelsea Elisabeth.

Education: Graduated from Norman High School, Norman, Oklahoma
in May, 1976; received Bachelor of Science degree from
Oklahoma State University in May, 1980, completed
requirements for the Master of Science degree from
Oklahoma State University in July, 1993.

Professional Experience: County Extension 4-H Agent, Lincoln
County, 1980 to 1992. County Extension Agricultural Agent
and CED, McIntosh County, 1993 to present.

Professional Organizations: National Association of County
Agricultural Agents, Oklahoma Association of County
Agricultural Agents.