

EFFECTIVENESS OF COUNTY SHARING COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS AS
PERCEIVED BY OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION AGENTS

By

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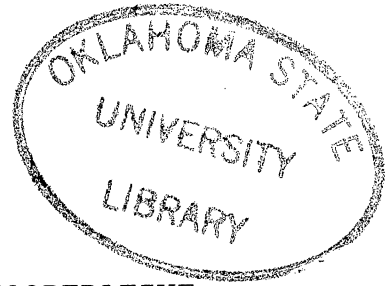
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Study	2
Objectives of the Study.	2
Assumptions of the Study	3
Scope of the Study	3
Definitions.	3
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.	6
History of the Cooperative Extension Service	6
History of the Oklahoma Cooperative	
Extension Service.	8
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service	
Meeting the Need	9
Funding and Funding Problems	10
The County Sharing Concept	11
Summary of Review of Literature.	12
III. METHODOLOGY	14
Introduction	14
The Population	14
Selection and Development of the Instrument.	15
The Instrument	17
Analysis of Data	19
IV. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA	20
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	47
Introduction	47
Purpose.	47
Summary of Population.	47
Findings	48
Conclusions.	52
Recommendations.	58
Recommendations for Additional Research. . .	62
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.	63

Chapter	Page
APPENDIXES	64
APPENDIX A - INSTRUMENT	65
APPENDIX B - LETTERS	68

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Population By District.	16
II. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They Utilized Program Planning Advisory Committees and Their Perceived Effectiveness.	21
III. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They utilized County Advisory Councils and Their Perceived Effectiveness	22
IV. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They Utilized Community Leaders and Committees and Their Perceived Effectiveness.	24
V. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They Utilized Area, District and State Specialists and Their Perceived Effectiveness	26
VI. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They Utilize Inservice Training and Their Perceived Effectiveness	28
VII. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They Utilize Field Demonstrations and/or Workshops and Their Perceived Effectiveness .	29
VIII. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They Utilize Multi-county Educational Programs and Their Perceived Effectiveness. .	31
IX. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They utilize Resources (time, travel, etc.) Better and Their Perceive Effectiveness . . .	33
X. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They Spend More Time Organizing and Managing Resources Available Instead of Direct Clientele Contact and Their Perceived Effectiveness	34
XI. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not the Needs of the Clientele Are Being Met and Their Perceived Effectiveness	36

Table	Page
XII. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They Conduct Educational Programs in: Rural Development, Home Economics, Agriculture or 4-H and Their Perceived Effectiveness. . . .	39
XIII. Distribution of Respondents by Whether or not They Feel it is Economical to Cross County Lines and Their Perceived Effectiveness. . .	41
XIV. Respondents Perception of the Quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service as a Result of the Utilization of the County Sharing Concept.	42
XV. Respondents Perception of the Conflicts Between Co-workers as a Result of the Utilization of the County Sharing Concept. .	44
XVI. Respondents Perception of the Number of Program Areas and the Number of Counties They Would Rather Work if Given a Choice . .	45
XVII. Summary of the Respondents Perceived Effectiveness of County Sharing Cooperative Extension Personel Assignments	50
XVIII. Summary of the Respondents Perception of the Oklahoma Extension Personel Assignments County Sharing Program	53

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During fiscal year 1987, the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service (OCES) was delt several financial blows. Funding from the federal and state level was cut by 4.9% and 10.01% respectively. Costs of OCES continued to rise. The county share of the OCES budget had not been increased since 1981. In order to keep up with costs, the county share of the OCES budget was increased. This increase was a hardship for some counties and funding increases could not be met. Staff reductions in those counties followed.

In order for OCES to meet its obligations of providing educational programs in agriculture, home economics, 4-H and youth and rural development to the people in the county, while providing agents knowledgeable in the four program areas, a county sharing concept was designed. For example, an agent with expertise in one program area would share that expertise with a neighboring county lacking in that program area.

Since this is a new concept for Oklahoma, a need has been recognized to determine the effectiveness of the county sharing concept as perceived by the Cooperative Extension agents.

Statement of the Problem

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service agents (including 4-H, Agriculture, Home Economics and Horticulture) who have been re-assigned, in that they are currently responsible for program area(s) in more than one county, have not been formally surveyed to determine their perceptions relative to the effectiveness of county sharing responsibilities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of county sharing Cooperative Extension personnel assignments as perceived by Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Agents.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine county extension agents preference relative to program area responsibilities either in a single county or within a sharing group.
2. To determine county extension agents perceptions relative to:
 - A. Economical aspects of county sharing.
 - B. The change of educational techniques of county sharing.
 - C. The planning and conducting of programs with the county sharing concept;

- D. Whether or not clientele needs are being met as a result of county sharing;
- E. The degrees of compatibility among themselves relative to the county sharing concept.

Assumptions of the Study

1. The instrument (questionnaire) elicited accurate responses from county extension agents.
2. The county extension agents provided an honest, open perception of what they actually perceived relative to the questionnaire.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study included all (18) the county extension agents, including agriculture, home economics, 4-H, and horticulture, who had county sharing responsibilities in Oklahoma in 1986-87.

Definitions

The definitions used are as they apply to this study:

Cooperative Extension Service. The mission of the extension service is to assure that information gained through research at the Land Grant College is distributed, free of charge, to all citizens in useful and practical ways that help achieve quality life for all.

Extension Agents, 4-H (4-H Agent). He or she is respon-

sible for 4-H programs in the county or county sharing group of location. They are also accountable to the County Extension Director.

Agriculture (Agriculture Agent). He or she is responsible for Agriculture programs in the county or county sharing group of location. They may have dual responsibilities for 4-H programs. They are also accountable to the County Extension Director.

Home Economics (Home Economist). He or she is responsible for Home Economics programs in the county or county sharing group of location. They may have dual responsibilities for 4-H programs. They are also accountable to the County Extension Director.

Horticulture (Horticulture Agent). He or she is responsible for Horticulture programs in the county or county sharing group of location. They are also accountable to the County Extension Director.

County Extension Director. Is the administrative head of a county staff. Has the total responsibility for total programs covering 4-H, Agriculture, Home Economics and Rural Development in the county of location.

County Sharing. A plan, by which extension agents share their area of expertise with a neighboring county lacking in that area.

Program Area. The program areas for Cooperative Extension Service are: Agriculture, Home Economics, 4-H and

Youth and Rural Development.

Program Planning Advisory Committee, (PPAC). Each county has four PPACs, one for each program area. Each committee meets once per year to make recommendations to the extension agent concerning needs of county clientele.

County Advisory Council, (CAC). Each county has a CAC. The CAC is composed of two or three members of each PPAC. The CAC meets twice each year to receive updates from the extension agents about programming and to express their ideas.

Effectiveness. Extension agent being able to reach his/her goals and objectives.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter was to present a review of selected literature which was related to this study. The intent of this study was to determine the effectiveness of county sharing Cooperative Extension personnel assignments as perceived by Oklahoma Cooperative Extension agents. The major areas included in this review of literature were:

- (1) history of the Cooperative Extension Service, (2) history of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service,
- (3) Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service meeting the need,
- (4) funding problems for Cooperative Extension Service in fiscal 1987, (5) the county sharing concept, (6) summary of review of literature.

History of the Cooperative Extension Service

Cooperative Extension educational programs were formally introduced in 1914 with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. However, informal agriculture education was probably started by the American Philosophical Society, founded in 1743. A long time leader of the society was Benjamin Franklin.

In 1857, Congressman Justin Smith Morrill introduced a land-grant college bill. On July 2, 1862, President Abraham

Lincoln signed the bill.

The 1862 Morrill Act provided for at least one college in each state.

. . . . where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific or classical studies, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and mechanic arts (Anderson, 1976, p.161).

Research was firmly established as a recognized function of the land-grant colleges and universities with the passage of the Hatch Act in 1887. The Hatch Act laid the ground work for Agriculture Experiment Stations at one college in each state. These stations and the information they produced also eventually led to the establishment of the Cooperative Extension Service.

The first of thirty two bills filed to finance extension work by agriculture colleges was introduced in December, 1909. President Woodrow Wilson signed the Smith-Lever Act on May 18, 1914. The Smith-Lever Act provided for cooperation between the land-grant colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture in conducting agriculture extension work. Smith-Lever specified that the work was

. . . .to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics and to encourage the application of the same (Bruner, 1949, p.14).

Establishment of a rural educational system was not easy. The Smith-Lever Act received endorsements from the

National Grange and the Farmers' Union but there was little enthusiasm on the part of rural America. Trained professionals were almost impossible to find. A few were found however, with the mental, emotional and physical capabilities needed for the job.

By the time of the great drought of 1930 and the accompanying depression, the Extension Service had established itself as an outstanding organization, free of political control and staffed with conscientious hard-working people who were slowly bringing an educational revolution to rural America (Sanders, 1966, p.23).

History of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

Extension work began in Oklahoma in 1907 with the hiring of a United States Department of Agriculture Agent (Roberts, 1965, p.5).

He was stationed at Ardmore and was assigned the eastern part of Oklahoma. The western part of the state was supervised out of Wichita Falls, Texas. The agents job was to conduct demonstrations. When the Smith-Lever Act was passed, extension was growing in Oklahoma. There were 44 county agents, two district agents, 17 women agents, a state agent and two assistant state agents.

By 1937, at least two agents were in each county in Oklahoma. One for agriculture, the other for home economics. 4-H agents were hired on the county level also. This type of staffing pattern has continued with an agriculture agent and home economist in each county and 4-H and horticulture agents in larger counties.

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

Meeting the Need

Being able to quickly adjust its' abilities, the Cooperative Extension Service has always been an agency that could adapt programs to changing times and emergencies. This was shown in World War I by helping increase agriculture production. It was also shown during the drought areas of the late 30's and during the depression days. It also made adjustments during World War II.

The very nature of the Extension Service Agency has been excellent in communications. Quick communication has always been possible from Washington, D.C., direct to the state, from the state direct to all the counties and from the counties direct to the leaders of the county and from the leaders direct to the people at the grass roots. This is what one of the greatest humanitarian agencies of the United States is doing for people (Roberts, 1976, p.98).

After World War II, farm efficiency increased. Less farmers were needed to produce on the same number of acres. During the late 50's and 60's, farm programs were implemented to reduce production. The Cooperative Extension Service had to change with the times.

Marketing education gained new prominence and oriented to three basic clients -- the farmer viewed as a marketer, the businessmen as the middleman, and the citizen-consumer bent on judicious buying at the supermarket. Special federal appropriations under the Agricultural Marketing Act gave national impetus to the marketing emphasis and to heady discussions about the agri-business frontier. At last, it seemed, a bridge had become visible to the

world beyond the farm and the local community. There was logic about it, too; research and education, having had a hand in bountiful production, would now follow it all the way to the urban consuming family (Miller, 1973, p.19).

Management and marketing revitalized the Cooperative Extension Service. Finances were being increased from the federal level. Specialized agents were being hired to assist county agents in teaching specific areas.

The modern farmer is dependent on many links with the outside world which he himself cannot provide. If he is to use improved seed he must purchase it. In order to buy fertilizers and pesticides, he needs merchants nearby from whom to purchase them. He must sell most of his products and, since the ultimate consumers of these are many miles away, he must sell through "middlemen", whether these be private merchants, or cooperative societies, or governmental agencies. Because some inputs are expensive he may need credit. He certainly needs to be near a road, because fertilizers, grain, fodder, fruits, and vegetables are heavy. And the modern farmer constantly needs new information and new skills. Improved varieties do him no good unless he knows about them and knows how to use them. He cannot apply the proper pesticide unless he can identify different diseases and infestations and knows what to do about each. He cannot make good decisions about when and to whom to sell his products unless he has independent knowledge about current prices in different market-places. Moreover, since one of the features of a modern agriculture is that it is steadily increasing in productivity, the modern farmer is dependent on research organizations. Not only must more productive techniques be constantly invented or developed but they must be tested near where each farmer lives to see what they will accomplish locally (Mosher, 1978, p.1).

Funding and Funding Problems

The Extension Service is truly a "cooperative" venture among three levels of government-

federal, state, and local. All three share in the financial support and program development but not necessarily in equal portions. Though there is considerable variation by county and state, on the average, about 38 percent of Extension's budget comes from the federal level, 44 percent from the states, and 18 percent from local governments (Warner, 1984, p.14-15).

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service receives funds from the federal government through the United States Department of Agriculture, the state government through Oklahoma State University appropriations and from the counties. The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service budget is currently broken down in the following manner: 30 percent federal, 50 percent state and 20 percent county.

The county share of the total budget had not been increased since 1981. To keep the counties at a fair share level, an increase in county support was requested for fiscal 87. Some counties could not meet the criteria for various reasons.

Federal funds for the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service were cut by 4.9 percent and state funds were cut by 10.01 percent for fiscal 87.

The funding problems led to a hiring freeze in January, 1986 for all Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service positions. This hiring freeze was lifted for in house transfers in June 1986.

The County Sharing Concept

Those counties that could not meet their funding obli-

gations were forced to reduce county staff. All staff that were in this situation were given the opportunity to transfer to another county.

The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service administration wanted all program areas (Rural Development, Home Economics, 4-H, and Agriculture) to be covered by a county agent. A county sharing concept was implemented where possible (Bogle, 1986).

County sharing consists of an agent in one county with expertise in home economics (for example) sharing job responsibilities with a neighboring county lacking home economics but having expertise in agriculture. The sharing concept allows all program areas to be covered within a county sharing group.

Summary of Review of Literature

It was determined, based on the review of literature, that the Cooperative Extension Service has been extremely important in the development of agriculture, home economics and 4-H throughout the nation and in Oklahoma. Responsibilities lie with federal, state and county government to fund the agency. Therefore, if funding is inadequate, reduction in force will take place with all program areas being covered by professional county staff through a sharing arrangement where possible.

Letters were sent to the Directors for Cooperative

Extension Service in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan asking for information concerning their county sharing arrangements. Marvin T. Beatly, Associate Dean--Personnel, University of Wisconsin replied. In his letter he stated:

. . . .Within the past year we have had two pairs of counties formally undertake a process of sharing agents. It is too early to have any formal written evaluative material on the success of this effort. .
(Beatty, 1987).

Dan Panshin, Associate Director Human Resource Development, University of Minnesota; also responded to the letter. In his letter he stated:

. . . .we are planning to implement a county clustering arrangement starting in July of this year. At this point we have county clustering worked out only on a conceptual basis and do not yet have details
(Panshin, 1987).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methods and procedures used to conduct the study. The intent of the study was to determine the effectiveness of sharing Cooperative Extension personnel assignments as perceived by Oklahoma Cooperative Extension agents based upon certain criteria. In order to accomplish the purpose and objectives of this study, it was necessary to determine the population and develop an instrument which would provide the necessary information. A procedure for the collection of data was established and the methods to be used to analyze the data were chosen. The data for this study was collected using a mail survey, June, 1987.

The Population

The population of this study consisted of all county extension agents working under a county sharing arrangement or those recently transferred from a county sharing assignment. The population was determined by the author and the district directors for the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. The eighteen agents comprising the population

represented all county sharing groups in the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service.

Table I reflects the total population of this study by district in Oklahoma.

Selection and Development of the Instrument

In the preparation of the instrument to meet the objectives of the study, the first step was to review and evaluate the instruments used in other studies.

In the analysis of other methods of data gathering, the questionnaire method was determined most appropriate to meet the study objectives. Since there was a relatively small number in the survey population, a mail survey was chosen as most reliable requiring the least amount of time and expense. Personal interviews and telephone surveys were ruled out due to the open ended questions desired in the survey. Hand delivering the questionnaire was deleted due to the time involved.

Considering expense and time, it was decided that mailing the questionnaire to agents would offer the best results. Concern of no agent response was not a concern due to the number of the population and the newness of the county sharing concept. A code was used, however, to determine respondents and mail a second questionnaire if necessary.

The instrument was of original design and developed to gather information for this study. The Northeast District

TABLE I
POPULATION BY DISTRICT

District	Number of Agents	Percentage
Northwest	1	5.60
Northeast	9	50.00
Southeast	6	33.30
Southwest	2	11.10
TOTAL	18	100.00

Director, made suggestions for question content. Questions were brainstormed by the author and major advisor. A list of yes/no questions were compiled by the author and reviewed by the major advisor. Upon reviewing the questions a decision was made to utilize a yes/no response to basic job related activities and rate the effectiveness of the activity if it was being utilized. Two open ended questions were chosen along with two forced choice response questions. After the list of questions used in the questionnaire was completed, the next step was to make necessary revisions and then test the applicability and continuity of the questions to be used. The instrument was given for review to the Associate Director for the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service.

Throughout the developmental process of the questionnaire, the length of the instrument was considered. Some individuals felt that if the instrument was too long, completion by agents would be sporadic. The length and types of questions was carefully considered in the preparation of the instrument. The instrument was designed to require less than ten minutes of the agents time and still provide the needed information.

The Instrument

To gather data concerning factors which influence the effectiveness of county sharing Cooperative Extension

personnel assignments as perceived by Oklahoma Cooperative Extension agents, two open ended questions of qualitative nature were included, the remaining questions were force choice responses. The questions were divided into two sections; first, one which will determine if the agent is utilizing basic job related activities working under a county sharing arrangement and the effectiveness as perceived by the county extension agent of the activity if it is being used; and secondly, force responses to related questions.

The questions were developed from specific factors that are related to the county extension agents' profession, more specifically those factors associated with basic job related activities and their effectiveness as perceived by the county extension agent working under a county sharing arrangement. Each draft of the instrument was reviewed by the authors' major advisor and upon completion of each draft revisions were made. Once the questions were fully developed and implemented as the survey instrument, the drafted instrument was tested by Occupational and Agricultural Research and Design class on March 31, 1987.

After these considerations and revisions, the instrument was ready to be mailed to the county extension agents with county sharing assignments. It was important to note that response to any questions was left up to the decision of the respondents.

The information obtained from the instrument provided a

means for identifying basic job related activities and their effectiveness as perceived by the county extension agent with county sharing assignments. The questionnaire contained a scale of categories for the county extension agents to rate the effectiveness of basic job related activities with variables in four major areas of influence: ineffective, somewhat effective, effective, very effective.

A four point "Likert-type" scale of categories was used to allow the agents to rate the effectiveness of basic job related activities with each of the selected variables on the questionnaire.

The response categories were assigned the following numerical values: ineffective=1, somewhat effective=2, effective=3, very effective=4. Real limits were set at 1.0 to 1.49 for ineffective; 1.50 to 2.49 for somewhat effective; 2.50 to 3.49 for effective; 3.50 to 4.0 for very effective.

Analysis of Data

Data from the questionnaire was analyzed utilizing descriptive statistics. It is important to point out that frequency distribution includes numbers and percent. In addition, mean scores were used to interpret the data.

The primary use of descriptive statistics is to describe information or data through the use of numbers. The characteristics of groups of numbers representing information or data are called descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics are used to describe groups of numerical data such as test scores, numbers or hours of instruction, or the number of students enrolled in a particular course (Key, 1981, p.126).

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this chapter was to report the results from the questionnaire used to conduct the study. The intent of the study was to determine the effectiveness of the sharing of Cooperative Extension personnel assignments as perceived by Oklahoma Cooperative Extension agents based on certain criteria.

The scope of the study included a total of 18 Cooperative Extension agents who were working under a county sharing arrangement as of June, 1987. The questionnaire was administered to eighteen Cooperative Extension agents and of the eighteen included in the study, eighteen, or 100.0 percent responded to the questionnaire.

Table II indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they utilized Program Planning Advisory Committees and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Are you utilizing Program Planning Advisory Committees?" eighteen respondents (or 100.0 percent) replied "yes" and zero respondents replied "no". Of the eighteen respondents who replied "yes" they were utilizing Program Planning Advisory Committees, five (or 27.78 percent) indicated they made somewhat effective use of the Program Planning Advisory Committees, twelve (or 66.67 percent) indicated they made

TABLE II

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY
 UTILIZED PROGRAM PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEES
 AND THEIR PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response				Degree of Effectiveness								Mean Response	Category		
No*		Yes		Ineffective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective				Total N	%
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
0	0	18	100	0	0	5	27.78	12	66.67	1	5.55	18	100	2.78	Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not utilize Program Planning Advisory Committees were not provided the opportunity to rate the degree of effectiveness of the use of Program Planning Advisory Committees.

effective use of Program Planning Advisory Committees, and one (or 5.55 percent) indicated they made very effective use of the Program Planning Advisory Committees. The mean response of the eighteen respondents who replied "yes" they were utilizing Program Planning Advisory Committees was 2.78 which indicates that the utilization of Program Planning Advisory Committees was effective.

Table III indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they utilized County Advisory Councils and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Are you utilizing the County Advisory Council?" fifteen respondents (or 83.33 percent) replied "yes" and three respondents (or 16.67 percent) replied "no". Of the fifteen respondents who replied "yes" they were utilizing County Advisory Councils, eight (or 53.33 percent) indicated they made somewhat effective use of County Advisory Councils and seven (or 46.67 percent) indicated they made effective use of County Advisory Councils. The mean response of the fifteen respondents who replied "yes" they were utilizing the County Advisory Council was 2.47 which indicated that the utilization of the County Advisory Council was somewhat effective.

Table IV indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they utilized community leaders and committees and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Are you utilizing community leaders and committees?" eighteen

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY
 UTILIZED COUNTY ADVISORY COUNCILS AND THEIR
 PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response				Degree of Effectiveness								Mean Response	Category		
No *		Yes		Ineffective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective				Total N %	
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
3	16.67	15	83.33	0	0	8	53.33	7	46.67	0	0	15	100	2.47	Somewhat Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not utilize County Advisory Councils were not given the opportunity to rate the effectiveness of the use of County Advisory Councils.

TABLE IV

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY UTILIZED
COMMUNITY LEADERS AND COMMITTEES AND THEIR
PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response				Degree of Effectiveness								Total N %	Mean Response	Category
No* n %	Yes n %	Ineffective n %	Somewhat Effective n %	Effective n %	Very Effective n %									
0	18	100	1	5.5	3	16.67	10	55.56	4	22.22	18	100	2.94	Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not utilize community leaders and committees were not given the opportunity to rate the degree of effectiveness of the use of community leaders and committees.

respondents (or 100.0 percent) replied "yes" and zero respondents replied "no". Of the eighteen who replied "yes" they were utilizing community leaders and committees, one (or 5.55 percent) indicated they made ineffective use of community leaders and committees, three (or 16.67 percent) indicated they made somewhat effective use of community leaders and committees, ten (or 55.56 percent) indicated they made effective use of community leaders and committees and four (or 22.22 percent) indicated they made very effective use of community leaders and committees. The mean response of the eighteen respondents who replied "yes" they were utilizing community leaders and committees was 2.94 which indicated that the utilization of community leaders and committees was effective.

Table V indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they utilize area, district and state specialists and their perceived effectiveness. When asked "Are you utilizing area, district and state specialists?" eighteen respondents (or 100.00 percent) replied "yes" and zero replied "no". Of the eighteen respondents who replied "yes" they were utilizing area, district, and state specialists, one (or 5.55 percent) indicated they made ineffective use of area, district and state specialists, three (or 16.67 percent) indicated they made somewhat effective use of area, district and state specialists, ten (or 55.56 percent) indicated they made effective use of area, district and state specialists,

TABLE V

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY UTILIZED
 AREA, DISTRICT AND STATE SPECIALISTS AND THEIR
 PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response				Degree of Effectiveness								Mean Response	Category		
No*	Yes	Ineffective		Somewhat	Effective	Very	Total								
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%				
0	0	18	100	1	5.55	3	16.67	10	55.56	4	22.22	18	100	2.94	Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not utilize area, district and state specialists were not provided the opportunity to rate the effectiveness of the use of area, district and state specialists.

and four (or 22.22 percent) indicated they made very effective use of area, district and state specialists. The mean response of the eighteen who replied "yes" they were utilizing area, district and state specialists was 2.94, which indicated that the utilization of area, district and state specialists was effective.

Table VI indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they utilize inservice training and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Are you utilizing inservice training?" eighteen respondents (or 100.00 percent) replied "yes" and zero replied "no". Of the eighteen respondents who replied "yes" they were utilizing inservice training, five (or 27.78 percent) indicated they made somewhat effective use of inservice training, eight (or 44.44 percent) indicated they made effective use of inservice training, and five (or 27.78 percent) indicated they made very effective use of inservice training. The mean response of the eighteen who answered "yes" they were utilizing inservice training was 3.00 which indicated that the utilization of inservice training was effective.

Table VII indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they utilize field demonstrations and/or workshops and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Are you utilizing field demonstrations and/or workshops?" fourteen (or 77.78 percent) replied "yes" and four (or 22.22 percent) replied "no". Of the fourteen respondents who

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY
 UTILIZE INSERVICE TRAINING AND THEIR
 PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response				Degree of Effectiveness								Mean Response	Category		
No*		Yes		Ineffective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective				Total N	Total %
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
0	0	18	100	0	0	5	27.78	8	44.44	5	27.78	18	100	3.00	Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not utilize inservice training were not provided the opportunity to rate the degree of perceived effectiveness of the use of inservice training.

TABLE VII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY
 UTILIZE FIELD DEMONSTRATIONS AND/OR WORKSHOPS
 AND THEIR PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response				Degree of Effectiveness						Mean Response	Category
No*	Yes	Ineffective	Somewhat	Effective	Very	Total					
n %	n %	n %	Effective n %	Effective n %	Effective n %	N %					
4 22.22	14 77.78	0 0	4 28.57	8 57.14	2 14.29	14 100			2.86	Effective	

* Respondents indicating they did not utilize field demonstrations and/or workshops were not provided the opportunity to rate the degree of effectiveness of the use of field demonstrations and/or workshops.

replied "yes" they were utilizing field demonstrations and/or workshops, four (or 28.57 percent) indicated they made somewhat effective use of field demonstrations and/or workshops, eight (or 57.14 percent) indicated they made effective use of field demonstrations and/or workshops, and two (or 14.29 percent) indicated they made very effective use of field demonstrations and/or workshops. The mean response of the fourteen respondents who answered "yes" they were utilizing field demonstrations and/or workshops was 2.86 which indicated that the utilization of field demonstrations and/or workshops was effective.

Table VIII indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they utilize multi-county educational programs and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Are you utilizing multi-county educational programs?" sixteen respondents (or 88.89 percent) replied "yes" and two (or 11.11 percent) replied "no". Of the sixteen respondents who replied "yes" they were utilizing multi-county educational programs, five (or 31.25 percent) indicated they made somewhat effective use of multi-county educational programs, nine (or 56.25 percent) indicated they made effective use of multi-county educational programs and two (or 12.50 percent) indicated they made very effective use of multi-county educational programs. The mean response of the sixteen respondents who answered "yes" they were utilizing multi-county educational programs was 2.81 which indicated that

TABLE VIII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY
 UTILIZE MULTI-COUNTY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND THEIR
 PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response		Degree of Effectiveness										Mean Response	Category		
No n %	Yes n %	Ineffective n %	Somewhat Effective n %	Effective n %	Very Effective n %	Total N %									
2	11.11	16	88.89	0	0	5	31.25	9	56.25	2	12.50	16	100	2.81	Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not utilize multi-county educational programs were not provided the opportunity to rate the degree of effectiveness of the use of multi-county educational programs.

the utilization of multi-county educational programs was effective.

Table IX indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they utilize resources (time, travel, etc.) better and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Are you able to utilize resources (time, travel, etc.) better?" eleven (or 61.11 percent) replied "yes" and seven (or 38.89 percent) replied "no". Of the eleven who replied "yes" they were able to utilize resources (time, travel, etc.) better, five (or 45.45 percent) indicated they made somewhat effective better use of resources (time, travel, etc.), five (or 45.45 percent) indicated they made effective better use of resources (time, travel, etc.), and one (or 9.10 percent) indicated they made very effective better use of resources (time, travel, etc.) The mean response of the eleven respondents who answered "yes" they were able to utilize resources (time, travel, etc.) better was 2.64 which indicates that they were effective in making better use of resources (time, travel, etc.).

Table X indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they spend more time organizing and managing resources available instead of direct clientele contact and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Do you spend more time organizing and managing resources available to you instead of direct clientele contact?" twelve (or 66.67 percent) replied "yes" and six (or 33.33 percent) replied "no".

TABLE IX

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY
 UTILIZE RESOURCES (TIME, TRAVEL, ETC.) BETTER AND
 THEIR PERCEIVE EFFECTIVENESS

Response		Degree of Effectiveness										Mean Response	Category		
No n %	Yes n %	Ineffective n %	Somewhat Effective n %	Effective n %	Very Effective n %	Total N %									
7	38.89	11	61.11	0	0	5	45.45	5	45.45	1	9.10	11	100	2.64	Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not utilize resources (time, travel, etc.) better were not provided the opportunity to rate the degree of effectiveness of the use of resources (time, travel, etc.) better.

TABLE X

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY SPEND
 MORE TIME ORGANIZING AND MANAGING RESOURCES AVAILABLE
 INSTEAD OF DIRECT CLIENTELE CONTACT AND THEIR
 PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response				Degree of Effectiveness								Mean Response	Category		
No		Yes		Ineffective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective				Total N	%
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%				
6	33.32	12	66.77	1	8.33	7	58.34	4	33.33	0	0	12	100	2.24	Somewhat Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not spend more time organizing and managing the resources available instead of direct clientele contact were not provided the opportunity to rate the degree of effectiveness of spending more time organizing and managing resources available instead of direct clientele contact.

Of the twelve who answered "yes" they were spending more time organizing and managing the resources available to them instead of direct clientele contact, one (or 8.33 percent) indicated they made ineffective use of spending more time organizing and managing resources instead of direct clientele contact, seven (or 58.34 percent) indicated they made somewhat effective use of spending more time organizing and managing resources instead of direct clientele contact, and four (or 33.33 percent) indicated they made effective use of spending more time organizing and managing resources instead of direct clientele contact. The mean response of the twelve respondents who answered "yes" they were spending more time organizing and managing the resources available to them instead of direct clientele contact was 2.25 which indicates that the time they spent organizing and managing the resources available to them instead of direct clientele contact was somewhat effective.

Table XI indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not the needs of the clientele are being met and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Are the needs of the clientele being met?" fifteen respondents (or 83.33 percent) replied "yes" and three respondents (or 16.67 percent) replied "no". Of the fifteen respondents who answered "yes" the needs of the clientele were being met, one (or 6.67 percent) indicated the needs of the clientele were ineffectively being met, five (or 33.33 percent) indicated the needs

TABLE XI

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THE NEEDS
OF THE CLIENTELE ARE BEING MET AND THEIR
PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response				Degree of Effectiveness								Mean Response	Category		
No		Yes		Ineffective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective				Total	
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
3	16.67	15	83.33	1	6.67	5	33.33	7	46.67	2	13.33	15	100	2.67	Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not believe the needs of the clientele were being met were not provided the opportunity to rate the degree of effectiveness of clientele needs being met.

of the clientele were somewhat effectively being met, seven (or 46.67 percent) indicated the needs of the clientele were effectively being met and two (or 13.33 percent) indicated the needs of the clientele were being met very effectively. The mean response of the fifteen respondents who answered "yes" the needs of the clientele were being met was 2.67 which indicates that the needs of the clientele were being effectively met.

Table XII indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they conduct educational programs for: Rural Development, Home Economics, Agriculture or 4-H, and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Do you conduct educational programs for: Rural Development, Home Economics, Agriculture or 4-H?" eleven respondents (or 61.11 percent) replied "yes" and seven respondents (or 38.89 percent) replied "no" to the Rural Development response, eight (or 44.44 percent) replied "yes" and ten respondents (or 55.56 percent) replied "no" to the Home Economics response, ten respondents (or 55.56 percent) replied "yes" and eight respondents (or 44.44 percent) replied "no" to the Agriculture response and fourteen respondents (or 77.78 percent) replied "yes" and four respondents (or 22.22 percent) replied "no" to the 4-H response. Of the eleven respondents who replied "yes" they were conducting educational programs in Rural Development, one (or 9.10 percent) indicated their programming in Rural Development was ineffective, seven (or 63.63

percent) indicated their programming in Rural Development was somewhat effective, and three (or 27.27 percent) indicated their programming in Rural Development was effective. The mean response of the eleven respondents who answered "yes" they were conducting educational programs in Rural Development was 2.18 which indicates programming in Rural Development was somewhat effective. Of the eight respondents who replied "yes" they were conducting educational programs in Home Economics, three (or 37.50 percent) indicated their programming in Home Economics was somewhat effective, three (37.50 percent) indicated their programming in Home Economics was effective and two (or 25.00 percent) indicated their programming in Home Economics was very effective. The mean response of the eight respondents who answered "yes" they were conducting programs in Home Economics was 2.88 which indicates programming in Home Economics was effective. Of the ten respondents who replied "yes" they were conducting educational programs in Agriculture, one (or 10.00 percent) indicated their programming in Agriculture was ineffective, three (or 30.00 percent) indicated their programming in Agriculture was somewhat effective, four (or 40.00 percent) indicated their programming in Agriculture was effective and two (or 20.00 percent) indicated their programming in Agriculture was very effective. The mean response of the ten respondents who answered "yes" they were conducting educational programs in Agriculture was 2.70 which indicates programming in Agriculture was effective.

TABLE XII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY CONDUCT
 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN: RURAL DEVELOPMENT, HOME
 ECONOMICS, AGRICULTURE OR 4-H AND THEIR
 PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

P/A	Response				Degree of Effectiveness								Mean Response	Category		
	No		Yes		Ineffective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective				Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
RD	7	38.89	11	61.11	1	9.10	7	63.63	3	27.27	0	0	11	100	2.18	Somewhat Effective
HE	10	55.56	8	44.44	0	0	3	37.50	3	37.50	2	25.00	8	100.00	2.88	Effective
AG	8	44.44	10	55.56	1	10.00	3	30.00	4	40.00	2	20.00	10	100.00	2.70	Effective
4-H	4	22.22	14	77.78	0	0	6	42.86	7	50.00	1	7.14	14	100.00	2.64	Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not conduct educational programs for Rural Development, Home Economics, Agriculture or 4-H were not provided the opportunity to rate the effectiveness of providing educational programs for Rural Development, Home Economics, Agriculture or 4-H.

Of the fourteen respondents who replied "yes" they were conducting educational programs in 4-H, six (or 42.86 percent) indicated their programming in 4-H was somewhat effective, seven (or 50.00 percent) indicated their programming in 4-H was effective and one (or 7.14 percent) indicated their programming in 4-H was very effective. The mean response of the fourteen respondents who answered "yes" they were conducting educational programs in 4-H was 2.64 which indicates programming in 4-H was effective.

Table XIII indicates the distribution of respondents by whether or not they feel it is economical to cross county lines and their perceived effectiveness. When asked, "Do you feel it is economical to cross county lines?" thirteen (or 72.22 percent) replied "yes" and five (or 27.78 percent) replied "no". Of the thirteen who answered "yes" it was economical to cross county lines, seven (or 53.85 percent) indicated it was economically somewhat effective to cross county lines, five (or 38.46 percent) indicated it was economically effective to cross county lines and one (or 7.69 percent) indicated it was economically very effective to cross county lines. The mean response of the thirteen respondents who answered "yes" it was economical to cross county lines was 2.54 which indicates it was effective to cross county lines.

Table XIV indicates respondents perception of the quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service as a

TABLE XIII

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY FEEL
IT IS ECONOMICAL TO CROSS COUNTY LINES AND THEIR
PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS

Response				Degree of Effectiveness								Mean Response	Category		
No	Yes	Ineffective	Somewhat	Effective	Very	Total									
n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
5	27.78	13	72.22	0	0	7	53.85	5	38.46	1	7.69	13	100	2.54	Effective

* Respondents indicating they did not feel it was economical to cross county lines were not provided the opportunity to rate the degree of effectiveness of the economics of crossing county lines.

TABLE XIV

RESPONDENTS PERCEPTION OF THE QUALITY OF THE OKLAHOMA
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE AS A RESULT OF THE
UTILIZATION OF THE COUNTY SHARING CONCEPT

Response	Distribution of Respondents	
	N	%
Improved	2	11.10
Remained Same	8	44.45
Deteriorated	8	44.45
Total	18	100.00

result of the utilization of the county sharing concept. When asked, "Do you feel the quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service has improved, remained same or deteriorated utilizing the county sharing concept?" two respondents (or 11.10 percent) indicated the quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service had improved utilizing the county sharing concept, eight (or 44.45 percent) indicated the quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service had remained the same utilizing the county sharing concept and eight (or 44.45 percent) indicated the quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service had deteriorated utilizing the county sharing concept.

Table XV indicates the respondents perception of the conflicts between co-workers as a result of the utilization of the county sharing concept. When asked, "Since you have began using the county sharing concept, has there been more, no change or less conflicts between co-workers?" ten respondents (or 55.56 percent) indicated there were more conflicts between co-workers and eight (or 44.44 percent) indicated there was no change in conflicts between co-workers.

Table XVI indicates the respondents perception of the number of program areas and the number of counties they would rather work if given a choice. When asked, "If given a choice, which would you choose? Work one county and all program areas, Work more than one county and one or two program areas or Other, please specify" four respondents

TABLE XV

RESPONDENTS PERCEPTION OF THE CONFLICTS BETWEEN CO-WORKERS
AS A RESULT OF THE UTILIZATION OF THE COUNTY
SHARING CONCEPT

Response	Distribution of Respondents	
	N	%
More	10	55.56
No Change	8	44.44
Less	0	0.00
Total	18	100.00

TABLE XVI

RESPONDENTS PERCEPTION OF THE NUMBER OF PROGRAM
AREAS AND THE NUMBER OF COUNTIES THEY
WOULD RATHER WORK IF GIVEN A CHOICE

Response	Distribution of Respondents	
	N	%
Work one County and all Program Areas	4	22.22
Work more than one County and 1 or 2 Program Areas	10	55.56
Other, please specify*	4	22.22
Total	18	100.00

*Respondents indicating "Other, please specify" were given the opportunity to express other ideas. The other ideas were: work more than one county but only one program area (three respondents) and drive a truck or a backhoe (one respondent).

(or 22.22 percent) indicated they would rather work one county and all program areas if given a choice, ten respondents (or 55.56 percent) indicated they would rather work more than one county and one or two program areas if given a choice and four respondents (or 22.22 percent) indicated other and wrote a description. Of the four that indicated other, these ideas were given: work more than one county and one program area (three respondents) and drive a truck or run a backhoe (1 respondent).

When asked to write a brief explanation to their response to the question, "Do you feel it is economical to cross county lines?" the following responses were submitted:

1. If crossing county lines using one program.
2. There should be an agreeable plan with the local extension staff, county officials and county advisory council. The success depends upon a realistic purpose and the attitude of all involved.
3. It may be economical to cross county lines if the counties border each other. Otherwise we could spend enough on travel to make up for the savings in personnel.
4. If we operate as three counties sharing staff it's uneconomical, but if the thing was staffed as agents working three counties, it would be more effective.
5. One agent can cover one program area in two counties or two program areas in one county.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to present concise summaries of the following topics: purpose of the study and the major findings of the research. Also, through a detailed inspection of these topics, conclusions and recommendations were presented based on the analysis of data.

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of county sharing personnel assignments as perceived by Oklahoma Cooperative Extension agents.

Summary of Population

The number of Cooperative Extension agents working under a county sharing arrangement or those recently transferred from a county sharing arrangement within the four districts of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service was eighteen. The eighteen agents comprising the population represented all county sharing groups in the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. The district with the largest number of agents sharing was the northeast with nine

agents comprising 50.00 percent of the population; the southeast district had six agents comprising 33.33 percent of the population; the southwest district had two agents comprising 11.11 percent of the population; and finally the northwest district had one agent comprising 5.56 percent of the population.

Findings

A summary of the respondents perceived effectiveness of county sharing Cooperative Extension personnel assignments, (questions 1 through 12) was reported in Table XVII. The respondents revealed the county sharing concept, based on the criteria of the questionnaire, was effective. It should be noted that only one mean was equal to 3.00, with all remaining means under 3.00. Three areas were considered only somewhat effective as found by the author from the data collected. The three areas considered somewhat effective were: (1) the utilization of County Advisory Councils with a mean response of 2.47; (2) more time was being spent organizing and managing resources instead of direct clientele contact with a mean response of 2.25; and (3) conducting educational programs in Rural Development with a mean response of 2.18.

The questions with which the respondents indicated a response of "effective" are reported as follows: utilization of Program Planning Advisory Committees (mean response of

2.78); utilization of community leaders and committees (mean response of 2.94); utilization of area, district and state specialists (mean response of 2.94); utilization of inservice training (mean response of 3.00); utilization of field demonstrations and/or workshops (mean response of 2.86); utilization of multi-county educational programs (mean response of 2.81); better utilization of resources (mean response of 2.64); clientele needs being met (mean response of 2.67); conducting educational programs for Home Economics (mean response of 2.88); Agriculture (mean response of 2.70); and 4-H (mean response of 2.64); economics of crossing county lines (mean response of 2.54).

Question thirteen was an open ended question asking to explain their response to question twelve, "Do you feel it is economical to cross county lines?" Listed below are the major responses:

- (1) County sharing can be economical if counties border.
- (2) County sharing can be economical and effective if staffed as agents working two or three counties not as two or three counties sharing agents.
- (3) County sharing can be economical and effective if one agent does not work over two program areas.

The respondents were asked three forced choice questions. The following narrative summarizes their responses and are reported in Table XVIII.

TABLE XVII

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONDENTS PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF COUNTY
SHARING COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PERSONEL ASSIGNMENTS

Question	Distribution of Response					Distribution of Perceived Effectiveness									
	no		yes		mean	Ineffective		Somewhat Effective		Effective		Very Effective		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Are you utilizing Program Planning Advisory Committee?	0	0	18	100	2.78**	0	0	5	27.8	12	66.7	1	5.5	18	100
Are you utilizing the County Advisory Council?	3	16.7	15	83.3	2.47*	0	0	8	53.5	7	46.7	0	0	15	100
Are you utilizing Community Leaders and Committees?	0	0	18	100	2.94**	1	5.5	3	16.7	10	55.6	4	22.2	18	100
Are you utilizing area, district and state specialists?	0	0	18	100	2.94**	1	5.5	3	16.7	10	55.6	4	22.2	18	100
Are you utilizing inservice training?	0	0	18	100	3.00**	0	0	5	27.8	8	44.4	5	27.8	18	100
Are you utilizing field demonstrations and/or workshops?	4	27.3	14	77.3	2.86**	0	0	4	28.6	8	57.1	2	14.3	14	100
Are you utilizing multi-county educational programs?	2	11.2	16	88.8	2.81**	0	0	5	31.25	9	56.25	2	12.5	16	100
Are you utilizing resources (time, travel, etc.) Better?	7	38.9	11	61.1	2.64**	0	0	5	45.5	5	45.5	1	19.0	11	100

TABLE XVII (CONTINUED)

Question	Distribution of Response				mean	Distribution of Perceived Effectiveness								TOTAL	
	no		yes			Ineffective	Somewhat		Effective		Very		n	%	
	n	%	n	%			n	%	n	%	n	%			
Do you spend more time organizing and managing the resources available to you instead of direct clientele contact?	6	33.3	12	66.7	2.25*	1	18.3	7	58.3	4	33.4	0	0	12	100
Are the needs of the clientele being met?	3	16.7	15	83.3	2.67**	1	6.7	5	33.3	7	46.7	2	13.3	15	100
Do you conduct educational programs for Rural Development?	7	39	11	61	2.18*	1	9.1	7	63.3	3	27.3	0	0	11	100
Do you conduct educational programs for Home Economics?	10	56	8	44	2.88**	0	0	3	37.5	3	37.5	2	25.0	8	100
Do you conduct educational programs for Agriculture?	8	44	10	56	2.70**	1	10.0	3	30.0	4	40.0	2	20.0	10	100
Do you conduct educational programs for 4-H?	4	22	14	78	2.64**	0	0	6	42.9	7	50.0	1	7.1	14	100
Do you feel it is economical to cross county lines?	5	27.8	13	72.2	2.54**	0	0	7	53.8	5	38.5	1	7.7	13	100

* Indicates category is somewhat effective

** Indicates category is effective

When asked, "Do you feel the quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service has, improved, remained same or deteriorated utilizing the county sharing concept?" The respondents indicated "improved" two (or 11.10 percent), "remained same" eight (or 44.45 percent) and "deteriorated" eight (or 44.45 percent)

When asked, "Since you have been using the sharing concept, has there been, more, no change or less, conflicts between co-workers?" The respondents indicated "more" ten (or 55.60 percent), "no change" eight (or 44.40 percent) and "less" zero.

When asked, "If given a choice, which would you choose? Work one county and all program areas, work more than one county and one or two program areas or other, please specify. The respondents indicated "work one county all program areas" four (or 22.20 percent), "work more than one county and one or two program areas" ten (or 55.60 percent) and "other, please specify" four (or 22.20 percent). Respondents specified, "work more than one county and one program area (three) and drive a truck or run a backhoe (one).

Conclusions

Based on the findings that all of the respondents reported they perceived that the use of Program Planning Advisory Committees was, with a mean of 2.78, effective, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments

TABLE XVIII

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONDENTS PERCEPTION OF THE
OKLAHOMA EXTENSION PERSONEL ASSIGNMENTS
COUNTY SHARING PROGRAM

Question	Distribution of Response						TOTAL	
	Improved n	%	Remained Same n	%	Deteriorated n	%	N	%
Do you feel the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service has ___ utilizing the County Sharing Concept?	2	11.1	8	44.45	8	44.45	18	100
	More n	%	No Change n	%	Less n	%	TOTAL N	%
Since you have began using the sharing concept, has there been ___ conflicts between co-workers?	10	55.6	8	44.4	0	0	18	100
	Work 1 County all areas n	%	Work more than 1 or 2 areas n	%	Other* Specify n	%	TOTAL N	%
If given a choice, what would you choose?	4	22.2	10	55.6	4	22.2	18	100

* Other responses included; work more than one county and one program area and drive a truck or backhoe

does have a positive effect on the use of Program Planning Advisory Committees.

Based on the findings that most respondents reported they perceived that the use of County Advisory Councils was, with a mean of 2.47, somewhat effective, the author concluded that the county sharing of personnel assignments has a somewhat positive effect on the use of County Advisory Councils.

Based on the findings that all of the respondents reported they perceived that the use of community leaders and committees was, with a mean of 2.94, effective, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the use of community leaders and committees.

Based on the findings that all the respondents reported they perceived that the use of area, district and state specialists was, with a mean of 2.94, effective, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the use of area, district and state specialists.

Based on the findings that all the respondents reported they perceived the use of inservice training was, with a mean of 3.00, effective, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments does not effect the use of inservice training.

Based on the findings that most of the respondents

reported they perceived the use of field demonstrations and/or workshops was, with a mean of 2.86, effective, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the use of field demonstrations and/or workshops.

Based upon the findings that most of the respondents reported they perceived the use of multi-county educational programs was, with a mean of 2.81, effective, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the use of multi-county educational programs.

Based upon the findings that most of the respondents reported they perceived they were better able to utilize resources (time, travel, etc.), with a mean of 2.64, effectively while (33.39 percent of the respondents reported they were not able to better utilize resources including time, travel, etc.), the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments may have a negative effect on the utilization of resources, however most of the respondents were using their resources effectively.

Based on the findings that most of the respondents reported they perceived they spent more time organizing and managing resources instead of direct clientele contact was, with a mean of 2.24, somewhat effective while (33.33 percent of the respondents reported they were not spending more time organizing and managing the resources available instead of

direct clientele contact), the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments has a positive effect on the time spent organizing and managing resources.

Based on the findings that most of the respondents reported they perceived that clientele needs were being met, with a mean of 2.67, effectively, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the clientele needs being met.

Based upon the findings that most of the respondents reported they perceived educational programs conducted in Home Economics, Agriculture and 4-H was, with a mean of 2.88, 2.70 and 2.64 respectively, effective and educational programs conducted in Rural Development was, with a mean of 2.18, somewhat effective, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on educational programs conducted in Home Economics, Agriculture and 4-H but has a somewhat positive effect on educational programs conducted in Rural Development.

Based upon the findings that most of the respondents reported they perceived the economics of crossing county lines was, with a mean of 2.54, effective (while 27.78 percent of the respondents reported they felt it was not economical to cross county lines), the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the economics of crossing county lines.

Based upon the findings that most respondents reported

they perceived crossing county lines would be economical and effective if certain criteria were met, the author concluded that the most economical and effective way to utilize the county sharing concept was: if counties border, staffing patterns were arranged as agents working two or three counties not two or three counties sharing agents and an agent would not be responsible for more than two program areas.

Based upon the findings that most of the respondents reported they perceived the quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service had remained the same or improved, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments had a somewhat positive effect on the quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service.

Based upon the findings that most of the respondents reported they perceived there were more conflicts between co-workers, the author concluded that county sharing personnel assignments did nothing to improve co-worker relationships and may have had a negative effect on co-worker relationships.

Based upon the findings that most of the respondents reported they perceived that they would rather work more than one county but only one or two program areas, the author concluded that working more than one county and one or two program areas was more desirable to the extension agent rather than working one county and all program areas or more than one county and three program areas.

Recommendations

As a result of the conclusion drawn from the analysis and interpretation of data the following recommendations are made:

1. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the use of Program Planning Advisory Committees, it is recommended that efforts be made by the county extension director and the district director to strengthen the utilization of Program Planning Advisory Committees in county's sharing groups.

2. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does have a somewhat positive effect on the use of County Advisory Council, it is recommended that the county extension director and the district director put more emphasis on the use of the County Advisory Council.

3. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the use of community leaders and committees, it is recommended that district directors emphasise the importance of volunteers to the county extension director and the county extension director utilize to the fullest extent community leaders and committees.

4. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the use of area, district and state specialists, it is recommended

that county extension agents be made aware of program support offered by area, district and state specialist.

5. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does not effect the use of inservice training, it is recommended that county extension agents continue to utilize inservice training to improve their knowledge and skills to better the transfer of knowledge and skills to the clientele.

6. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the use of field demonstrations and/or workshops, it is recommended that county extension agents strive to better utilize this valuable educational technique.

7. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the use of multi-county educational programs, it is recommended that multi-county educational program use be expanded in order to better serve the clientele and save county extension agents time in programming.

8. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments may have a negative effect on the utilization of resources (time, travel, etc.), it is recommended that agents working in county sharing groups receive training in time management and that the district directors, in conjunction with county extension directors train staff to better utilize resources.

9. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments has a positive effect on the time being spent organizing and managing resources instead of direct clientele contact, it is recommended that agents receive training in time and resource management in order to better serve clientele.

10. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the needs of the clientele being met, it is recommended that the county extension agents plan of work be designed to meet clientele needs. It is also recommended the county extension agents receive training to better prepare their plan of work and programming to meet clientele needs in a sharing group.

11. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on educational programs conducted in Home Economics, Ag or 4-H and has a somewhat positive effect on educational programs conducted in Rural Development, it is recommended the county extension agent receive training in conducting educational programs within a county sharing group. It is also recommended that area specialist, district program specialist and state specialist make suggestions to the county extension agent through the district program specialist on how to better their educational programs.

12. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments does have a positive effect on the

perceived economics of crossing county lines, it is recommended that the district director consult with each agent in order to give the agent a positive outlook on the economics of their job assignment.

13. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments would be economic and effective if certain criteria were met, it is recommended that counties sharing groups geographically border, agents job responsibilities not exceed two program areas, and staffing patterns be changed to insure agents are working a county sharing group and not a county sharing agents.

14. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments has a somewhat positive effect on the quality of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, it is recommended that agents receive positive reinforcement for working in county sharing groups and the agents keep a positive attitude concerning this new concept.

15. Based on the conclusion that county sharing personnel assignments did nothing to improve and may have had a negative effect on co-worker relationships, it is recommended that the district director be aware of conflicts and increase communication among co-workers to alleviate this problem.

16. Based on the conclusion that the respondents would rather work more than one county and one or two program areas instead of one county and all program areas it is recommended that no county extension agent be assigned to a

county with responsibility for all program areas.

Recommendations for Additional Research

The following recommendations are made in regard to additional research. The recommendations are judgements based on having conducted the study and on the examination of the study.

1. There should be a study conducted with elected officials by the Cooperative Extension Service to gain information concerning politicians perceived effectiveness of county sharing personnel assignments.

2. There should be a study conducted with clientele by the Cooperative Extension Service to gain information concerning tax payer's perceived effectiveness of county sharing personnel assignments.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENT

13. PLEASE WRITE A BRIEF EXPLANATION FOR YOUR RESPONSE TO QUESTION #12.

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

14. DO YOU FEEL THE QUALITY OF THE OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE HAS

IMPROVED REMAINED THE SAME DETERIORATED

UTILIZING THE COUNTY SHARING CONCEPT?

15. SINCE YOU HAVE BEGAN USING THE SHARING CONCEPT, HAS THERE BEEN

MORE NO CHANGE LESS

CONFLICTS BETWEEN CO-WORKERS?

16. IF GIVEN A CHOICE, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

WORK ONE COUNTY AND ALL PROGRAM AREAS.

WORK MORE THAN ONE COUNTY AND WORK 1 OR 2 PROGRAM AREAS.

OTHER, PLEASE SPECIFY.

APPENDIX B

LETTERS

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY



DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

JUNE 6, 1987

DEAR CO-WORKER,

AS YOU KNOW, WE IN EXTENSION ARE IN CHANGING TIMES. ONE OF THOSE CHANGES IS THE COUNTY SHARING ARRANGEMENTS.

ENCLOSED IS A SURVEY PERTAINING TO THE SHARING CONCEPT. YES, ANOTHER SURVEY.

I WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE YOU TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE. AFTER YOU COMPLETE IT, PLEASE RETURN IT IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE. THIS SURVEY IS FOR MY M.S. THESIS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

SINCERELY,

SHERMAN GRUBB III

EXTENSION AGRICULTURE AGENT

CREEK COUNTY

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY



DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

Route 1, Box 300
Kellyville, Oklahoma 74039

February 23, 1987

Dr. W.J. Moline, Director
Cooperative Extension Service
Michigan State
East Lansing, MI 48824

Dear Sir:

This year Oklahoma Cooperative Extension has begun an agent sharing arrangement among certain counties in Oklahoma. I have begun a research study on the effectiveness of this sharing concept as perceived by the agents.

I understand your state has a sharing arrangement among certain counties. If you would have any printed material or know of any studies concerning this subject, I would greatly appreciate a copy of materials on a list of studies.

Your assistance in this project would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sherman Grubb III".

Sherman Grubb III
Creek County Ag Agent

SG:bb

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY



DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

Route 1, Box 300
Kellyville, Oklahoma 74039

February 23, 1987

Dr. Patrick Boyle, Director
Cooperative Extension Service
University of Wisconsin
432 N. Lake Street
Room 527
Madison, WI 53706

Dear Sir:

This year Oklahoma Cooperative Extension has begun an agent sharing arrangement among certain counties in Oklahoma. I have begun a research study on the effectiveness of this sharing concept as perceived by the agents.

I understand your state has a sharing arrangement among certain counties. If you would have any printed material or know of any studies concerning this subject, I would greatly appreciate a copy of materials on a list of studies.

Your assistance in this project would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sherman Grubb III
Creek County Ag Agent

SG:bb

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY



DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

Route 1, Box 300
Kellyville, Oklahoma 74039

February 23, 1987

Mr. Willis Johnson
Northwest District Director
Box 3627
205 W. Maple, Enid, OK 73702

Dear Mr. Johnson,

I am beginning to work on my research in order to complete my M.S. The study is going to be over the effectiveness of the County Sharing Concept as perceived by the agent working under the sharing arrangement. However, I need your assistance. I need the names of the agents in your district who are working multi-county and their job description (i.e. Home Economist in County A 60% and 4-H Agent County B 40%).

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sherman Grubb III
Creek County Ag Agent

SG:bb

letter also sent to:
Jan W. Montgomery, Southeast District Director
Ronnie George, Northeast District Director
Mr. Keith McLemore, Southwest District Director

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY



DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

Route 1, Box 300
Kellyville, Oklahoma 74039

February 23, 1987

Dr. Patrick Borich, Director
Cooperative Extension Service
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55108

Dear Sir:

This year Oklahoma Cooperative Extension has begun an agent sharing arrangement among certain counties in Oklahoma. I have begun a research study on the effectiveness of this sharing concept as perceived by the agents.

I understand your state has a sharing arrangement among certain counties. If you would have any printed material or know of any studies concerning this subject, I would greatly appreciate a copy of materials on a list of studies.

Your assistance in this project would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sherman Grubb III
Creek County Ag Agent

SG:bb

VITA

Sherman Levi Grubb III

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Science

Thesis: EFFECTIVENESS OF COUNTY SHARING COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS AS PERCEIVED
BY OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AGENTS

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Thomas, Oklahoma, February 10,
1955, the son of Sherman Jr. and Gretel Grubb.

Education: Graduated from Custer City High School,
Custer City, Oklahoma, May, 1973; received Bachelor of
Science Degree from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater,
Oklahoma, 1977, with a major in Agriculture Education;
completed requirements for the Master of Science Degree at
Oklahoma State University in December, 1987.

Professional Experience: Vocational Agriculture
teacher, Taloga, Oklahoma, July, 1977 to May, 1982; Branch
Manager for McNeill Grain Company, Seiling, Oklahoma, May,
1982 to July, 1984; Extension Agriculture Agent, Nowata
County, Nowata, Oklahoma, October, 1984 to August, 1986;
Extension Agriculture Agent, Creek County, Sapulpa, Oklahoma,
August, 1986 to present.

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