

CHARACTERISTICS RELATED TO RETENTION
AND DROPOUT OF TEENAGE
4-H YOUTH IN OKLAHOMA

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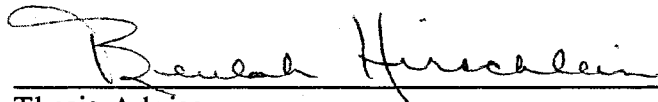
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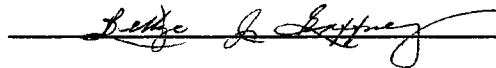
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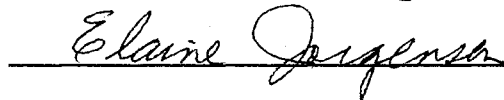
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The world's largest informal educational program for young people today is 4-H (Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, ECOP, 1984). Four-H, an integral part of the Cooperative Extension Service, is the only youth organization which combines county governments, state land grant universities, and the United States Department of Agriculture as a support base. This diversified base of support contributes to the organization's qualifications in meeting both the constant and everchanging needs of youth. Membership in the 4-H program is available to all interested youth, ages 9-19, regardless of race, sex, creed, national origin, or handicap.

Over half a million of volunteer leaders give extensive time, talents, and personal resources to support 4-H. They provide healthy, adult-youth relationships, teach skills, and supervise and encourage youth (Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, ECOP, 1977). Local Extension staff, known as 4-H Agents, recruit and train volunteers and coordinate the total county 4-H youth program.

The mission of the 4-H organization is 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, 1982). The mission, as stated, has guided 4-H throughout its history.

The purpose of 4-H is to create an environment that stimulates the development of life skills. These life skills may be categorized as three types:

- * Competency - acquiring subject matter skills and knowledge in certain areas of agriculture, home economics, science and technology.
- * Coping - acquiring a positive self-concept and learning to respect and get along with other people.
- * Contributory - learning and practicing leadership skills and fulfilling leadership roles (ECOP, 1984).

The components of the 4-H program are designed to assist youth in making future plans and sound decisions in the areas of: (1) economics, jobs, and careers; (2) animal, plant, and social sciences; (3) environment and natural resources; (4) home and family resources; (5) health and safety; (6) leadership, citizenship, educational and community development; and (7) mechanical sciences and energy (ECOP, 1977).

Background of the Problem

Since its start prior to World War I, 4-H has been an active youth organization in each state in the nation. In 1943, the number of young people participating in 4-H projects was well over one million per year, reaching a peak of 1.6 million. By 1945, the number of youth successfully completing a project was over 76 percent, but statistics also indicated some internal problems. Retention rates in 4-H were relatively low. That is, fewer young people stayed in 4-H for very long periods; the average length of membership was only 2.4 years. In 1945, statistics indicated that 30 percent of the membership was young people who had participated less than one year. An additional 25 percent was second year members. After the second year of club work, enrollment dropped rapidly. Members with four years of experience numbered less than 10 percent and those with six years of experience were less than 3 percent. A study conducted in 1951 indicated that the retention rate was related directly to the ability of a young

person to complete a project. Members who successfully completed projects in the first year accounted for 72 percent of those who re-enrolled in 4-H while the re-enrollment rate for those who failed to complete a first year project was only 28 percent. In 1960, the average length of membership was still less than three years (Wessel, 1982).

In 1962, an ad hoc group of the Subcommittee on 4-H of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, ECOP, investigated the retention problems and recommended two major changes. The first recommendation included changing the age limits for 4-H membership from 10 to 21 years to 9 to 19 years. The second recommendation divided 4-H club and projects into three age levels: 9 to 11 years, 12 to 14 years, and 15 to 19 years. The key idea was to design programs to advance in accordance with the development of young people as they mature. While age grading did not solve all the problems of retention, it probably resulted in more effective programs for young people participating in 4-H (Wessel, 1982).

Even though many years have passed since the evolution of the 4-H program, retention of youth still remains a major concern of administration. The Federal Extension Service and Oklahoma Extension Service annual reports (Cooperative Extension Service, 1988) indicate that enrollment figures decrease as age increases. For the year 1988, the enrollment figures for 13-19 year olds in organized clubs in Oklahoma ranged from 3,180 at 13 years of age, down to 37 at 19 years and older. National data reflect the same trend as county and state data.

As 4-H members approach adolescence, many receive less satisfaction from the program. Only a small number of teens re-enroll and remain active in the 4-H program. The tendency of teenagers to drop out constitutes a serious loss to the organization as many have acquired knowledge and skills in 4-H projects and leadership that could be shared with younger members. They are indeed a very

valuable resource to the organization and retaining them as members would significantly enrich the 4-H program.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify characteristics and perceptions of Oklahoma youth, ages 13-19, who continued as 4-H members and those who did not.

Objectives of the Study

In order to accomplish the purpose of this study, the research was directed toward the following specific objectives:

1. To identify characteristics of teens who re-enroll in 4-H and those who discontinue their membership.
2. To identify the perceptions of the 4-H program among enrolled and non-enrolled members.
3. To identify or formulate recommendations, based on this study, that might be useful for encouraging teens to remain enrolled in the Oklahoma 4-H program.

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were developed to guide this study. They were as follows:

Hypothesis I: There will be no differences in the characteristics of members who continue in 4-H and those who do not.

Hypothesis II: There will be no differences in the perceptions of 4-H among members who continue in 4-H and those who do not.

Basic Assumptions of the Study

The basic assumptions of this research study were that teenagers enrolled in 4-H value their 4-H learning experiences and would be willing to share their opinions and preferences with the researcher. The second assumption was that a reliable and valid questionnaire would be an efficient method of obtaining data for the study. The third assumption was that the responses made by the participants of this study would provide useful information for making recommendations to the State 4-H Director and 4-H Program Specialists in Oklahoma.

Scope of the Study

The research study population was limited to counties having at least one or more Extension 4-H Agents working 100 percent time with the 4-H Program. The counties selected at random and included in the study were Lincoln, Tulsa, Kay, Garfield, Pittsburg, Pontotoc, Oklahoma, Cleveland, Jackson, and Stephens.

The study was limited to 600 members 13-19 years of age and older. Questionnaires were mailed to 300 members who were currently enrolled in the 1988-89 4-H year and 300 members who had discontinued membership from 1987-88. The members were randomly selected from the 1989 4-H membership rolls in each of the ten counties. The nonmembers were selected by comparing the 1987-88 membership rolls to the 1988-89 membership rolls in each of the ten counties.

Definition of Terms

Four-H - A youth development program which utilizes a variety of program methods and projects to reach and teach youth 9-19 years of age regardless of race, sex, creed, national origin, or handicap.

Four-H Member - A boy or girl between 9-19 years of age who was enrolled in a 4-H club in Oklahoma during the 1988-89 membership year.

Nonmember - A boy or girl between 9-19 years of age who had been enrolled in a 4-H club in Oklahoma during 1987-88 but did not reenroll in 1988-89.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Age Levels of Adolescence

Adolescence can be one of the most difficult phases for the individual, his or her parents and others associated with that person. It is a time of transition where the young person is no longer a child, nor a fully responsible, mature adult.

Adolescence can be divided into three stages of development covering the years of ages eleven to seventeen and beyond. Early adolescence, ages eleven to fourteen, brings the immediate response to puberty's physical and hormonal changes. Young people spill over with energy and intensity, switch moods, behave unpredictably and develop a new ability to think abstractly about things they have never personally experienced (Kaplan, 1983). By this stage young people have become increasingly eager and able to direct their own lives within reasonable bounds. At the same time, they need to feel a part of and belong to an intimate group of their own age and sex (Oklahoma 4-H Leaders Guide, 1978).

Middle adolescence, ages fifteen to seventeen, brings about more complex and subtle ways of relating to one another. Young people become more at ease with their bodies, their own abilities and talents and practicing new skills. They initiate and carry out tasks without adult supervision (Kaplan, 1983).

From age seventeen onward late adolescence lasts until an indefinite point when the individuals initiate responsibility and accept themselves as unique persons. Older adolescents are able to make major choices about life's work and begin to make their lives move forward in desirable ways (Kaplan, 1983).

Socialization of Youth

Adolescence brings about many changes in social expectations. This is an age when family becomes less important and peers become very influential in offering advice and understanding. Parents are no longer considered as the only resource in their lives. This does not mean that parents' values are still not influential, but their importance is usually reduced (Anyan & Schowater, 1979).

Peer groups play an important role in the lives of adolescents. By belonging to peer group's they feel a sense of security knowing they are accepted and recognized as a unique person. The peer groups approval is important to them because it helps them to establish an identity apart from their parents.

The peer group offers adolescents the chance to develop social skills. Through developing relationships with friends, whether male or female, they are learning important characteristics of loyalty, trust, empathy, and confidentiality. Most like sharing their experiences and concerns with others who they feel really understand. The adolescent looks to the peer group for support, safety, and companionship (Kaplan, 1983).

The adolescent also needs confirmation of his own self-worth. Therefore, popularity and status become very important to youth of these ages, and they often join clubs on the basis of who belongs and what status the club holds in their group (Bell, 1975). Adolescents want to belong to groups that will help them cope with these kind of challenges: learning how to make friends and be a friend, discovering their individuality, learning what's right and wrong and learning how to deal with their own sexuality (Daugherty & Daly, 1984).

Peer groups help adolescents establish values, attitudes, and behaviors in many areas of their life. Their advice becomes important in the selection of friends, styles of clothing, dating relationships, and social activities. Peer

approval and friends help them develop confidence and build self-esteem while trying to succeed in becoming independent young adults (Kaplan, 1983).

Developmental Needs of Youth

All people, whether children, adolescents, or adults, share basic needs which must be met if they are to enjoy a smooth progression through life.

According to The Oklahoma 4-H Leaders Guide (Cooperative Extension Service, 1978) the following list of basic needs are common to both boys and girls:

1. They want to belong. Part of their feeling of personal worth is gained from the value that others place on them.
2. They want to achieve. They need tasks that are challenging but within their reach.
3. They want to become independent and need a chance to make decisions.
4. They want experience and adventure. This need can be met through meeting new friends, sharing new ideas and gaining new responsibilities.
5. They want love and affection. (p. 8)

The needs vary according to the individual 4-H member's age, background, socioeconomic status, and level of maturity.

Maslow (1970) placed the five levels of needs in a formal framework referred to as the hierarchy of needs. The needs were categorized according to their level of importance. A brief description of the five categories of needs was summarized:

1. Physiological Needs - The basic physical needs for food, water, air, shelter, rest, elimination, and sexual satisfaction. These needs are usually taken as the starting point for motivation.

2. Safety Needs - The need to be safe from harm, to have security, stability, protection, and freedom from anxiety and chaos.
3. Belongingness and Love Needs - The need for love and affection or closeness with others; to be liked. Organizations such as 4-H usually provide opportunities to satisfy these social needs through affiliation with their peers.
4. Esteem Needs - The need to be recognized as a person of value. These needs may be classified into two subsidiary sets. First, the desire for strength, achievement, competence, and confidence. Second, the desire for reputation or prestige, status, recognition, dignity, and appreciation. 4-H members receive rewards through the recognition and awards system utilized at the county, district, state, and national level.
5. Self-Actualization Needs - The highest need, which Maslow called life's "peak experience". The highest level of Maslow's hierarchy was related to a man striving to become what he was capable of becoming. At this level, individual differences are greatest. Self actualization meant setting goals and reaching to your fullest potential. A 4-H member can recognize and utilize his or her own talent and creative ability in accomplishing one's goals.

Another theory, related to motivation is Frederick Herzberg's Motivation - Hygiene theory. Herzberg (1947) separates factors affecting people into two categories: hygiene factors and motivators.

Hygiene factors include things related to the work environment such as supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations, status, security and money. Herzberg (1947) refers to the motivators as satisfying factors that involve feelings of achievement, professional growth, and recognition. These relate to the

job itself and include: achievement; recognition for accomplishment; challenging work, increased responsibility, and growth and development.

As we review Herzberg's (1947) Motivators we realize that members enrolled in the 4-H club program could experience one or more of these motivators as they complete projects and advance in club work.

Similar Studies

"In his quest to satisfy his needs and wants, man has found that many of them are best satisfied through group affiliation and action" (Beal, Bohlen & Raudabaugh, 1962 p. 64). Beal et al revealed that youth join groups for different reasons. When asked why they joined the group, they gave different answers.

Beal et al listed the following reasons for group membership:

1. Some members join groups to enhance their status.
2. Some join because of a value placed on their service, for example, wanting to help other people.
3. Some members value the contacts with other members of the group.
4. Some join because of traditional reasons, for example, their mother or father was an active member.
5. Some members join because of friendships with other members of the group.
6. A few members join because they are lonely.
7. Some members join because of specific activities, projects, and experiences of the group.
8. Some join because of the influence of leaders in the group. (p. 69)

Many of the basic needs of people were best satisfied through group membership. While the great majority of people belonged to at least one group,

some did not belong to any groups (Beal et al, 1962). Some members tended to drop out of the group when they became dissatisfied.

A few studies have examined the participation or lack of participation of teenagers in youth organizations. Konopka (1974) and her staff interviewed approximately 1,000 adolescent girls, one-third of whom were members of youth organizations. She found that 83 percent of those who were not currently members of youth organizations had been at some time and that the average age for dropping out was twelve or thirteen. Konopka's study revealed these four reasons that girls dropped out of organizations: boring or childish activities, domineering adult leaders, group too large for close personal relations, and lack of opportunity to participate in decision making and in significant activities. Among her recommendations for improvements in youth organizations were increasing the participation of adolescents in decision making; involving members in activities benefitting the community; and providing opportunities for intense discussion of personal issues.

Using the "Minnesota Youth Poll", which relies on reports from peer-led discussion groups rather than pencil-and-paper surveys, Hedin and Simon (1980) collected the views of Minnesota youth about youth organizations. One sample included about 725 high school students from all types of communities; the other sample included 550 4-H junior leaders attending a statewide conference. A major consideration with respect to participation in a youth organization for both the junior leaders and the representative sample of high school students was time.

Youth view their "own time" as a time to do whatever they want to do without obligation, responsibility, or pressure. Even though many of the youth viewed discretionary time as their "own time" they felt other pressures kept them from using their time freely. The greatest pressure came from work or part-time jobs which were not taken by choice but rather by necessity. The next strongest

pressure named was homework followed by parents and family, sports and after school activities.

When asked about the advantages of belonging to 4-H, the junior leaders emphasized the opportunity to meet many diverse people. They joined primarily with the intentions of making new friends. Other advantages of membership included using their time constructively, gaining new skills, having opportunities to develop leadership roles, gaining self-confidence, and developing greater responsibility. The junior leaders identified several disadvantages to membership in addition to time, poor advisors, disorganized and wasted time, excessive rules, competition among members, and disapproval of peers.

When asked why they thought some people drop out of organizations the major reason suggested was loss of interest in the organization. As youth approach adolescence their interests, goals, and ideas change; therefore they feel the need to move on to new challenges, new groups and new activities. The second reason identified was that many individuals never become actively involved in the organization and drop out because of "boredom".

To prevent club drop out these junior leaders recommended involving all youth in the planning and decision making process, developing more interesting projects, and making the organization more exciting and fun. The recommendations Hedin and Simon (1980) gleaned from the youth in their poll echo Konopka's, with the addition of these categories of activities identified as attractive to teens: adventure, sports, the arts, career exploration, and personal growth.

In a study conducted in Montgomery, Kansas, enrollment figures indicated that they were losing 40 to 50 percent of new members within the first year and 20 percent in the second year. But, if members survived until the third year, they were more stable and tenure increased. Recognizing they had a retention problem,

and not an enrollment problem, new members were surveyed to find out why they were leaving the 4-H program. Some of the major factors found for leaving 4-H included:

1. Lack of understanding of the 4-H program, its goals, activities, events, and time commitment.
2. Families moved.
3. Never felt welcome or a part of the group.
4. Conflicting time commitments.
5. Project groups didn't meet often and/or frequently enough to satisfy children (Astroth, 1985).

In a 1981 research survey of 110 Utah 4-H winners, ages 14-19, a questionnaire was given to the contestants asking about family life, friendships, amount of involvement by family members in 4-H, the perceived image of the community and of peer groups about 4-H. The highest ranked reasons expressed for joining 4-H included parents being a leader first, followed by encouragement by friends, personal enrichment, horse projects, livestock show, and family involvement in descending order. They listed meeting and associating with neat people as the most important reason for staying in 4-H.

When asked about their biggest concerns in life over half were primarily concerned with "pleasure and enjoyment", which included recreation, fun, or enjoyable ways to spend their time. "Career choice" was the second most often mentioned area of concern (Jenson, Young, Adams, & Schvaneveldt, 1982).

Adolescent boys and girls are at a time in their life when their interest in a future occupation is of importance to them. Many 4-H club leaders have a greater influence on young people than most parents, so it is important that they help stimulate this interest in the future.

Because of the variety of projects that are offered in club work; young people have an opportunity to use the technical knowledge learned to make vocational choices but only a small percentage will. Two of the most important values learned in 4-H that all boys and girls can use later in life are the problem-solving experiences and the knowledge of how to work with others (Shuman, 1960).

Career development educators generally agree that vocational development begins at an early age. Super, in a 1957 study indicated that by the ninth grade youth not only have a vocational preference in mind but also know something about vocational requirements, duties, and career opportunities.

Rouse (1964) studied the factors that influenced the retention of senior boys in 4-H in Hamilton County, Tennessee. He interviewed 75 senior male 4-H club members and 92 senior male 4-H club drop outs. Rouse found the following factors to influence the retention of senior boys in the 4-H organization:

1. Active participation of members in the 4-H program.
2. Membership of friends in the same club.
3. Recognition members receive from 4-H club accomplishments.
4. Home visits county agents and leaders make to 4-H club members.
5. Mothers not working outside of the home.

Rouse also found the following factors to be related to drop out rate in 4-H club membership:

1. Lack of interest of boys in the 4-H club projects and activities.
2. Participation in activities other than 4-H.
3. Teasing of 4-H club members by non-members
4. Interference of high school work.

Forbes (1978) studied factors related to why teens did not re-enroll in 4-H and what changes could be made to encourage those teens to remain in 4-H. The

study involved a total of 100 adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 who had completed at least two years in 4-H. The samples consisted of a group of 50 boys and girls 14 to 18 years of age who had not enrolled in 4-H since 1974 and a group of 50 boys and girls 14 to 18 years who were enrolled in the 1977-78 year.

Based on the data collected the following trends were noted as to why members enrolled and did not re-enroll in the program.

1. Non-re-enrollers completed fewer years as a 4-H member with males leaving the program at a younger median age.
2. Non-re-enrollers parents' were not 4-H leaders, while over half of the re-enrollers' parents were.
3. Non-re-enrollers participated in fewer county activities and events or state trips than re-enrollers. They did not take an active part in leadership or program planning on the local or county level.
4. Non-re-enrollers reported that the awards or incentives offered were less important than program or projects, while re-enrollers said the awards make them work harder.
5. Non-re-enrollers gave as major reason for discontinuing 4-H membership job conflicts or belonging to too many other organizations and not having time for 4-H.

The majority of successful teen programs are ones in which they have an important part in program planning and implementation. If teens decide to do an activity, they are more likely to complete it in a more satisfactory way. They will also gain more knowledge and skills, satisfaction, and self-confidence from a finished project that they have completed.

Successful teen programs are also flexible to the time schedules and interests of teens. The subject of the program must be one in which teens are genuinely interested and have time to participate. The purpose of a program for

teens is not an award that may be received or what may be accomplished for 4-H, but how a teen may mature as a result of the program (Bell, 1975). As reported in other studies, programs for teens must be interesting, fun, and relevant to their needs. In today's complicated and competitive economy the 4-H program must continually strive to meet the needs of older youth and help them to become better able to take an important place in society (Shuman, 1960).

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND CONDUCT OF STUDY

Introduction

This chapter is set forth to describe the methods and procedures followed in conducting the study. The methods and procedures were dictated by the purpose of the study.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine characteristics and perceptions of Oklahoma youth, ages 13-19, who continued as 4-H members and those who did not.

The specific objectives of this study provided guidance for the design and conduct of the research. The objectives were:

1. To identify characteristics of teens who re-enroll in 4-H and those who discontinue their membership.
2. To identify the perceptions of the 4-H program among enrolled members and non-enrolled members.
3. To identify or formulate recommendations, based on this study that might be useful for encouraging teens to remain enrolled in the Oklahoma 4-H program.

The Study Population

This study was conducted in ten counties in Oklahoma with representation from each of the four districts. The counties in the study were selected at random

and included N.E District - Lincoln and Tulsa, N.W. District - Kay and Garfield, S.E. District - Pittsburg and Pontotoc, and S.W. District - Oklahoma, Cleveland, Jackson and Stephens.

The sample was selected from a list of 3,427 adolescents between the ages of 13 and 19. One group of 1,065 adolescents were no longer enrolled in 4-H, having dropped since the 1987-88 4-H year. This list of non-enrolled 4-H members was compiled by comparing the 1988-89 4-H membership rolls to the 1987-88 4-H membership rolls. Another group of 2,362 adolescents was currently enrolled in the 1988-89 year. Three hundred persons were randomly selected from each list.

Development of the Instrument

A mail questionnaire was determined to be the most appropriate instrument for the collection of data. A 4-H Questionnaire for enrolled and non-enrolled members was used. Items on the questionnaire were designed to obtain information on the background of the respondents, extent of their participation in 4-H, their perceptions of the 4-H program and characteristics which affected re-enrollment and non-re-enrollment in 4-H. Permission to conduct the study was received from Extension 4-H Agents in each of the ten counties included in the survey.

Items on the questionnaire were developed using three similar surveys conducted by researchers in Oklahoma and Illinois as background information. Forbes (1978) surveyed 100 adolescents to determine factors related to adolescent attrition among Kay County (Oklahoma) teenagers who re-enrolled in the 4-H Program and teenagers who dropped out. Bell (1975) mailed similar questionnaires to 264 4-H'ers in 11 counties representing a diversity of 4-H Programs in Illinois. In a third survey by Parker (1984), data were collected from 380 4-H members on their commitment to 4-H clubs and special interest groups in Oklahoma.

Terminology was changed on some items to correspond to terms and programs used in Oklahoma.

The questionnaire was pretested by 10 4-H members, age 13 and over who were enrolled in the Perkins Senior 4-H Club in Payne County. The instrument was reviewed to determine if directions and items were easily understood. After appropriate revisions, the questionnaires were printed, coded and prepared for distribution.

The Application for Review of Human Subjects Research was completed and submitted to the Institutional Review Board at Oklahoma State University.

Collection of Data

A questionnaire containing 34 items was mailed to 300 members and 300 former members in April, 1989. Subjects were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it within 12 days in the self-addressed stamped envelopes which were provided. A cover letter explaining the project accompanied the questionnaires. A follow-up postcard was mailed two weeks later to non-respondents to encourage their participation in the study. Copies of the cover letter, questionnaire and follow-up postcard may be found in Appendixes A, B and C respectively.

Analysis of Data

The computer center at Oklahoma State University was used to compute the statistical analysis. Responses to each item were totaled and reported for both groups. Frequencies and percentages were then used to report the data collected. Comparisons of the groups were made using the chi square test. According to Jaccard (1983), the chi square test of independence is used to analyze the relationship between two variables when both variables are qualitative in nature and between subjects in nature. The chi square test of independence uses a two-

way frequency table as the basis for analysis (also called a contingency table). The table is "two-way" because it examines two variables.

The logic underlying the chi square test of independence focuses upon the concept of expected frequency. The expected frequency can then be compared with the observed frequency and if the discrepancy is large (as defined by a given alpha level) the null hypothesis is rejected. The sample chi square statistic, if computed on all possible random samples of a given size, would form a sampling distribution of the chi square statistic. There are different chi square distributions depending on the degrees of freedom associated with them. The relevant chi square distribution is one with $(r-1)(c-1)$ degrees of freedom where r is the number of rows and c is the number of columns. The chi square distribution allows us to specify probability levels of obtaining a chi square as large as or larger than the observed chi square statistic under the assumption of the null hypothesis. It is therefore possible to derive a critical value for any given alpha level to test the null hypothesis of no relationship. If the observed chi square exceeds the critical value, the null hypothesis is rejected. In this study a probability level of 0.05 was used to determine if results were statistically significant.

The survey instrument used to collect the data included questions about respondents' background and their perceptions of 4-H. A five-point Likert Scale and open ended questions were the primary methods of obtaining information from respondents. In the reporting of the results, the enrollees were designated as members and the nonenrollees were designated as nonmembers.

TABLE I
SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PLAN

Research Objectives	Hypothesis	Questionnaire Items	Method
I. To identify characteristics of teens who re-enroll in 4-H and those who discontinue their membership	I. There will be no differences in the characteristics of members who continue in 4-H and those who do not.	Section A. Background Information Items 1-21	Frequency Percent and chi square
II. To identify the perceptions of the 4-H program among enrolled and non-enrolled members.	II. There will be no differences in the perceptions of 4-H among members who continue in 4-H and those who do not.	Section B. Perceptions of 4-H Items 22-34	Frequency Percent and chi square

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The major purpose of this study was to identify characteristics related to retention and drop out of Oklahoma teenage 4-H youth, ages 13-19.

Data for this study were collected in the Spring of 1989. Subjects involved 300 4-H members who were currently enrolled in 4-H in 1988-89 and 300 4-H members who had discontinued membership since 1987-88. The objective of this chapter is to present the findings of this study.

Responses to Questionnaire

Information presented in this chapter was obtained from the return of 220 usable questionnaires. Of the 600 questionnaires that were mailed to two groups in ten Oklahoma counties, 36.6 percent of the questionnaires were returned. Responding were 162 members and 58 nonmembers. Twenty-two of the questionnaires were returned marked "non deliverable".

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Of the 220 questionnaires returned 162 were received from members and 58 from nonmembers. Sixty-six questionnaires were returned by male members, 96 by female members, 28 from male nonmembers, and 29 from female nonmembers. The gender identity of one respondent was not indicated. As shown in Table II, the percentage of questionnaires returned by members was 73.6 percent

and 26.4 percent for nonmembers.

The ages of respondents ranged from 13-20 years old. The highest percent of the respondents were fourteen-years old. Fourteen years olds were 26.5 percent of the members and 22.4 percent of the nonmembers. As the groups began to approach the age of sixteen and older, the larger percentage of each age group became inactive in the 4-H program.

Responses to the question regarding gender indicated that nonmembers were represented equally by males and females while members were predominantly female. This finding indicates an imbalance in the retention of males and females as members.

When asked about their place of residence a total of 48.1 percent of the respondents reported living on a farm or ranch. Among members, 49.3 percent lived on a farm or ranch as did 44.8 percent of the nonmembers. This points out that place of residence among members and nonmembers is very similar. It is also noted that approximately one-half of the members resided on farms and ranches which indicates a need to recruit heavily among youth from small towns and cities as we continue to observe a rural-urban shift in the United States.

Over 55.0 percent of the respondents indicated they began their 4-H membership at the age of 9-10 years old. This provides the county extension agent a strong base for conducting promotional programs in schools to recruit this age group before they become involved in other organizations and activities. There was a general tendency of nonmembers to join at a later age. This finding may reveal that members who join 4-H at a later age in their career do not remain active in the 4-H program (Table II).

TABLE II
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Characteristics	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^a)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<u>Membership Status</u>	162	73.6	58	26.4	220	100
<u>Age on January 1, 1989</u>						
13	31	19.1	3	5.2	34	15.5
14	43	26.5	13	22.4	56	25.5
15	32	19.9	16	27.6	48	21.8
16	29	17.9	11	19.0	40	18.2
17	19	11.7	4	6.9	23	10.5
18	1	0.6	5	8.6	6	2.7
19	1	0.6	5	8.6	6	2.7
20	0	0.0	1	1.7	1	0.4
Not reported	6	3.7	0	0.0	6	2.7
<u>Gender</u>						
Male	66	41.0	28	48.3	94	42.7
Female	96	59.0	29	50.0	125	56.8
Not reported	0	0.0	1	1.7	1	0.5
<u>Place of Residence</u>						
Farm/Ranch	80	49.3	26	44.8	106	48.1
Rural/Sm. town	53	32.7	21	36.2	74	33.6
Sm./Lg. city	29	18.0	10	17.3	39	17.8
Not reported	0	0.0	1	1.9	1	0.5

TABLE II (continued)

Characteristics	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^a)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<u>Age joined 4-H</u>						
9-10 yrs old	92	56.8	30	51.7	122	55.4
11-12 yrs old	39	24.1	18	31.0	57	26.0
13-15 yrs old	30	18.5	8	13.8	38	17.2
Not reported	1	0.6	2	3.5	3	1.4

^a Some items were not completed by all respondents.

Why Respondents Joined 4-H

As shown in (Table III) when asked "Why did you join this organization?" the largest difference between members and nonmembers was noted for the item relating to parental influence (Item A). For members, 43.3 percent reported their parents said it was a good idea to belong to 4-H. For nonmembers, only 27.6 percent reported their parents said it was a good idea to belong to 4-H. The chi square test for differences between members and nonmembers regarding parental influence as a reason for joining 4-H was significant ($\chi^2 = 4.458$, $df = 1$, $p < .05$).

For both groups combined, 44.0 percent reported they joined 4-H because their friends encouraged them to become a member of the organization. Among the members, 43.1 percent had friends who encouraged them to join 4-H while 46.6 percent of the nonmembers had friends who encouraged them to join 4-H. These

findings indicate that parental support and friends are very important to youth joining and remaining active within the 4-H organization. Since there were close similarities in their responses however, a chi square test for differences between members and nonmembers regarding the influence of friends as a reason for joining 4-H was not significant.

TABLE III
WHY RESPONDENTS JOINED 4-H^a

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^b)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
a. My parents said it was a good idea	69	43.3	16	27.6	85	39.2
b. My brothers or sisters belong	33	20.6	13	22.4	46	21.0
c. My friends encouraged me to join	69	43.1	27	46.6	96	44.0
d. My leader asked me to join	27	16.9	7	12.1	34	15.6
e. My County Extension Agent asked me to join	5	3.1	0	0.0	5	2.3
f. Media	9	5.7	2	3.4	11	5.1
g. Other	46	28.9	21	36.2	67	30.9

^a More than one response per subject was possible.

^b Some items were not completed by all respondents.

Composition of Local 4-H Club

Data in Table IV reported the responses of members and nonmembers regarding the composition of the local 4-H club. A total of 56.8 percent of both groups of respondents indicated they belonged to a 4-H club or project club with all age levels meeting and working together. Of those responding only 41.4 percent, 39.4 percent among members and 46.0 percent of the nonmembers belonged to a Junior-Senior club with separate meetings or a Senior club with all ages meeting together and separate programs planned for older youth. A chi square test for differences in the composition of the local 4-H club between members and nonmembers was not significant.

TABLE IV
COMPOSITION OF LOCAL 4-H CLUB

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^a)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
a. Junior - Senior club, separate meetings or Senior club with all ages meeting together	64	39.4	27	46.6	91	41.4
b. A 4-H club or project club with with all age levels meeting and working together	97	60.0	28	48.2	125	56.8
Not reported	1	0.6	3	5.2	4	1.8

^a Some items were not completed by all respondents.

4-H Membership Among Youth Thirteen and Older

In order to estimate respondents' perceptions regarding the enrollment of youth ages 13 and over in 4-H, question #8 in the instrument asked "In your opinion, how many youth age 13 or older, currently belong to the 4-H club of which were/are a member?" Responses to this item indicated that for members 90.0 percent of the groups had five or more age mates in 4-H as opposed to 77.6 percent of nonmembers who had five or more age mates in 4-H (Table V). While there is an indication that members have more age mates in 4-H than nonmembers, the difference especially in the category of ten or more age mates in 4-H was slight. However, a chi square test of the difference in members and nonmembers regarding the perception of the presence of age mates in 4-H was significant ($\chi^2 = 6.216$, $df = 2$, $p < .05$). The difference found may be explained by a larger proportion of nonmembers than expected having fewer than five age mates in 4-H and a smaller proportion of members than expected having fewer than five age mates in 4-H.

Importance of Older Members to a Successful 4-H Program

As shown in Table VI, a total of 67.7 percent of the respondents felt older members were of great importance to the success of the 4-H program. However, nonmembers placed greater importance on the presence of older members to a successful 4-H program than did members. The finding that such a large majority of both members and nonmembers perceived that older members were very important to a successful 4-H program supports developmental theories regarding peer group influence. Over 64.0 percent of the members responding and 75.0 percent of the nonmembers indicated that older members were needed in 4-H for the program to be a success. A chi square test for differences between members

and nonmembers regarding their opinions of the importances of older members to the success of 4-H programs was not significant.

TABLE V
4-H MEMBERSHIP AMONG YOUTH, AGE THIRTEEN AND OLDER

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^a)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<u>Youth 13 and older involved in 4-H</u>						
Less than five	16	9.9	13	22.4	29	13.2
Five to ten	57	35.2	15	25.9	72	33.7
Over ten	87	53.7	30	51.7	117	53.2
Not reported	2	1.2	0	0.0	2	0.9

^a Some items were not completed by all respondents.

Membership of Close Friends in 4-H

Table VII presents the data regarding close friends who are members of 4-H. For both members and nonmembers combined, 55.5 percent reported having several friends involved in the 4-H program. Among members 57.4 percent had several friends in 4-H while 48.3 percent of the nonmembers had several friends in 4-H. While the difference was slight, it is noted that more members than nonmembers had several friends in 4-H. This finding supports the wide spread

belief that peer influence is a strong factor in the affiliation decisions of youth. Young people continue to express their preference to be involved in the same activities as their friends.

TABLE VI
IMPORTANCE OF OLDER MEMBERS TO
A SUCCESSFUL 4-H PROGRAM

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^a)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Very important	105	64.8	44	75.9	149	67.7
Important	57	35.2	12	20.7	69	31.4
Not reported	0	0.0	2	3.4	2	0.9

^a Some items were not completed by all respondents.

Level of Offices Held

When asked about the level of offices held in 4-H, 71.1 percent of the members and 64.3 percent of the nonmembers indicated they had held an office at the local level (Table VIII). The data revealed that a larger percentage of the members held offices at all levels except at the district level. This finding reveals that for older members to have the opportunity to become district and state officers they must continue their 4-H membership and participate in District Youth Action Leadership Conference and State 4-H Round-Up. While the

difference was slight, this finding may indicate that members who are elected to leadership roles feel of greater importance to the 4-H program and choose to continue membership; whereas those who do not hold offices choose to discontinue membership. The chi square test for differences in offices held by members and nonmembers was not significant.

TABLE VII
MEMBERSHIP OF CLOSE FRIENDS IN 4-H

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^a)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
None	0	0.0	1	1.7	1	0.5
One or two	68	42.0	28	48.3	96	43.6
Several	93	57.4	28	48.3	121	55.0
Not reported	1	0.6	1	1.7	2	0.9

^a Some items were not completed by all respondents.

Participation in Common 4-H Activities

Table IX shows the results of how respondents checked the frequency of participation in six 4-H events and activities. According to the six events listed, exhibits at county or state fairs had the most participation with a total of 62.3 percent for the two groups combined. Among members 63.3 percent had participated in county or state fairs while 58.6 percent of non-members had. The

second most popular activity was exhibits at livestock shows with a total of 44.5 percent for both groups combined, 43.2 percent among members and 43.8 percent among nonmembers. Responses to the other four events were similar with 31.8 percent of the two groups involved in demonstrations, 29.1 percent in judging teams, 27.3 percent in teen leader meetings, and 25.9 percent in talks. There were only minor differences between members and nonmembers for these events. These results indicate that both members and nonmembers enjoy participating in the same events of which participation in county and state fairs and livestock related projects appear to be the most popular. A chi square test for differences between member and nonmember participation in six common 4-H activities was not statistically significant.

TABLE VIII
LEVEL OF OFFICES HELD^a

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^b)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Local	113	71.1	36	64.3	149	69.3
County	25	16.0	8	14.8	33	15.6
District	6	3.8	3	5.6	9	4.2
State	1	0.6	0	0.0	1	0.5

^a More than one response per subject was possible.

^b Some items were not completed by all respondents.

TABLE IX
PARTICIPATION IN COMMON 4-H ACTIVITIES

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<u>Demonstrations</u>						
Never	110	67.9	40	69.0	150	68.2
Often	52	32.1	18	31.0	70	31.8
<u>Talks</u>						
Never	119	73.5	44	75.9	163	74.1
Often	43	26.5	14	24.1	57	25.9
<u>Exhibits at County or State Fairs</u>						
Never	59	36.4	24	41.4	83	37.7
Often	103	63.6	34	58.6	137	62.3
<u>Exhibits at Live- stock Shows</u>						
Never	92	56.8	30	51.7	122	55.5
Often	70	43.2	28	48.3	98	44.5
<u>Judging Teams</u>						
Never	114	70.4	42	72.4	156	70.9
Often	48	29.6	16	27.6	64	29.1
<u>Teen Leader Meetings</u>						
Never	113	69.8	47	81.0	160	72.7
Often	49	30.2	11	19.0	60	22.3

Favorite 4-H Projects

To determine if certain projects were of more interest to one group than the other, the participants were asked to list their four favorite projects. Table X presents a complete list of the respondents' favorite 4-H projects. The projects

listed more frequently among both groups were clothing, food-nutrition, sheep, livestock shows, arts and crafts, horse, swine, public speaking, photography, beef, and citizenship. The largest number of participants listed clothing as their favorite project. Proportionally, the greatest differences between members and nonmembers were found in the areas of clothing and photography. In each of these project areas, members listed these projects as their favorites more frequently than did nonmembers. Generally nonmembers selected animal projects more frequently than members.

TABLE X
FAVORITE 4-H PROJECTS

Response	Members (n=162) Frequency	Non-members (n=58) Frequency	Total (n=220 ^a) Frequency
Achievement	0	1	1
Arts and Crafts	21	12	33
Automotive	1	1	2
Beef	18	7	25
Bees	1	0	1
Bicycle	1	1	2
Breads	4	0	4
Child Care	3	0	3
Citizenship	19	4	23
Clothing	42	9	51
Computer	2	0	2
Consumer Education	1	0	1

TABLE X (continued)

Response	Members (n=162) Frequency	Non-members (n=58) Frequency	Total (n=220 ^a) Frequency
Dairy	2	0	2
Dairy Foods	1	0	1
Dog	5	3	8
Electricity	1	0	1
Entomology	3	2	5
Fishing	2	3	5
Food-Nutrition	30	9	39
Forestry	1	0	1
Gardening	1	0	1
Goat	1	0	1
Health	2	0	2
Home Environment	5	0	5
Horse	21	12	33
Horticulture	1	0	1
Judging	11	0	11
Leadership	12	1	13
Livestock Shows	27	9	36
Meat	8	0	8
Performing Troupe	2	1	3
Personal Development	1	0	1
Photography	23	3	26
Poultry	1	3	4
Postmarks	0	1	1

TABLE X (continued)

Response	Members (n=162) Frequency	Non-members (n=58) Frequency	Total (n=220 ^a) Frequency
Public Speaking	31	9	40
Rabbits	6	1	7
Recreation	8	3	11
Rocketry	1	1	2
Safety	2	1	3
Sheep	25	13	38
Shooting Sports	2	1	3
Swine	26	5	31
Veterinary Science	5	1	6
Wildlife	4	3	7
Wood Science	1	2	3

^a Some items were not completed by all respondents.

Participation in Trips and Conferences

Another item asked respondents to check a list of eight 4-H trips or conferences in which they had participated. The conference most attended was State 4-H Round-Up with 28.3 percent of the members attending and 35.7 percent of the nonmembers attending (Table XI). A chi square test of the differences between members and nonmembers regarding participation in trips and conferences was not significant. However the researcher was surprised by the

direction of difference in participation in state round-up. One might have hypothesized the state round-up would have served to increase retention.

TABLE XI
PARTICIPATION IN TRIPS
AND CONFERENCES^a

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
State 4-H Congress	11	6.9	3	5.4	14	6.5
Kansas City Conference	6	3.8	3	5.4	9	4.2
Exchange Trip	8	5.0	1	1.9	9	4.2
National 4-H Conference	3	1.9	1	1.8	4	1.9
Citizenship Washington Focus	11	7.0	4	7.1	15	7.0
State 4-H Round-Up	45	28.3	20	35.7	65	30.2
Out-of-State Judging Event	6	3.8	3	5.4	9	4.2
National 4-H Congress	1	0.6	2	3.6	3	1.4

^a More than one response per subject was possible.

Educational Plans

When asked about their educational plans, 74.3 percent of the respondents indicated that they planned to attend college. Among these respondents were 75.2 percent of the members and 71.9 percent of the nonmembers. Out of the two groups 42.9 percent of the members and 44.6 percent of the nonmembers said they would graduate from college. This finding revealed no differences in educational plans among members and nonmembers. Only 66.7 percent of the members and 63.2 percent of the nonmembers indicated they would graduate from high school therefore the researcher felt that several respondents assumed they would graduate from high school and did not feel they needed to answer the question regarding high school graduation. Chi square tests for differences in the educational plans of members and nonmembers were not significant.

Career Plans

When asked "Have you decided upon a career to pursue?", 63.0 percent of the members and 69.0 percent of the non-members indicated they had made a decision regarding a specific career to pursue (Table XIII).

A follow up question requested that respondents indicate which careers they had chosen. A summary of the open-ended responses shared by members and non-members is shown in Table XIV. Careers choices such as business, lawyer, accountant, medical field, teacher and veterinary medicine were selected most frequently by members and careers in fashion and merchandising, business, medical field, teacher, and veterinary medicine were most frequently selected by nonmembers. A wide diversity of career interest was indicated by the total group; of 138 responses 41 different careers were reported.

TABLE XII
EDUCATIONAL PLANS^a

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^b)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
a. Graduate from high school	108	66.7	36	63.2	144	65.7
b. Attend vocational school	26	16.0	8	14.3	34	15.6
c. Attend private school	1	0.6	1	1.8	2	0.9
d. Attend college	121	75.2	41	71.9	162	74.3
e. Graduate from college	69	42.9	25	44.6	94	43.3
f. Attend graduate school	34	21.1	14	24.6	48	22.0

^a More than one response per subject was possible.

^b Some items were not completed by all respondents.

Things Liked Most About 4-H Projects

The item selected most frequently by respondents when asked, "What do you like most about 4-H?" was "friends". A total of 82.0 percent of the combined groups reported "friends" as their most favorite thing. The percentage that selected this item was very similar across groups; 82.5 percent of the members and 80.7 percent of the nonmembers. New ideas and skills learned was the next item most frequently chosen among both groups with very little difference in the member and nonmember responses. Feeling of accomplishment and helping others

followed closely in ranked with 70.0 percent and 69.1 percent respectively (Table XV). A chi square tests for differences between members and nonmembers regarding things they liked most about 4-H were not significant.

These findings revealed that members and nonmembers needs were very similar. They both enjoy close affiliation with their peers, the satisfaction of helping others, recognition, and achieving to their fullest. All of these needs are in accordance with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1970).

TABLE XIII
CAREER PLANS

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220 ^a)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<u>Career Plans</u>						
Yes	102	63.0	40	69.0	142	64.5
No	59	36.4	17	29.3	76	34.5
Not reported	1	0.6	1	1.7	2	1.0

^a Some items were not completed by all respondents.

TABLE XIV
CAREER CHOICES

Response	Members (n=162) Frequency	Non-members (n=58) Frequency	Total (n=220 ^a) Frequency
Accountant	6	1	7
Agriculture	2	1	3
Agriculture Teacher	1	1	2
Airforce	4	1	5
Architecture	2	0	2
Army	2	0	2
Art	2	0	2
Beautician	0	1	1
Biologist	3	1	4
Body Repair	1	0	1
Business	4	3	7
Child Care	1	0	1
Chemist	1	0	1
Communications	2	0	2
Computer Technician	1	1	2
Dermatologist	0	1	1
Dentist	2	1	3
Dietitian	1	0	1
Embryo Technician	0	1	1
Engineer	3	0	3
Fashion and Merchandising	2	4	6
Florist	0	1	1

TABLE XIV (continued)

Response	Members (n=162) Frequency	Non-members (n=58) Frequency	Total (n=220 ^a) Frequency
Home Economics Teacher	2	1	3
Horse Trainer	0	1	1
Investigator	2	0	2
Journalism	3	0	3
Landscape	1	0	1
Lawyer	9	1	10
Medical	13	4	17
Meteorologist	1	0	1
Model	0	2	2
Music	1	0	1
Photographer	1	1	2
Rancher	2	0	2
Ranger	0	1	1
Secretary	3	0	3
Social Worker	0	1	1
Teacher	9	4	13
Truck Driver	1	0	1
Veterinary Medicine	10	5	15
Wildlife Management	1	0	1

^a Some items were not completed by all respondents.

TABLE XV
 THINGS LIKED MOST ABOUT 4-H PROJECTS^a

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
a. New ideas and skills	115	71.9	40	70.1	155	71.4
b. Feeling of accomplishment	116	72.5	36	63.2	152	70.1
c. Thrill of winning	67	42.1	28	49.1	95	44.0
d. Awards received	77	48.4	33	58.0	110	51.0
e. Recognition received	79	50.0	27	47.4	106	49.1
f. Friends	132	82.5	46	80.7	178	82.0
g. Helping others	114	71.3	36	63.2	150	69.1

^a More than one response per subject was possible.

Things Disliked About the 4-H Program

The responses in Table XVI indicate the members' and nonmembers' reasons for disliking the 4-H program. The item most frequently checked under dislikes of the 4-H program by both groups was lack of teen involvement. Among the members, 46.3 percent disliked the lack of teen involvement while among the nonmembers, 58.6 percent disliked the lack of teen involvement. This finding may indicate that the lack of older youth's involvement in the 4-H program may cause teenage youth to discontinue membership. However, chi square tests for

differences between members and nonmembers regarding things they disliked most about 4-H were not significant.

TABLE XVI
THINGS DISLIKED ABOUT 4-H PROGRAM^a

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
a. 4-H leaders	15	9.3	11	19.3	26	12.0
b. Cost of projects	32	20.0	13	22.4	45	20.6
c. Meeting times	26	16.3	8	13.8	34	15.6
d. Lack of teen involvement	74	46.3	34	58.6	108	49.5
e. Record keeping	43	26.7	9	15.5	52	23.7
f. Other	28	17.5	12	20.7	40	18.4

^a More than one response per subject was possible.

Competition for Time Spent on 4-H

Table XVII presents the data regarding competition for time spent on 4-H. For both members and nonmembers combined, 58.2 percent reported school activities as the main item that competes most with the time they spend on 4-H. For members 58.6 percent reported school activities as the main competitor with their time while 56.9 percent of the nonmembers reported school activities as the main competitor with their time.

The item homework ranked close to school activities with 55.0 percent being reported by both groups combined. This item was selected in a similar fashion by member (56.2 percent) and nonmembers (51.7 percent). The third and fourth items most frequently reported as competing with time spent on 4-H were responsibilities at home (50.7 percent) and sports (49.1 percent). The finding that approximately 50.0 percent or more of both groups indicated that each of the four items above were competitors for time spent on 4-H emphasizes the reality of intense competition for the discretionary time available to youth.

The frequencies reported in Table XVII indicated there were only slight differences, among the members and nonmembers activities, in regard to the things that compete most with the time they spend on 4-H. In support of a conclusion of no differences, the chi square tests regarding competition for time spent on 4-H were not significant.

Ways to Improve the 4-H Program

Members' responses in Table XVIII revealed the respondents' perceptions of ways to improve the 4-H program. Over 85.0 percent of both groups combined indicated that 4-H needed more projects related to teens' interests. For members 83.9 percent indicated the need for more projects related to teens interests while 91.4 percent of the nonmembers indicated the need for more projects related to teens interests. Respondents were largely in agreement that 4-H needed more interesting meetings with 82.7 percent of the members and 86.2 percent of the nonmembers checking this item. A total of 80.4 percent of the two groups felt recreational activities were of high importance, (79.6 percent of the members and 82.8 percent of the nonmembers). For each of the above items, responses were very similar for members and nonmembers. Chi square tests for differences between the groups were not significant.

Prizes and awards were perceived differently by members and nonmembers as a means of improving 4-H programs. Among nonmembers, 65.5 percent responded that prizes and awards would be very helpful in improving 4-H programs while only 46.9 percent of the members perceived prizes and awards as being very helpful in improving 4-H. The chi square test for difference between groups for regarding prizes and awards was significant ($\chi^2 = 5.920$, $df = 2$, $p > .05$).

In summary, these data indicated that teenage youth involved in the 4-H programs need more advanced projects for their age level, more programs of interest at the local club level, activities which are fun and allow them to socialize with other members and prizes and awards for their participation.

TABLE XVII
COMPETITION FOR TIME SPENT ON 4-H^a

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
a. Part-time job	25	15.5	13	22.4	38	17.4
b. Sports	76	47.0	32	55.2	108	49.1
c. Other organizations	59	36.6	20	34.5	79	36.1
d. Homework	91	56.2	30	51.7	121	55.0
e. Responsibilities at home	84	52.2	27	46.6	111	50.7
f. School activities	95	58.6	33	56.9	128	58.2
g. Other	23	14.3	7	12.1	30	13.7

^a More than one response per subject was possible.

TABLE XVIII
WAYS TO IMPROVE THE 4-H PROGRAM

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<u>Parent participation</u>						
Little	73	45.1	24	41.4	97	44.1
Very much	89	54.9	34	58.9	123	55.9
<u>Prizes and awards</u>						
Little	86	53.1	20	34.5	106	48.2
Very much	76	46.9	38	65.5	114	51.8
<u>Help from leaders</u>						
Little	53	32.7	17	29.3	70	31.8
Very much	109	67.3	41	70.7	150	68.2
<u>Interesting meetings</u>						
Little	28	17.3	8	13.8	36	16.4
Very much	134	82.7	50	86.2	184	83.6
<u>Projects related to teens</u>						
Little	26	16.1	5	8.6	31	14.1
Very much	136	83.9	53	91.4	189	85.9
<u>Non-competitive programs</u>						
Little	104	64.2	43	74.1	147	66.8
Very much	58	35.8	15	25.9	73	33.2
<u>Recreational activities</u>						
Little	33	20.4	10	17.2	43	19.6
Very much	129	79.6	48	82.8	177	80.4

Reasons Senior Members Drop Out of 4-H

The responses in Table XIX indicated members' and nonmembers' perceptions of why senior members drop out of 4-H. The three most important reasons checked were conflicts with other activities and organizations, job and

lack of age mates in the organization. The largest percent of both groups, 84.5 percent of the members and 75.0 percent of the nonmembers indicated the main reason senior members drop out of 4-H is due largely to conflicts with other activities and organizations. Over 66.4 percent of the respondents in both groups combined agreed that job was the second most important reason for dropping out of 4-H. The third most important reason agreed upon by 35.5 percent of the members and nonmembers combined was the lack of others their age and interest in the club. Both members' and nonmembers' perceptions of why senior members drop out of 4-H were very similar. Chi square tests for differences between groups regarding reasons for dropping out of 4-H were not significant.

Reasons Senior Members Remain in 4-H

The findings in Table XX present the responses of why senior members remain involved in the 4-H program. The respondents were asked to check the item of most importance. The item most often selected by members and nonmembers was the opportunity to compete for awards at the county, district, and state level. A total of 31.5 percent of both groups combined reported that competing for awards was the item of most importance to remaining in 4-H; 31.7 percent for members and 30.9 percent for nonmembers. The item ranked next in importance by respondents was the opportunity to hold leadership roles in different levels of the organization. For both groups combined, a total of 30.6 percent checked the opportunity to hold leadership roles as important to retention. Nonmembers viewed the opportunity to serve as a leader as more important (34.6 percent) than did members (29.2 percent).

Both groups felt strongly that the opportunity to hold leadership roles and compete for awards helps to retain older youth in the 4-H program. Therefore, it

is not surprising that chi square tests for differences between groups regarding reasons senior members remain in 4-H were not significant.

TABLE XIX
REASONS SENIOR MEMBERS DROP OUT OF 4-H^a

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
a. Conflicts with other activities and organizations	136	84.5	42	75.0	178	82.0
b. Job	112	69.6	32	57.1	144	66.4
c. Teased about membership	37	23.0	13	23.2	50	23.0
d. Parents do not encourage them	34	21.1	13	23.2	47	21.7
e. Peers	43	26.7	17	30.4	60	27.7
f. No one else in club their age or has their interest	55	34.2	22	39.3	77	35.5
g. Projects and activities are not challenging	32	20.0	11	19.6	43	19.8
h. Disliked competition	10	6.2	2	3.6	12	5.5
i. Didn't get the awards and recognition they felt they had earned	27	16.8	13	23.2	40	18.4

^a More than one response per subject was possible.

TABLE XX
REASONS SENIOR MEMBERS REMAIN IN 4-H^a

Response	Members (n=162)		Non-members (n=58)		Total (n=220)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
a. Club offers them an opportunity to learn	43	26.7	13	23.6	56	25.9
b. Interesting and challenging projects	22	13.7	12	21.8	34	15.7
c. Leadership roles at all levels	47	29.2	19	34.6	66	30.6
d. Compete for awards in county, district, and state	51	31.7	17	30.9	68	31.5
e. Role model to younger members	42	26.1	20	36.4	62	28.7

^a More than one response per subject was possible.

Additional Programs Needed for Older 4-H Members

When asked "What type of additional programs would you like to see offered to older 4-H members?" a wide variety of ideas were reported. Among the most frequently reported were animal science, leisure education, leadership development, and interesting and challenging projects. Table XXI presents the complete responses for members and nonmembers to this question.

TABLE XXI
 ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS NEEDED
 FOR OLDER 4-H MEMBERS

Response	Members (n=162) Frequency	Non-members (n=58) Frequency	Total (n=220 ^a) Frequency
Academic Preparation	4	1	5
Animal Science	10	5	15
Career Education	5	1	6
Family Living	9	2	11
Interesting & Challenging Projects	4	6	10
Leisure Education	7	6	13
Leadership Development	5	5	10
Natural Sciences	4	0	4
Social Activities	6	3	9
Trips & Scholarships	7	2	9

^a Some items were not completed by all respondents.

Summary

The data analyzed for this study related to characteristics and perceptions of 4-H among members and nonmembers. A summary of the findings are shown in Tables XXII and XXIII along with the decisions pertaining to the null hypotheses.

TABLE XXII
 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS REGARDING
 CHARACTERISTICS OF MEMBERS
 AND NONMEMBERS

<u>Research Objective I:</u> To identify characteristics of teens who enroll in 4-H and those who discontinue their membership.	<u>Decision Related To Hypothesis I:</u> There will be no differences in the characteristics of members who continue in 4-H and those who do not.
a. Age	a. Do not reject
b. Gender	b. Do not reject
c. Place of residence	c. Do not reject
d. Age at first enrollment	d. Do not reject
e. Reason for joining	e. Reject
f. Composition of local 4-H club	f. Do not reject
g. Number of age mates in 4-H	g. Do not reject
h. Importance of older members	h. Reject
i. Number of close friends in 4-H	i. Do not reject
j. Level of offices held	j. Do not reject
k. Favorite 4-H projects	k. Do not reject
l. Common 4-H activities & events	l. Do not reject
m. 4-H trips & conferences	m. Do not reject
n. Educational plans	n. Do not reject
o. Career plans and choices	o. Do not reject

TABLE XXIII
 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS REGARDING
 PERCEPTIONS OF MEMBERS
 AND NONMEMBERS

<u>Research Objective II:</u> To identify the perception of the 4-H program among enrolled and non-enrolled members	<u>Decision Related to Hypotheses II:</u> There will be no differences the perceptions of 4-H among members who continue in 4-H and those who do not
a. Things most liked about 4-H projects	a. Do not reject
b. Things disliked about 4-H	b. Do not reject
c. Competition with time for 4-H	c. Do not reject
d. Ways to improve 4-H	d. Reject
e. Reasons senior members drop out of 4-H	e. Do not reject
f. Reasons senior members remain in 4-H	f. Do not reject

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the major findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Conclusions and recommendations are presented based upon an analysis of data collected and interpretations resulting therefrom.

Major Findings of the Study

The largest number of respondents who were members were 13-15 years old while the largest numbers of respondents who were nonmembers were 14-16 years old. Both members and nonmembers indicated that the majority of 4-H members were female. The most likely age for members to join 4-H was between 9-10 years of age. Over 49.0 percent of the members and 44.0 percent of the nonmembers resided on a farm or ranch.

Among member respondents both parents and friends were influential in encouraging them to join, while nonmembers received more influence from friends to join. County extension agents were perceived as the least influential of seven choices in encouraging prospective members to join. A major finding concerning composition of local 4-H clubs was that a majority of both members and nonmembers belonged to a 4-H club or project club with all age levels meeting and working together. Respondents indicated they felt most of their clubs would have at least ten members thirteen years of age or older involved at the local level.

A large majority of both members and nonmembers perceived that older members were very important to the success of the 4-H program. While over 35.0 percent of the members and 31.0 percent of the nonmembers indicated that it was important that older members continue membership for a club to be successful.

Over 55.0 percent of 4-H members indicated they had several close friends who were also 4-H members, while slightly less than 50.0 percent of the nonmembers indicated they had several close friends in 4-H also.

An extremely large majority of current and former members indicated they had held an office in their local club. It was further revealed that 16.0 percent of the members and over 15.0 percent of the nonmembers had held an county office.

With regard to participation in competitive activities 62.3 percent of members and nonmembers combined reported that they "often" exhibited projects at county or state fairs. The second most frequent activity in which members and nonmembers participated "often" was exhibiting at livestock shows (44.5 percent of the respondents). Further findings reveal that the least participation occurred in the area of 4-H talks and judging contests.

The projects listed most frequently by both members and nonmembers were clothing, food-nutrition, sheep, arts and crafts, horse, swine, public speaking, photography, beef, and citizenship. The largest number of respondents listed clothing as their favorite project.

The 4-H sponsored trip in which both members and nonmembers had participated most frequently was State 4-H Round-Up. For both groups combined 30.2 percent had attended State 4-H Round-Up.

Approximately 75.0 percent of both members and nonmembers plan to attend college. Over 43.3 percent of both groups felt they would graduate from college.

Sixty-three percent of the members and 69.0 percent of the nonmembers had definite career plans. The most popular career choices for both groups were health professions, veterinary medicine, education, law, accounting, and business.

Responding to a question regarding what they liked most about 4-H, 82.0 percent of members and nonmembers combined indicated that friends was what they liked most about 4-H projects. Three other areas popular with members and nonmembers were developing new ideas and skills, acquiring the feeling of accomplishment, and helping others.

The things disliked most about the 4-H program by both members and nonmembers was the lack of teen involvement. A higher percent of nonmembers indicated this more than members.

School activities for both members and nonmembers was perceived as the most limiting factor with regard to competition with time spent on 4-H. Running a close second in competition for time spent on 4-H was homework. In addition, responsibilities at home and sports were also perceived as highly competitive with 4-H.

The most striking finding with regard to improving the 4-H program had to do with increasing the number of projects and activities related to teens. Approximately 86.0 percent of all respondents indicated that projects related to teens would be very helpful in improving 4-H programs. Prizes and awards was found to be significant in a chi square test of differences between members and nonmembers. Generally non-members valued "prizes and awards" as more important in improving 4-H than did members.

The three most frequent reasons given for senior members discontinuing their membership by both members and nonmembers was conflicts with other organizations, job responsibilities and no one else in the club was their age or had their interests.

The most frequent reasons given for senior members remaining involved in the 4-H program was competition for awards and serving in leadership roles at all levels. However, being a role model to younger members and the opportunity to learn through 4-H activities are also cited by members and nonmembers as being important reasons for remaining in 4-H.

The major findings reported above largely support the earlier research conducted by Maslow (1970), Herzberg (1947), Hedin & Simon (1980), Jenson, Young, Adams & Schvaneveldt (1982), Rouse (1974) and Forbes ((1978).

The findings that were unique from earlier research cited were that respondents felt most of their clubs had at least 10 members who were thirteen years old or older; they perceived that older members were very important to the success of the 4-H program; the events they participated in most often were county and state fairs; the thing disliked most about 4-H was the lack of teen involvement and they identified the need for more projects and activities closely related to teens' interests as the most important means of improving the 4-H program.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Females were 60.0 percent of the members but only 49.0 percent of the nonmembers. From this disparity, one could conclude that males are less likely to join 4-H but more likely to drop-out. Therefore, when increasing 4-H members among youth ages 13-19 is a goal, special attention must be paid to males as a target for both recruitment and retention.

The typical 4-H members in Oklahoma comes from a rural background. In view of the continuing shift from rural to urban, future 4-H members must be recruited from non-rural areas if present membership levels are to be sustained.

The encouragement of family members and friends was a strong influence in the decision to join 4-H. Nonmembers were influenced more by friends than parents. To encourage the involvement of family and friends, programs and special efforts toward this end should be continued and/or initiated. Parents should be strongly encouraged to continually support their youngsters' involvement in 4-H activities. Professional 4-H staff should give special recognition to the parents who encourage and support their children.

Both members and nonmembers reported other reasons for joining 4-H. The most frequently listed reasons in descending order of frequency were as follows; to show livestock, to pursue personal interests (wanted to join), to be involved in fun and interesting activities, and to learn more about projects. Therefore, the marketing of 4-H programs should consider the potential influence of family and friends and at the same time, the desire of youth to make autonomous decisions.

The presence of peers was a factor of importance in retention of 4-H members. Recruitment and retention efforts should focus strongly on the affiliation needs of youth as well as the achievement oriented needs.

The involvement of older 4-H members was considered very important to the success of the 4-H program. In order to retain older youth in the 4-H program, both county and state extension staff are strongly encouraged to provide a broad range of activities and programs relative to their age and interests.

County and state fairs were the competitive events that had the greatest participation from older members. With regard to competitive events, professional staff, 4-H leaders, and parents are encouraged to emphasize the importance of participating in public speaking events and judging contests. Participation in these events are encouraged due to the value of life skills that are acquired in decision making and public speaking.

College and career were a part of the long-range goals for both members and nonmembers. This provides an opportunity for 4-H agents and leaders to provide guidance to older youth in selecting projects that can enhance their knowledge and skills in advanced projects and at the same time influence their career choices. In addition, leaders and agents are strongly encouraged to emphasize the importance of further education and careers by providing seminars and curriculum related to vocational development. State 4-H specialists are encouraged to develop project manuals on careers for youth fifteen and older.

Long-term membership and active involvement was important to members seeking election to a district or state office. County Extension staff, 4-H leaders and parents should be encouraged to help members to develop their leadership potential. Professional staff are encouraged to provide programs on leadership, life skills and personal growth and development to retain older youth's involvement in all levels of the 4-H program.

A rather broad spectrum of 4-H projects were considered popular among members and nonmembers with much similarity in the traditional projects. To maintain current membership these "traditional" projects must be offered in addition to promoting "non-traditional" projects in an effort to reach more youth in small towns and cities.

The things most liked about their involvement in 4-H projects was affiliation with friends. Since involvement of friends was an important part of the members' participation, positive social activities should not be overlooked in local, county, district, and state events.

Both members and nonmembers were in agreement with regard to their dislikes about the lack of teen involvement in the 4-H program. In order for teens to become more actively involved in 4-H, leaders and agents should utilize their expertise in planning, organizing, and carrying out programs of their interests.

Since teens usually belong to several organizations and their time is limited, programs offered by 4-H must be relevant and of interest to them so they will decide to take time for 4-H.

The perception that there was considerable competition between 4-H and school activities was indicated among both members and nonmembers. With the current emphasis on academic performance and stricter school policies regarding release time for extracurricular activities staff, leaders, and parents should be encouraged to lessen the conflict between 4-H and other activities.

The opportunity to compete for awards, serve in leadership roles, and be a role model was influential in the decision for members to remain in 4-H. Parents, leaders, and agents need to recognize these decisions as opportunities to continually emphasize personal development, leadership development, and project achievement.

A strong ongoing 4-H program cannot be developed without retention of older members to serve as role models for younger 4-Hers. With more young people making definite decisions about college education today, State Extension 4-H specialists are strongly encouraged to reward outstanding project achievement with scholarships that can be used to further their education.

Summary

Professionals with 4-H responsibilities must heavily recruit potential members, 9-10 years of age, and provide positive experiences for them throughout their 4-H career so they will want to remain a part of this very important organization.

With an ever changing society and many conflicting issues facing youth today, 4-H must continue to make an impact on the lives of young people and help them achieve to their fullest potential.

Recommendation for Further Research

This study compared the characteristics and perceptions of 4-H of members and nonmembers. An additional study focused specifically on those who choose to discontinue 4-H membership would be helpful in understanding their needs, aspirations and goals.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
COVER LETTERS

COVER LETTER FOR MEMBERS

DATE: April 19, 1989

TO: Current 4-H Teens

FROM: Nancy Thomason
Ext. 4-H Agent, Payne County

Charles Cox
Interim Assistant Director, OCES,
4-H and Youth Development

You can Help Make a Difference for Oklahoma 4-H. Because of your involvement in the 4-H Program, you are one of a select few being asked to complete the enclosed 4-H Member Questionnaire. This survey is being conducted to find out how you feel about 4-H, what competes most with your time, and what new programs you would like to see offered for older 4-H youth. Your survey has been coded to assist me with follow up procedures, but I can assure you that information regarding your identity will not be reported in this study.

Would you please take just a few minutes of your time to complete the enclosed 4-H Member Questionnaire and return in the self-addressed stamped envelope, Courthouse Room 103, Stillwater, OK 74074, on or before May 1, 1989.

Your opinions will help to strengthen the 4-H Program in Oklahoma and assist me in completing my Master's Degree. Thank you for your cooperation and time in completing the questionnaire.

ch

Enclosure

COVER LETTER FOR NONMEMBERS

DATE: April 19, 1989

TO: Former 4-H Teens

FROM: Nancy Thomason
Ext. 4-H Agent, Payne County

Charles Cox
Interim Assistant Director, OCES,
4-H and Youth Development

Your help is needed in obtaining information that can help make a difference in the quality of the Oklahoma 4-H Program. Because of your past involvement in 4-H, I am asking a selected group of former 4-H members to complete the enclosed 4-H Member Questionnaire. This survey is being conducted to find out how you feel about 4-H, what competes most with your time, and what new programs you would like to see offered for older 4-H youth. Your survey has been coded to assist me with follow up procedures, but I can assure you that information regarding your identity will not be reported in this study.

Would you please take just a few minutes of your time to complete the enclosed 4-H Member Questionnaire and return in the self-addressed stamped envelope, Courthouse Room 103, Stillwater, OK 74074, on or before May 1, 1989.

Your opinions will help to strengthen the 4-H Program in Oklahoma and assist me in completing my Master's Degree. Thank you for your cooperation and time in completing the questionnaire.

ch

enclosure

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

4-H Member Questionnaire

Directions: Please complete the following questions to the best of your ability. The information gathered in this questionnaire will be used to help evaluate and improve the 4-H program in Oklahoma. Your responses will be held in the strictest of confidence.

A. Background Information

1. Are you currently a 4-H member?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. Age on January 1, 1989 _____
3. What is your sex?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
4. Where do you live? (*check only one*)
 - a. Farm or ranch
 - b. Rural, small town (*under 10,000*)
 - c. Small city (*10,000 - 49,999*)
 - d. Large city (*50,000 or over*)
5. What age were you when you became a 4-H member? (*check only one*)
 - a. Nine (*9*) years old
 - b. Ten (*10*) years old
 - c. Eleven (*11*) years old
 - d. Twelve (*12*) years old
 - e. Thirteen (*13*) years old
 - f. Fourteen (*14*) years old
 - g. Fifteen (*15*) years old or older
6. Why did you join this organization? (*check as many that are true for you*)
 - a. My parents said it was a good idea
 - b. My brother(s) and/or sister(s) belong
 - c. My friends encouraged me to join
 - d. My 4-H leader asked me to join
 - e. My County Extension Agent asked me to join
 - f. Media (*newspaper, radio, or T.V.*)
 - g. other _____
7. Check the description that best describes the make-up of your local 4-H club. (*check only one*)
 - a. A junior-senior club with separate club meetings for older and younger members
 - b. A senior club with all ages meeting together, but special programs planned for older members
 - c. A 4-H club with all age levels meeting and working together
 - d. A project club with all age levels meeting and working together

8. In your opinion, about how many youth, age 13 or older currently belong to the 4-H club of which you were/are a member? *(check one)*
 Less than 5 5 to 10 Over 10
9. How important do you think older members are to a successful 4-H Program. *(check one)*
 Very important Important Not important
10. How many of your close friends belong to 4-H? *(check one)*
 None 1 or 2 Several
11. What level of offices have you held during your membership in 4-H? *(check all that apply)*
 a. Local
 b. County
 c. District
 d. State
12. List your four favorite 4-H projects.
 a. _____ b. _____
 c. _____ d. _____

13-18 Below is a list of common 4-H activities and events. Please read the list carefully and after each activity, check the degree to which you have participated.

Activity	Never					Often
13. Give a demonstration(s)	0	1	2	3	4	
14. Give a talk(s)	0	1	2	3	4	
15. Exhibit at county or state fair(s)	0	1	2	3	4	
16. Exhibit at livestock show(s)	0	1	2	3	4	
17. Member of judging team(s)	0	1	2	3	4	
18. Attend teen leader meetings	0	1	2	3	4	

19. Below is a list of 4-H trips. Please read and check those trips or conferences in which you have participated.
- State 4-H Congress Citizenship Washington Focus
 Kansas City Conference State 4-H Round-Up
 Exchange Trip Out of State Judging Event
 National 4-H Conference National 4-H Congress
20. What are your educational plans? *(check all that are true for you)*
 a. Graduate from high school grades (10-12)
 b. Attend a vocational school to learn a trade
 c. Attend a private school to learn a skill
 d. Attend college
 e. Graduate from college with a bachelor's degree
 f. Attend graduate school
21. Have you decided upon a career to pursue? Yes _____ No _____
 If yes, please list the general area or specific choice:

B. Perceptions of 4-H

22. What are the things you liked most about your 4-H project(s)? (check all that are true for you)

- a. The new ideas and skills I received
 b. The feeling of accomplishment
 c. The thrill of winning over the other 4-H members
 d. The award, medal, trophy, or money I received
 e. The recognition I received
 f. Making friends
 g. Helping others

23. What are the things you dislike about the 4-H Program? (check all that are true for you)

- a. 4-H Leaders
 b. Cost of projects
 c. Meeting times
 d. Lack of teen involvement
 e. Record keeping
 f. Other _____

24. What competes most with the time you spend on 4-H? (check all that are true for you)

- a. Part-time job
 b. Sports
 c. Other organizations
 d. Homework
 e. Responsibilities at home
 f. School activities
 g. Other _____

25-31 Below is a list of items that could be used to improve the 4-H program.

Circle the degree to which you feel each item would help improve 4-H.

4-H Should Have:	None					Very Much
	0	1	2	3	4	
25. Parent participation.	0	1	2	3	4	
26. Prizes and awards	0	1	2	3	4	
27. Help from 4-H leaders	0	1	2	3	4	
28. Interesting meetings	0	1	2	3	4	
29. Projects related to teens interest	0	1	2	3	4	
30. Programs that are not competitive	0	1	2	3	4	
31. Recreational activities	0	1	2	3	4	

32. Why do you think some 4-H club members drop out of 4-H club work in senior years? (Check the three most important reasons)
- a. Conflicts with other activities and organizations (school and community)
 - b. They have a job and no longer have time for 4-H
 - c. They are teased about 4-H membership by non-members
 - d. Their parents do not support and encourage them to belong to 4-H
 - e. Their peers do not encourage them to belong to 4-H
 - f. No one else in the 4-H club is their age or has their interest
 - g. 4-H does not have projects and activities which challenge them
 - h. They disliked the competition in 4-H
 - i. They didn't get the awards and recognition they felt they had earned in 4-H
33. Why do you think some 4-H club members remain in senior 4-H club work? (check the one of most importance)
- a. The club offers them an opportunity to learn
 - b. They have interesting and challenging projects
 - c. They hold leadership roles in different levels of the organization
 - d. They like to compete for awards in the 4-H events that are offered in county, district, and state
 - e. They like serving as a role model to younger 4-H members
34. What type of additional programs would you like to see offered to older 4-H members?

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP POSTCARD

POSTCARD FOR MEMBERS AND NONMEMBERS

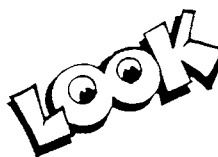
Dear Teen,

May 2, 1989

Approximately two weeks ago I mailed you a 4-H Member Questionnaire to find out your opinions of the 4-H Program in Oklahoma. This is a reminder asking you to complete and return the questionnaire within two days if you have not done so already. It is important that you be included in this study so the results can accurately represent the opinions of teens in Oklahoma. If by some chance you did not receive a questionnaire or it was misplaced please call me at 405-624-9300 extension 23 and I will gladly send you a new one. I appreciate your participation and look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Nancy Thomason
Extension 4-H Agent, Payne County

The word "LOOK" is written in a large, bold, bubbly font. The two 'O's are stylized to look like eyes with large pupils and small mouths, giving the word a playful, cartoonish appearance. The letters are white with black outlines and are set against a dark, irregular background.

VITA

Nancy Lynn Thomason

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: CHARACTERISTICS RELATED TO RETENTION AND DROPOUT OF
TEENAGE 4-H YOUTH IN OKLAHOMA

Major Field: Home Economics Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Ardmore, Oklahoma, January 6, 1955, the daughter
of Nancy Sue and Robert Lee Thomason Jr.

Education: Graduated from Graham High School at Graham, Oklahoma in
May, 1973; received an Associate of Science Degree in Home
Economics from Murray State Jr. College, Tishomingo, Oklahoma, in
May 1975; received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Home
Economics Education from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater,
Oklahoma, December, 1977. Completed requirements for the Master
of Science Degree from Oklahoma State University at Stillwater,
Oklahoma, in July, 1989.

Professional Experience: County Extension 4-H Agent, Payne County,
Stillwater, Oklahoma from February, 1978 - present.

Professional Organizations: Oklahoma Association of Extension Home
Economist; Oklahoma Association of Extension 4-H Agents; Delta
Kappa Gamma; Epsilon Sigma Phi; Omicron Nu.