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# Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards: Measuring Leadership Life Skills and Youth-Adult Relationships.

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LOUISIANA 4-H STATE LEADERSHIP BOARDS: MEASURING LEADERSHIP LIFE SKILLS AND
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**ABSTRACT**

This descriptive correlational study sought to measure the development of leadership life skills and the perceptions of youth-adult relationships by youth serving on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards. Members of the 2013-2014 Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards ($N$ = 99) served as the population for the study. Overall, 4-H members who served on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards perceived they gained "a lot" of leadership life skills from their board involvement. Board members reported high levels of youth involvement, adult involvement, and youth-adult interaction. Based on the high levels of involvement and interaction, youth-adult partnerships were present on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards. The participants involved in this study and the total population of 4-H members is not concurrent with each other in terms of race or gender. Youth development professionals could vary the recruitment efforts of potential board members to include a more diverse pool of applicants. This could include widening the range of diverse adult sponsors. Future research should be conducted to determine if there is a difference in youth who serve on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards and other 4-H members who do not serve on the boards. No statistically significant relationship existed between development of leadership life skills and youth-adult partnerships. Future research should investigate the subject deeper to determine why in this study the leadership life skills and youth-adult partnerships had no significant relationship.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

**Rationale**

A guiding principle for many businesses and corporations is the idea that programs, services, and products should be developed with the customer in mind. Not only should the customer choose the programs and products, but they should also have a say in the development of those items. Why should this be any different for youth development organizations? Youth are the main stakeholders and audience for youth development organizations. In theory, youth should have options and choices in the activities in which they participate and they should also have the opportunity to help mold and shape those activities. This idea is the foundation for principles such as youth participation and youth voice (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004).

The past five decades have provided valuable insight into the concept of youth voice. The concept of youth "as stakeholders in their own development" has grown tremendously over the past 50 years (Pittman, 2000, para. 2). There have been collaborative efforts between adults and youth to implement programs and activities with the input of youth. Many organizations have taken this concept further and designed programs in which adults and youth work in synergy to achieve solutions. These are commonly known as youth-adult partnerships (Pittman, 2000).

Many programs stress the idea of youth voice and youth-adult partnerships, but the idea that youth-adult partnerships are a critical need in the community has not been fully adopted (Pittman, 2000). According to Serido, Borden, and Perkins (2011) youth voice means "youth are respected for their ideas and opinions and feel free to state them within an

organization or program" (p. 45). An expansion of the previous definition would include the idea that youth have a say in the programs that affect them and their lives. The 4-H Youth Development Program, including Louisiana 4-H, is one program that utilizes the concepts of youth voice and youth-adult partnerships (Astroth & Haynes, 2002; Louisiana 4-H Youth Development Department, 2014).

Research has shown that youth engaging in practices connected with youth voice have an increased self-confidence, feel like they belong, become actively involved in the decision-making process, and feel more connected to caring adults (Camino, 2000; Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005; Mitra, 2004; Serido et al., 2011). Zeldin, Petrokubi, and McNeil (2008) define youth-adult partnerships as "an innovative method of practice that is firmly grounded in the principle that youth be engaged in the design and deliberation of policy and program decisions that directly influence them" (p. 263). It is recognized that youth-adult partnerships serve to bring together the two groups to participate in a process to make informed decisions (Zeldin et al., 2008).

Youth development organizations have focused on the skills that youth gain by participating in programs (Seevers, Dormody, & Clason, 1995). Life skills are those skills that are necessary for youth to be productive citizens in today's society (Boyd, Herring, & Briers, 1992). Research suggests that being involved in programs like 4-H or FFA increases the perceived attainment of life skills (Boyd et al., 1992; Bruce, Boyd, & Dooley, 2004; Seevers et al., 1995). Further, studies have recommended that youth participate beyond just community involvement but also regional and state involvement (Seevers & Dormody, 1994).

One avenue used by the Louisiana 4-H Youth Development Program to advocate for youth voice, youth-adult partnerships, and development of life skills is through the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards. There are a total of six boards that practice and utilize the concepts of youth voice. It is important to measure the success of the implementation of youth voice in differing programs and opportunities. In order to measure the achievement of programs like the State Leadership Boards, it is critical to study youth-adult partnerships and life skills development.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this descriptive and correlational study was to measure the development of leadership life skills and the perceptions of youth-adult relationships by youth serving on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards.

**Objectives**

1. To describe youth of the six Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards on the following demographic characteristics:

   a. Board they were a member of in the 2013-2014 school year

   b. Number of years in 4-H

   c. How often they were present at board sponsored events

   d. How many years they have served on a Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Board

   e. Race

   f. Ethnicity

   g. Gender

h. Age

i. Geographical area that they live

2. To measure the development of leadership life skills in terms of the State Leadership Boards as measured by the Youth Leadership Life Skills Development Scale.

3. To measure the perceptions and experiences of youth on the State Leadership Boards in terms of youth-adult relationships as measured by the Involvement and Interaction Rating Scale.

4. To determine if a relationship exists between development of leadership life skills and youth-adult partnerships for youth on the State Leadership Boards.

5. To determine if a relationship exists between development of leadership life skills and select demographic characteristics of youth on the State Leadership Boards.

6. To determine if a relationship exists between youth involvement, adult involvement, and youth-adult interaction and select demographic characteristics of youth on the State Leadership Boards.

**Significance of the Study**

The founding purpose for the implementation of the Louisiana 4-H Youth Leadership Boards was to ensure that youth had a part in every portion of the 4-H Youth Development program (Fox, 2010). Since youth are the audience of the program, it is important for a connection to exist between the leaders of the program and the youth (Astroth, 1996).

The objectives of the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards include developing skills like leadership skills and communication skills. This study will measure the development of leadership life skills, as well as youth-adult partnerships.

This study will contribute to the current or existing body of literature about youth leadership life skills and youth-adult partnerships because a study of these variables together in the context of leadership boards has not been completed. There have been individual studies of each board in the form of exit surveys. However, this will be the first overarching study of an examination of the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards in terms of youth-adult partnerships and leadership life skills.

**Definition of Terms**

The following definitions of terms are stated to assist in the understanding of the study.

<u>4-H</u>: 4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization with more than 6 million youth involved in the program. The program is carried out through 109 land-grant universities and the Cooperative Extension System. The 4-H program fosters an innovative, "learn by doing" approach with proven results (National 4-H Headquarters, 2012). The program is administered through the United States Department of Agriculture originally in rural areas to help young people become productive citizens by instructing them in useful skills (as in agriculture, animal husbandry, and carpentry), community service, and personal development ("4-H," n.d.).

<u>Leadership Life Skills</u>: Seevers and Dormody (1994) noted in their study that "Miller (1976, p.2) defined youth leadership life skills development as self-assessed and organization-specific 'development of life skills necessary to perform leadership function in real life'" (p.64). According to Seevers, Dormody, and Clason (1995) leadership life skills include communication skills, decision-making skills, skills in getting along with others, learning skills, management skills, skills in understanding yourself, and skills in working with groups.

<u>Life Skills</u>: As defined by Norman and Jordan (n.d.), "life skills are those competencies that assist people in functioning well in the environments in which they live" (p. 1).

<u>Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Board</u>: This researcher defines Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards as groups of young people formed to provide leadership for Louisiana statewide programs. Louisiana has six boards that each focus on a specific aspect of the program. The six boards are the Citizenship Board; Executive Board; Fashion Board; Food and Fitness Board; Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET) Board; and the Shooting Sports Ambassadors.

<u>Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Board Member</u>: This researcher defines Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Board Member as a young person in grades 9th- 12th who is an enrolled member in 4-H in Louisiana that has been elected or selected to one of the six Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards.

<u>Youth-Adult Partnership</u>: A youth-adult partnership is defined as "Youth and adult participants have equal chances in utilizing skills, decision making, mutual learning, and independently carrying out task to reach a common goal" (Jones & Perkins, 2005, p. 3).

<u>Youth Voice</u>: For the purpose of this study, the researcher defines youth voice as youth having a meaningful part in the decision-making process, creation, establishment, and implementations of programs. Furthermore, "youth voice refers to the ideas, opinions, involvement, and initiatives of people considered to be young" (Scherer & Justinianno, 2001, p. 11).

**Assumptions**

1. The participants will respond to the study using only their experience as it pertains to their involvement on one of the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards for the time period of June 2013 to June 2014.

2. The study only focuses on youth-adult partnerships and leadership life skills as it pertains to member's experiences on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards. The results cannot be generalized to all of Louisiana 4-H or all other youth organizations.

**Limitations**

1. This study was limited to Louisiana 4-H State Board members who served on a board during the time period of June 2013 to June 2014.

2. There is not a current group to compare the results with to determine a difference in members versus non-members.

**CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**Cooperative Extension and 4-H Youth Development**

The 4-H Youth Development Program is known as one of the country's leading youth development organizations. The origins of the 4-H Youth Development Program burgeoned within Land-Grant Universities and the Cooperative Extension System. The Morrill Act of 1862 founded Land-Grant Universities (United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). These universities provided foci on agriculture, home economics, and mechanical arts. The foundation of extension was built upon the development of the Land-Grant Universities. Extension services were not solemnized until the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 (United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). This act established collaborative efforts between land-grant universities and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Under this act, universities provided information to the general public on issues centered on agricultural development. They were tasked with delivering research-based information in an understandable manner to the community and/or farmers. They also served to "give practical demonstration of existing or improved practices or technologies in agriculture" (United States Department of Agriculture, 2011, para. 8). The Smith-Lever Act delegated certain funds from the Federal Government to support Cooperative Extension Services. Cooperative Extension was created to provide for both expertise and presentation of information. It was designed to meet the needs of the people and community (National 4-H Headquarters, 2012).

The birthplace of the 4-H program, Clark County, Ohio, began with a corn growing club in 1902 (National 4-H Headquarters, 2012). The idea rose from the struggles that agriculture producers were having in the early 1900s. It was thought that if resources could combine to

provide hands-on information to youth, the whole community would benefit. The idea started

to grow and community clubs focused on solving agricultural difficulties began to spread to

help youth learn more about the industry (National 4-H Headquarters, 2012). In the following

years, similar clubs to the one in Ohio started to emerge around the country. The 4-H program

started to earn a reputation as well as emblems, logos, and official names (National 4-H

Headquarters, 2012). This time period coincided with the passing of the Smith-Lever Act, which

included "work of various boys' and girls' clubs involved with agriculture, home economics, and

related subjects" (National 4-H Headquarters, 2012, para. 6).

Today, 4-H has the same fundamental function of serving youth with hands-on

experience (National 4-H Headquarters, 2012). However, there is much more to the 4-H Youth

Development Program than learning about corn and canning methods. The 4-H program is

inclusive for all youth including rural, urban, and suburban young people from every state in the

nation (National 4-H Headquarters, 2012). The program is provided through many different

delivery modes including school enrichment (i.e. co-curricular activities), camps, in-school

programing, after-school programing, mentorship, and much more (National 4-H Headquarters,

2012).

The program currently engages more that 6.5 million youth across the United States

(National 4-H Headquarters, 2012).   The 4-H Youth Development Program strives to teach

youth skills in belonging, independence, generosity, and mastery. This is accomplished through

three focus areas called mission mandates: Citizenship; Healthy Living; and Science,

Engineering, and Technology. The basic make-up of 4-H membership is young people between

the ages of nine through nineteen; however, some programs have portions to include five to

nine year olds. The program is designed to target specific life skills in youth to help them

become healthy and successful adolescents and adults (National 4-H Headquarters, 2012).

**Louisiana Cooperative Extension and 4-H Youth Development**

The 4-H program has been a part of Louisiana Cooperative Extension for over 105 years.

The first notion of 4-H in Louisiana was a boys' corn club established in 1908 in Avoyelles Parish.

It was the product of a joint effort by the Avoyelles Parish Superintendent of Education, V. L.

Roy, and the Dean of the College of Agriculture, Dr. W. R. Dodson. Word spread about the club

in Avoyelles Parish and other clubs started to form around the state. Almost a year later, in

1909, boys' corn clubs around the state had reached a membership of 1,129 (Louisiana 4-H,

2014).

As the popularity of the clubs began to grow, a need was realized for the role of a state

club agent and demonstration agents (History of Louisiana 4-H, n.d.). By 1910, the enrollment

of members had grown to 4,672 boys. This was the year pig clubs began to develop and

emerge. In continuation with the national movement, Louisiana introduced its first girls'

canning club in November of 1911. Louisiana Cooperative Extension matched the national

movement of 4-H, by continuing to grow the program in the state. Noteworthy historic

moments and growths in the state of Louisiana during 1911-1955 include:

- 4-H short course (1915);
- Organization of standard 4-H clubs in communities with guidelines (1920);
- 4-H summer camps (1923);
- Camp Grant Walker developed as a state camp (1935);
- 4-H livestock show held at the Jefferson race track in New Orleans (April, 1936);
- Camp for 4-H junior leaders and older youth (1948); and
- 56.8% of 4-H members were non-farm members (1955) (History of Louisiana 4-H, n.d.).

As time progressed, Louisiana 4-H continued to expand and grow into the organization it is today. Currently, Louisiana has over 225,000 4-H members throughout the state (Louisiana 4-H Youth Development Department, 2014). Louisiana 4-H "structur[es] programs that are central to the development of the essential elements of belonging, independence, mastery, and generosity" (Louisiana 4-H Youth Development Department, 2014, p. 1).

**Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards**

The Louisiana 4-H program provides opportunities for youth to utilize youth voice and develop leadership skills in many ways (Moran et al., 2009). One significant program within Louisiana 4-H is the State Leadership Boards. The Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards have had a presence in Louisiana in some capacity for the past 25 years (Louisiana State 4-H Youth Leadership Boards, 2010). The leadership boards "give youth the opportunity to work together on a common focus, develop leadership skills, and enhance statewide 4-H programs" (Louisiana State 4-H Youth Leadership Boards, 2010, p. 1). The Leadership Boards provide opportunities for youth to influence change in the 4-H program and their community (Louisiana State 4-H Youth Leadership Boards, 2010). Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards are groups of young people formed to provide leadership for Louisiana 4-H statewide programs. Louisiana has six boards that each focus on a specific aspect of the program. The six boards are (a) Citizenship Board; (b) Executive Board; (c) Fashion Board; (d) Food and Fitness Board; (e) Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) Board; and (f) the Shooting Sports Ambassadors. As stated in the Louisiana 4-H Youth Leadership Boards Program of Distinction (Fox, 2010), the overarching program goals and objectives for the state boards are:

1. To increase the leadership skills of teens from across the state.
2. To assist with the development of educational programs that provides opportunities for[*sic*]:
   a. To promote the development of character building.
   b. To expand technical, subject matter knowledge relative to the respective board.
   c. To apply the leadership skills learned on the boards to enhance local 4-H programs and communities.
   d. To increase youth voice in the state 4-H program.
   e. To increase communication skills.
   f. To increase engagement and retention of teens in the 4-H program. (p.6)

The Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards are comprised of enrolled 4-H youth from grades 9th-12th. They gain membership to a state board by either being elected or selected to serve as a member. Youth are selected or elected to a board based on numerous criteria including, but not limited to (a) previous experience, (b) leadership potential, (c) references of past performance, (d) assessment of interview or application, and (e) other specific standards.

Once membership on a board has begun, the youth are exposed to an abundance of opportunities to utilize youth voice, engage in youth-adult partnerships, and play an active leadership role in the Louisiana 4-H program (Louisiana State 4-H Youth Leadership Boards, 2010). Each board is characterized by a culminating event or program that the youth members work together to plan, organize, and implement. For example, the Executive Board hosts the Junior Leadership Conference. This is a conference for 300 of their peers. The Executive Board members work together with the adult sponsors to plan educational tracks, teach educational tracks, plan logistics, and plan most of the other activities at the three day conference. Each board has similar events including Fashion Camp, Food & Fitness Camp, L.O.S.T Camp, Louisiana Connections Camp, and shooting sports events. In addition to a culminating event, each board participates in other activities throughout the year. They range from organizing service-learning

projects to being spokespeople for the Louisiana 4-H program. Throughout all of their

opportunities, the goal is that the youth are actively engaging in youth voice, participating in

youth-adult partnerships, and learning valuable life skills for the future (Louisiana State 4-H

Youth Leadership Boards, 2010).

Previous research conducted on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards concluded

that youth engaging in membership on the boards thought they were able to think

independently, mastered some leadership skills, and improved their ability to communicate

with others (Louisiana State 4-H Youth Leadership Boards, 2010). In the past, varying exit

surveys have been completed by individual boards. These surveys have differed in the type of

questions asked and topics. There has not been an overarching conclusive study of all six boards

(Louisiana State 4-H Youth Leadership Boards, 2010).

**Positive Youth Development**

Positive youth development establishes the notion that youth have the potential to

develop into productive and engaged citizens as adolescents, and later as adults (Lerner et al.,

2005). Connell, Gambone, and Smith (2000) suggested that youth development should help

youth navigate through adolescences by focusing on three broad tasks (a) learning to be

productive, (b) learning to connect, and (c) learning to navigate. Today, positive youth

development is regarded as an approach and a field. Efforts of positive youth development are

concentrated on preparation for adulthood, successful contributions, and utilization of skills

(Lerner et al., 2008; Pittman, Irby, & Ferber, 2000).

In the beginning, the theory of adolescent development centered on the ideas of

overcoming chaos and turmoil (Lerner, 2005). The father of the scientific study of adolescent

development, G. Stanley Hall (1844-1924), marked adolescence as a time of "sturm und drang" or "storm and stress" (1904). The ideas proposed by Hall indicated that maturity was achieved by enduring emotional turmoil as a necessary phase in the development to adulthood. Human evolution included a shift from beast-like beings into civilized beings. According to Hall (1904), the transformation and shift to civilized beings occurred in the period of adolescence. The positions suggested by Hall greatly influenced the thinking of other researchers and scientists in the following decades (Lerner, 2005).

Researchers and scientists such as Anna Freud (1969) and Erik Erikson (1959, 1968) expanded upon the opinions expressed by Hall, which presented adolescence as a time of disturbance and identity crisis. During this time, the study of adolescent development was concentrated on the theory of youth being understood as having a shortfall (Lerner, 2005).

During the 1960s, more supported research challenged the ideas of Hall, Freud, and Erikson (Lerner, 2005). It was more widely believed that most adolescents did not encounter a period of "storm and stress" (Hall, 1904). Further research was focused on human and adolescent development as spanning the entire period of human life, instead of overcoming distress at a specific time. This time in the history of positive youth development was important in setting the stage to establish this area of study within developmental science (Lerner, 2005).

As the framework and the support of research changed over the years, so did the approach to youth development programs. The inaugural approaches to youth development focused on responding to crisis after a problem occurred. The programs reacted to the difficulties faced by youth. As research expanded, a broader focus was implemented instead of attention to single behavior strategies. Efforts were shifted to supporting youth before

behavior that caused problems occurred (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 1999).

Today, the framework of positive youth development "views young people as resources to be developed rather than as problems to be managed" (Lerner et al., 2008, p. 7). Although the ideas of positive youth development have established a strong foundation, there are still diverse approaches to look at the rapidly growing field of study (Lerner et al., 2008).

In observance of this new way of thinking, Pittman (1991) noted, "problem-free is not fully prepared."  Pittman and Fleming (1991) stated that, "Preventing high risk behaviors, however, is not the same as preparation for the future" (p. 3). The attention of youth development should be increasing young people's skills and abilities. Youth development should be considered before the problems exist as a plan for deterrence (Pittman & Fleming, 1991).

The term youth development can be difficult to relate to only one meaning or usage. Hamilton, Hamilton, and Pittman (2004) indicated that youth development could be used in three separate ways (a) natural processes, (b) principals, and (c) practices. The *natural process* refers to youth development as the process of adolescent development. Today, this is the most commonly used significance of the term. In this meaning, youth development should assist a young person to achieve a healthy and fulfilling life, both as a youth and adult (Hamilton et al., 2004). Youth development is also used to describe a group of *principles* or an approach that focuses attention toward supporting young people to strive (Hamilton et al., 2004). Lastly, youth development represents the *practices* in organizations and approaches. Practices of youth development are the "application of the principles to a planned set of practices, or activities, that foster the developmental process in young people" (Hamilton et al., 2004, p. 1).

It is significant to note that Hamilton et al. (2004) included a fourth "P", *Policy*, to the usage of youth development. Policy is the course of action that an organization takes to progress the movement forward.

The positive youth development methodology promotes development leading to the "Five C's."  The "C's" differ depending on the researcher. Hamilton et al. (2004) listed the "Five C's" as (a) competence, (b) character, (c) connections, (d) confidence, and (e) contribution. Lerner et al. (2005) list the "Five C's" as competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring. In their understanding of the Five C's, the above mentioned skills lead to development of a sixth "C": contributions. Meaning that "a young person enacts behaviors indicative of the Five Cs by contributing positively to self, family, community, and, ultimately, civil society" (Lerner et al., 2005, p. 23). The "Five C's" can be considered as the broad goals of youth development.

Building upon strengths is a central idea to the promotion of positive youth development (Lerner et al., 2008; Hamilton et al., 2004). All youth have a possibility for change, which means positive youth development could impact and alter their lives. All youth are developing; and the availably of organizations, programs, and opportunities could transform their course of development, both positively and negatively (Hamilton et al., 2004).

As previously mentioned research has similar but varying approaches to youth development. Similarly, this is the case with central themes of youth development programs and principles. Lerner et al. (2008) list the following as the three features of effective youth-serving programs: "Positive and sustained relationship between youth and adults, activities that build important life skills, and opportunities for children to use these life skills as both

participants and as leaders in valued community activities" (p. 8). In related terms, Hamilton et al. (2004) stated the principles of most use include, "the emphasis on a positive approach and universality, or the goal of all youth thriving; the importance of healthy relationship and challenging activities that endure and change over time; and engaging young people as participants, not merely recipients" (p. 6). As reflected by the approaches above, positive youth development is still a growing and transforming field. Since adolescents differ from one youth to another, it is naïve to think that there is one path of positive youth development (Lerner, 2005).

**Youth Voice**

Research in the field of youth development has found that youth voice and having a say in decision making positively affects the youth who engage in these practices (Mitra, 2004; Pittman et al., 2000; Serido et al., 2011). Youth voice as defined by Scherer and Justinianno (2001) "refers to the ideas, opinions, involvement, and initiatives of people considered to be young" (p. 11). Serido et al. (2011) stated "youth voice means that youth are respected for their ideas and opinions and feel free to state them within an organization or program" (p. 45). In similar terms, student voice refers to "the many ways in which youth might have the opportunity to actively participate in school decisions that will shape their lives and the lives of their peers" (Mitra, 2004, p. 651). All of the above explanations include giving youth a voice and recognizing that their ideas and opinions are important.

In order to better comprehend the concept of youth voice, it is important to look at the chronological development of the movement. The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) was the catalyst for the focused effort on child participation. This convention's

foundation was The United Nations' Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1959) held thirty years earlier. The document issued from the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) "reaffirm[ed] that children's rights require special protection and call for continuous improvement of the situation of children all over the world" (p. 1). Principally important are Articles 12 and 13. They speak on the right of children to voice, views, and expression.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views feely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law. (United Nations, 1989, p.7)

Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice. (United Nations, 1989, p.7)

From the United Nations document and subsequent works, the idea of youth participation has advanced. The term itself does not appear in Article 12 or 13, but in recent years the practice has emerged (United Nations, 2009). According to another document produced by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children, participation is

used to describe ongoing processes, which include information-sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect, and in which children can learn how their views and those of adults are taken into account and shape the outcome of such processes. (United Nations, 2009, p. 5)

A large influence on the conceptualization of youth participation is found in the works of Roger Hart. In 1992, he widely introduced a ladder of children's participation in his essay *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. The ladder model is borrowed from the earlier works of Sherry R. Arnstein, although Hart developed differing categories (Hart, 1992). In his essay, Hart defined participation as "the process of sharing decisions which affect one's life and the life of the community in which one lives" (Hart, 1992, p. 5). Hart also stated "Participation is the fundamental right of citizenship" (Hart, 1992, p. 5). Hart developed his model to bring perspective to a subject that was just developing (Hart, 2008). Hart (2008) noted the model was not developed to be used as an all-inclusive evaluative tool. The ladder metaphor lends one to think that the development of the model should occur in stages. This is not necessarily true, although all of the stages are not equal (Hart, 2008). Hart's (1992) ladder had 8 levels that included (a) manipulation; (b) decoration; (c) tokenism; (d) assigned but informed; (e) consulted and informed; (f) adult-initiated, shared decisions with children; (g) child-initiated and directed; and (h) child-initiated, shared decisions with adults. The first three levels are non-participatory while the last five are different degrees of child participation. Hart's (2008) model supports the idea that youth voice and participation includes partnerships with adults.  Hart (2008) concluded the

> ladder should be thought of as some kind of scale of competence not performance: children should feel that they have the *competence* and confidence to engage with others in the way outlined on any of the rungs of the ladder, but they should certainly not feel that they should always be trying to perform in such ways. (p. 24)

In recent years, the attention of youth participation research has moved in the direction of focusing on quality of participation over quantity of participation (Shernoff, 2010).  A study conducted by Roth, Malone, and Brooks-Gunn (2010), found "little support for the general

notion that greater amounts of participation in afterschool programs was related to academic, behavioral, or socio-emotional outcomes" (p. 310). Roth, Malone, and Brooks-Gunn (2010) conducted a review of literature on participation and associated developmental outcomes in formal afterschool programs. Their review examined 35 previously conducted surveys on participation.  They categorized participation into five aspects (a) intensity, (b) duration, (c) total exposure, (d) breadth, and (e) engagement. Overall, their review contradicted previous findings on the benefits of high quantities of participation, which is one of the most commonly studied aspects (Roth, Malone, & Brooks-Gunn, 2010). The researchers suggested the focus of future studies on participation should look more closely at breadth and engagement. In similar terms, Shernoff (2010) conducted a study that looked at engagement in after-school programs as a predictor of social competence and academic performance that controlled for background and baseline data.  His study found no significant association between dosage and social competence or academic performance, which suggests that quality of experience may be a more positive predictor.  Shernoff (2010) recommended to achieve higher outcomes to provide challenging and meaningful opportunities for youth.

**Youth-Adult Partnerships**

A centralizing factor in youth voice is the presence or lack of an adult. Research has shown that positive change can occur when differing individuals come together to achieve a common goal (Camino, 2005; Jones & Perkins, 2005). Particularly, youth have observed a positive impact of partnerships with non-family member adults (Serido et al., 2011). A youth-adult partnership is defined as "Youth and adult participants have equal chances in utilizing skills, decision making, mutual learning, and independently carrying out task to reach a

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common goal" (Jones & Perkins, 2005, p. 3). Mitra (2009) defined youth-adult partnerships as "relationships in which both youth and adults have the potential to contribute to decision-making processes, to learn from one another, and to promote change" (p. 407). Youth-adult partnerships are important to the study of youth development because it can increase the positive outcomes that youth achieve (Mitra, 2009).

Youth-adult partnerships teeter on a line of guiding the youth through situations without being too controlling. Many programs stress the importance of youth-adult partnerships; however the programs often find it hard to balance the power between youth and adults (Jennings, Parra-Medina, Messias, & McLaughlin, 2006). Larson (2006) explained that the dilemma includes "creating too much structure or direction by adults can lead to loss of youth ownership, whereas supporting youth ownership as the top priority can mean that youth are not being challenged to grow and develop" (p. 683). Research has shown that when adults are over-controlling it undermines learning of the youth and decreases motivation (Larson, 2006). Larson (2006) noted the importance of "youth empowerment" by stating "adults are most effective when they support youths' experience of ownership and agency" (p. 682).

Youth-adult partnerships are composed in part by the participation the youth have in things such as decision making. As mentioned previously in the discussion of Hart's Ladder metaphor, youth should be true participants in their lives and the activities that they are involved in. Jennings et al. (2006) noted "token participation rarely results in effective transfer of power to youth participants or real opportunities for youth to influence organizational

decision-making" (p. 45). Youth-adult partnerships include relinquishing power to the youth, for

them to make their own choices.

A key element in youth-adult partnerships is the adult acting in a mentoring role. A

mentor is defined as "a wise and trusted counselor or an influential senior sponsor or

supporter" ("mentor", n.d.)  Mentoring also includes a "sustained relationship between a young

person and an adult in which the adult provides the young person with support, guidance, and

assistance (Jekielek, Morre, Hair, & Scarupa, 2002, p. 1). Research has shown that "nonparent

adults who function as mentors may serve as crucial educators and support figures, promoting

learning and competence, providing exposure to positive social norms, increasing a sense of

efficacy and mattering, and helping youth realize their full potential" (DuBois & Silverthorn,

2005, p. 518). A mentoring relationship with a non-familial adult has been documented to

increase resiliency among youth (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002). The role of an

adult leader is to not dominate, but instead create an environment for support and

encouragement (Jennings et al., 2006). Support from adults is important for youth to feel

comfortable taking on new roles, trying different things, and making decisions (Jennings et al.,

2006). Research has established that youth who engaged in mentoring relationships have

experienced positive academic returns, have decreased some negative behaviors, and have

positive social attitudes and relationships (Jekielek et al., 2002).

An essential key to the success of youth-adult partnerships is the communication of a

shared purpose and means with how the shared purpose will be achieved (Zeldin, Camino, &

Mook, 2005). It has commonly been agreed for youth-adult partnerships to be successful that

the organization must take the time to invest in quality partnerships (Zeldin et al., 2005; DuBois

et al. 2002). Camino (2005) identified some promising practices in relation to youth-adult partnerships. The three promising practices listed by Camino (2005) are (a) integrate reflection into meetings, (b) articulate the logic of programs and youth-adult partnerships, and (c) engage a third party to help explore group assumptions and values. These practices have been used successfully by organizations to utilize youth-adult partnerships. Camino (2005) also surmised three pitfalls in her observations in relation to youth-adult partnerships. The pitfalls are (a) youth-adult partnerships means that youth do everything of importance, (b) adults just need to get out of the way and give up their power, and (c) youth is the marked category and focus. The pitfalls arise when a group is in transition and reflect behaviors and attitudes. Camino (2005) pointed out that youth-adult partnerships are an innovation and that both "youth and adults are experimenting with ways to formulate and implement them" (p. 83). It is also noted that youth-adult partnerships must have collective decision-making, implementation, and meaning in order to be prosperous (Camino, 2005).

As mentioned previously, Hart's Ladder of Participation had a large influence on youth voice and children's participation. In addition, it had a large impact on the theories of youth-adult partnerships. Many of the inaugural models of participation and frameworks of youth-adult partnerships were guided by the original model of Hart (Shier, 2001).

Phil Treseder (1997) created a model to deemphasize a herarchical illustrated structure that was used in previous models (Karsten, 2012). Treseder's Degrees of Participation (1997) described five types of distinctive yet equivalent forms of participation. "The degrees of participation…are represented in nonlinear nodes to indicate that one participation type is not more ideal than another" (Wong, Zimmerman, & Parker, 2010, p. 103). Treseder's Degrees of

Participation (1997) included (a) assigned but informed; (b) adult-initiated, shared decisions with children; (c) consulted and informed; (d) child-initiated and directed; and (e) child-initiated, shared decisions with adults.

Shier (2001) developed an alternative model, Pathways to Participation. According to Shier (2006), the diagram "is a practical planning and evaluation tool that can be applied in almost all situations where adults work with children" (p. 16). Shier's model works as a matrix and has five levels of participation and three stages of commitment at each level. The model is set up to where the practitioner using the tool can identify where they are by answering a question at each stage and level (Shier, 2001). The five levels of participation are (a) children are listened to, (b) children are supported in expressing their views, (c) children's views are taken into account, (d) children are involved in decision-making processes, and (e) children share power and responsibility for decision-making. The three stages of commitment to the process of empowerment are (a) openings, (b) opportunities, and (c) obligations (Shier, 2001). An opening occurs when there is intent to act in a specific manner. The next step, opportunity, is when all the pieces come together to provide an environment for practice of the level. This step could include (a) resources, (b) skills and abilities, (c) information, and (d) knowledge. The final commitment is obligation, when the practice becomes a policy. At this stage, participants feel a requirement to work with youth in a particular manner (Shier, 2001). This model differs from Hart's model because it specifically "identifies levels of participation through modes of interaction between adults and children" (Shier, 2001, p. 115). It does not include a level where decisions are made without adults in the discussion (Shier, 2001).

Jones and Perkins (2004) developed the Continuum of Youth-Adult Relationships model. This model was created to specifically target community efforts. The continuum has five levels that are dependent from each other and not considered to be on a hierarchy. The levels include (a) adult-centered leadership, (b) adult-led collaboration, (c) youth-adult partnership, (d) youth-led collaboration, (e) and youth-centered leadership. Jones and Perkins (2004) also created an evaluation tool to guide youth and adults to measure their experiences and translate them to a position on the Continuum of Youth-Adult Relationships. The Involvement and Interaction Rating Scale (Jones & Perkins, 2005) assesses three constructs (a) youth involvement, (b) adult involvement, and (c) youth-adult interaction. According to Jones and Perkins (2005), "The purpose of the Involvement and Interaction rating scale is to assess the perceptions and experience of youth and adults interacting together at some level within youth development programs" (p.7). The scale can also be used as a tool for self-evaluation by participants (Jones, 2006).

Wong, Zimmerman, and Parker (2010) saw a need for a new type of participation model that focused on empowerment through the child's perspective. They observed that "child and adolescent research and practice are largely constructed using an adult lens whereas the perspectives and real-life experiences of youth people are frequently overlooked" (Wong, Zimmerman, & Parker, 2010, p. 100). Their model, the Typology of Youth Participation and Empowerment (TYPE) Pyramid, has five types of participation (a) vessel, (b) symbolic, (c) pluralistic, (d) independent, and (e) autonomous. Wong, Zimmerman, and Parker (2010) "used a pyramid schematic to articulate different configurations of youth-adult control that reflect optimal participation types for youth empowerment" (p. 104). The pyramid was designed to be

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used a tool to help youth and adults experiment with different participation levels while working together.

**Youth Leadership Development**

The concept of leadership and development of leadership theories have been around since the early 1900s (MacNeil, 2006). In the inception of leadership theories, leadership was thought of as someone with positional power or someone that possesses certain traits (Mortensen et al., 2014). The contemporary view of leadership has progressed to ideas that include transformational leadership, servant leadership, and shared leadership (Mortensen et al., 2014). While the body of knowledge on leadership has evolved rapidly and dramatically, the bulk of research has been concentrated on adult leadership development (MacNeil, 2006; Mortensen et al., 2014). In the studies that have been completed on youth leadership development, many have a future orientation and focus on "leadership ability (skills, knowledge, and talents)"(MacNeil, 2006, p. 32). The missing element in most cases that makes youth leadership differ from adult leadership is the authority or power, like an elected position (Redmond & Dolan, 2014). However, the shift in leadership theories to a more collaborative framework opens the door for the integration of youth leadership development and theories (MacNeil, 2006). Redmond and Dolan (2014) created a conceptual model of youth leadership development that combines the earlier work of youth leadership and accounts for shortfalls in earlier theories.  They noted that many other models focus "solely on skills development without consideration of other important areas such as the opportunity for action and the practice of those skills" (Redmond & Dolan, 2014, p. 4). Mortensen et al. (2014) conducted a study to look at leadership through the perspective of youth.  They noted "without a solid

understanding of what leadership means to youth, we cannot effectively engage youth in leadership development efforts that are meaningful and useful to them in their current lives" (Mortensen et al., 2014, p. 448). Their study concluded five prominent ideas about leadership from the perspective of the youth: (a) leadership is available to anyone in any context, (b) leadership involves creating change, (c) leadership involves collective action, (d) leadership contains modeling and mentoring, and (e) leaders have a strong character. They found that the youth perspective of leadership is aligned with the more contemporary ideas of leadership but does not fit into one single current theory. Overall, researchers agree that youth must be given opportunities to apply and practice leadership skills in authentic and meaningful ways (MacNeil, 2006; Mortensen et al., 2014; Redmond & Dolan, 2014).

**Leadership Life Skills**

As defined by Norman and Jordan (n.d.), "life skills are those competencies that assist people in functioning well in the environments in which they live" (p. 1). Researchers agree that life skills are a necessary development for youth to be productive citizens and function in everyday life (Boyd, Herring, & Briers, 1992; Bruce, Boyd, & Dooley, 2004). Life skill development has been at the center of goals and missions of youth development organizations like 4-H and FFA (Seevers, Dormody, & Clason, 1995).

Life skills have been recognized to be important in other aspects like job readiness (United States Department of Labor, 1991). In a report completed by the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), five competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities were identified. These skills and competencies were defined as being "essential preparation for all students, both those going directly to work and

those planning further education" (United Stated Department of Labor, 1991, p. viii). The three-part foundation included (a) basic skills i.e., reading, writing, and listening; (b) thinking skills i.e., decision making, problem solving, and knowing how to learn, and (c) personal qualities i.e., responsibility, self-esteem, and sociability. The five competencies are (a) resources, (b) interpersonal, (c) information, (d) systems, and (e) technology. Many of these skills and competencies relate to the life skills referred to by youth development organizations.

Hendricks (1998) created a life skills framework and model to support the growth and development of youth called the "Targeting Life Skills Model". This model shows life skills as they relate to the four H's in the 4-H pledge. There are 35 life skills identified that are incorporated into 8 categories. The categories are (a) thinking and managing (head), (b) relating and caring (heart), (c) giving and working (hands), and (d) living and being (health) (Hendricks, 1998).

Many researchers have studied life skills in terms of leadership and personal development. One of the earliest sources was Miller (1976) who broke down leadership life skills development into seven categories. The categories are (a) decision making, (b) relationships, (c) learning, (d) management, (e) understanding self, (f) group processes, and (g) communications. Researchers after Miller used his original categories to form their own theories and inquiries. One instrument that was developed was the Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI) by Carter and Townsend in 1980 (Rutherford, Townsend, Briers, Cummins, & Conrad, 2002). This instrument was later modified into an instrument that included 21 questions that fit in the categories of (a) working with groups, (b) understanding self, (c) making decisions, (d) communicating, and (e) leadership (Rutherford et al., 2002). Rutherford et al. (2002) later used

this instrument to conduct a study focused on exploring leadership development in FFA members. Their study concluded that there was a "positive relationship between FFA participant and self-perceptions of leadership" (p. 30). A correlation was also found "between the leadership abilities of FFA member and the level of activity by an individual within the chapter" (p. 31).

Carter (1989) developed the Leadership and Personal Development Inventory (LPDI). This instrument used 10 measurement scales that included (a) group drive, (b) cohesiveness, (c) productivity, (d) achievement, (e) attitude toward group work, (f) degree of attainment of leadership, (g) self-confidence, (h) cooperation, (i) citizenship, and (j) personal development (Carter & Spotanski, 1989). Carter and Spotanski (1989) used the LPDI to assess leadership and personal development levels of high school students. Their study concluded that "students who have served as a committee chair, officer, or have received formal leadership training, consistently rated each of the ten measurement scales higher than students without theses leadership experiences" (p. 34). Phelps and Kotrlik (2007) also used the LPDI to "compare self-reported perceptions of personal and leadership life skills development of high school 4-H leadership activity participants" (p. 70) by whether they participated in specific program in the 4-H organization. They used a restructured LPDI to be valid for Louisiana 4-H participants. The instrument was still divided into three major sections identical to those used by Carter (Phelps & Kotrlik, 2007).

Waguespack (1988) used a modified version of the Leadership and Personal Development Inventory (LPDI) to examine life skills development among 4-H junior leadership participants and non-junior leadership participants (As cited in Phelps, 2005). Waguespack's

instrument, The Life Skills Development Instrument (LSDI), looked at self-perceived development of competency, coping, and contributory life skills. Waguespack's study showed that between 4-H project participation and the development of life skills, there was a significant and positive relationship (As cited in Miller & Bowen, 1993; Phelps, 2005). In a study conducted by Miller and Bowen (1993) using the LSDI, it was found that 8th graders in Ohio who participated in "4-H or other youth clubs had a positive influence on the perceived development of competency, coping, and contributory life skills" (p. 71).

Seevers and Dormody (1993) created the Youth Leadership Life Skills Development Scale (YLLSDS). It originated with 68 indicators of youth leadership life skills development that all fit within seven conceptual sub-domains. The scale was eventually modified to include 30 indictors that fit within seven sub-domains. Even though their scale included a breakdown into sub-domains, the researchers found that the construct was unidimensional among youth in their population (Seevers, Dormody, & Clason, 1995). In a study conducted by Seevers and Dormody (1994) using the YLLSDS, it was found that "participation in 4-H leadership activities had a positive relationship with youth leadership life skills development" (p. 67). Wingenback and Kahler (1997) utilized the YLLSDS to research the perceived youth leadership and life skills development among Iowa FFA members. They found that a "positive relationship existed between YLLSDS scores and FFA leadership activities and membership in the FFA" (p. 25). Bruce, Boyd, and Dooley (2004) used the categories established by Miller (1976) and Seevers, Dormody, and Clason (1995) to do a qualitative study with 4-H members serving as a State 4-H Council officer from 1988 – 2002. It was concluded that "4-H members do gain skills in decision

making, communication, and getting along with others as a result of serving as a State 4-H

Council officer" (Bruce, Boyd, & Dooley, 2004, p.5).

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

**Population and Sample**

The target population for this census study included Louisiana 4-H State Board Members from the year 2013-2014. For the year 2013-2014, there were 153 board members. Their contact information was obtained by contacting the adult leaders of each board. The leadership boards "give youth the opportunity to work together on a common focus, develop leadership skills, and enhance statewide 4-H programs (Louisiana State 4-H Youth Leadership Boards, 2010, p. 1). Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards are groups of young people formed to provide leadership for Louisiana 4-H statewide programs. Louisiana has six boards that focus on a specific aspect of the program. The six boards are the (a) Citizenship Board; (b) Executive Board; (c) Fashion Board; (d) Food and Fitness Board; (e) Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET) Board; and the (f) Shooting Sports Ambassadors (Louisiana State 4-H Youth Leadership Boards, 2010).

The Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards are comprised of youth members ranging from grades 9th -12th who are enrolled in Louisiana 4-H. They gain membership to a state board by either being elected or selected to serve as a member. Youth are selected or elected to a board based on numerous criteria including, but not limited to (a) previous experience, (b) leadership potential, (c) references of past performance, (d) assessment of interview or application, and (e) other specific standards. Once membership on a board has begun, the youth are exposed to numerous opportunities to utilize youth voice, engage in youth-adult partnerships, and play an active leadership role in the Louisiana 4-H Program (Louisiana State 4-H Youth Leadership Boards, 2010).

For the 2013-2014 year, there were a total of 153 4-H members on the State Leadership

Boards. The Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards are as follows:

- Citizenship Board – During the 2013-2014 year, the Citizenship Board had 29 members. The main focus of the Citizenship Board is service. Each year the Citizenship Board plans and implements the Louisiana Connections Camp. This is a camp for $7^{th} – 9^{th}$ grade 4-H members. In addition, the Citizenship Board provides leadership for the Louisiana 4-H statewide service-learning project. They also organize a history presentation at 4-H Day at the Capitol.

- Executive Board – During the 2013-2014 year, the Executive Board had 32 members. The Executive Board is the overall leadership board of the Louisiana 4-H Program. Members of this board serve on state committees such as 4-H University, 4-H Foundation, and 4-H State Fair. Each year the Executive Board organizes and implements the Junior Leadership Conference (JLC). This is a conference for 300 of their peers. The Executive Board members work together with the adult sponsor to plan educational tracks, teach educational tracks, plan logistics, and most of the other activities at the three day conference. The Executive Board also helps to plan 4-H University.

- Fashion Board – During the 2013-2014 year, the Fashion Board had 17 members. The Fashion Board holds an annual Fashion Camp for 10-13 year olds. The emphasis of the camp is to teach sewing skills and techniques to the participants. The Fashion Board plans and implements the camp.

- Food and Fitness Board – During the 2013-2014 year, the Food and Fitness Board had 18 members. The Food and Fitness Board serves as the ambassadors for healthy concepts such as healthy living, nutrition, and fitness. They hold a camp every year that focuses on increasing family fitness and nutrition. The Food and Fitness board also encourages parish programs to support healthy living by issuing a fitness challenge each year.

- Science, Engineering, and Technology Board (SET Board) – During the 2013-2014 year, the SET Board had 21 members. The SET board assists in planning and implementing the Louisiana Outdoor, Science, and Technology Camp (LOST Camp). LOST Camp is a camp for 7th and 8th graders focused on the outdoors, science, and technology. They also plan and organize educational tracks for a Science camp for military youth.

- Shooting Sports Ambassadors – During the 2013-2014 year, the Shooting Sports Ambassadors had 36 members. The Shooting Sports Ambassadors help facilitate the Louisiana Shooting Sports Program. They are certified instructors in the different disciplines of the program. They help run educational tracks at events like LOST Camp and JLC. They also help facilitate the State Shoot and other shoots throughout the year.

**Data Collection**

The researcher collected responses from the target population ($N$ = 153) using Dillman, Smyth, and Christian's (2008) Tailored Design Method. The target population was contacted via a LSU Qualtrics email that described the purpose of the study and contained a link to the questionnaire. The non-respondents at the end of weeks one, two, and three were contacted via LSU Qualtrics email. At the end of week four, a random sample, i.e., 20% of the remaining non-respondents ($n$ = 13) were contacted via telephone to control for non-response error. To

guarantee that the results were representative of the target population, an independent

samples *t*-test was used to compare respondents and non-respondents. No differences were

found between respondents and non-respondents. As such, it was concluded that the sample

was representative of the Louisiana 4-H State Board Members population and non-respondents

(*n* = 13) were combined with respondents (*n* = 86) for a response rate of 65%.

**Instrumentation**

Two instruments were used in this study (see Appendix A). The first one was the Youth

Leadership Life Skills Development Scale (YLLSDS). It was developed to take a "snapshot of a

youth's leadership life skills development during membership in a youth organization"

(Dormody, Seevers, & Clason, 1993, p. 1). It originated with 68 indicators of youth leadership

life skills development that all fit within seven conceptual sub-domains. The seven sub-domains

are communication skills, decision-making skills, skills in getting along with others, learning

skills, management skills, skills in understanding yourself, and skills in working with groups

(Seevers, Dormody, & Clason, 1995). The scale was eventually tapered down to 30 indictors

that fit within the seven sub-domains. A four-point summated scale (0 = *No Gain*, 1 = *Slight*

*Gain*, 2 = *Moderate Gain*, 3 = *A Lot of Gain*) measured the perceived gain of leadership life skills

(Dormody, Seevers, & Clason, 1993). Even though the scale included seven sub-domains, the

original researchers found that the construct was uni-dimensional among youth in their

population (Seevers, Dormody, & Clason, 1995).

The instrument was pilot tested with a stratified random sample of 262 New Mexico

senior 4-H and FFA members. The reliability estimate for the 30-question construct was .98

(Dormody, Seevers, & Clason, 1993).

The second instrument used in the study was the Involvement and Interaction Rating Scale developed by Kenneth Jones and Daniel Perkins (2005). This instrument assesses the perceptions and practices of youth and adults working together on community projects. The tool focuses on youth involvement, adult involvement, and youth-adult interaction. The relationship is then placed on the Continuum of Youth-Adult Relationships based on their responses (Jones, 2006). The Involvement and Interaction Rating Scale has 38 items that include bipolar statements to measure the participants' perception of youth-adult relationships. The instrument uses a 10-point scale to assess Youth Involvement, Adult Involvement, and Youth-Adult Interaction. The scale ranges from: 1-2 = *very poor*; 3-4 = *poor*; 5-6 = *fair*; 7-8 = *good*; and 9-10 = *excellent*.

The instrument contained three groups of items that measured the constructs youth involvement, adult involvement, and youth-adult interaction. The reliability estimates for each of the constructs were as follows: Youth Involvement (.83), Adult Involvement (.84), and Youth-Adult Interaction (.87) ( Jones & Perkins, 2005).

Reliability estimates for the constructs in this study were calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, *post hoc*. The reliability estimates were as follows (a) Youth Involvement $\alpha$ = .95, (b) Adult Involvement $\alpha$ = .97, (c) Youth-Adult Interaction $\alpha$ = .98, and (d) Leadership Life Skills $\alpha$ = .96. These reliability estimates were deemed exemplary (Robinson, Shaver, and Wrightsman, 1991).

Permission was granted by the creators of the original instruments for use in this study (see Appendix B).

**Data Analysis**

The data analyses for research objectives one through three involved computing descriptive statistics (e.g., means, percentages, frequencies, and standard deviations). Research questions four, five, and six were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients or spearman rho, where appropriate. The strength of relationships was determined using Davis' (1971) coefficient conventions: $r=$ .01 to .09 = *Negligible*, $r=$ .10 to .29 = *Low*, $r=$ .30 to .49 = *Moderate*, $r=$ .50 to .69 = *Substantial,* and r ≥ .70 = *Very Strong*. A statistical significance level of .05 was established *a priori* for all statistical tests.

# CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

**Research Objective One**

Research objective one sought to describe members on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards. Respondents (*n* = 99) consisted of 39(39.4%) male, 59(59.6%) female respondents, and 1(1%) failed to respond (see Table 1). Regarding race, an overwhelming majority, 88(88.9%) were White, 9(9.1%) were Black, 1(1%) were Asian, and 1(1%) were American Indian or Alaskan Native (see Table 1).

Most of the respondents 43(43.4%) reported living in a farm or rural area, 21(21.2%) lived in a Town under 10,000, 25(25.3%) lived in a town or city with 10,000 – 50,000, 6(6.1%) lived in a suburb or city over 50,000, and 4(4%) lived in a central city over 50,000. Regarding which board respondents served on, 18(18.2%) served on Citizenship Board, 23(23.2%) served on Executive Board, 9(9.1%) served on Fashion Board, 14(14.1%) served on Food & Fitness Board, 13(13.1%) served on Science, Engineering, & Technology (SET) Board, and 22(22.2%) served on the Shooting Sports Board (see Table 1).

Forty-six (46.5%) respondents reported that they were present at board sponsored events all of the time, 45(45.5%) reported their presence at board sponsored events as often, 4(4%) reported their presence about half the time, and 4(4%) reported being present as seldom (see Table 1). Respondents ranged in age from 15 to 20 years old (*M* = 17.16, *SD* = 1.037), had reported being a member of 4-H from 3 to 10 years (*M* = 8.01, *SD* = 1.496), and had served on a state board from 1 to 5 years (*M* = 2.30, *SD* = 1.025; see Table 2).

Table 1

Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Board Members Demographic Characteristics

| Variable | $f$ | % |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
|     Female | 59 | 59.6 |
|     Male | 39 | 39.4 |
|     Failed to Respond | 1 | 1 |
| Race | | |
|     Asian | 1 | 1 |
|     Black or African American | 9 | 9.1 |
|     American Indian/Native American | 1 | 1 |
|     White | 88 | 88.9 |
| Area in which they live | | |
|     Farm or rural area | 43 | 43.4 |
|     Town under 10,000 | 21 | 21.2 |
|     Town or City (10,000 – 50,000) | 25 | 25.3 |
|     Suburb or city over 50,000 | 6 | 6.1 |
|     Central City over 50,000 | 4 | 4 |
| Board they served on | | |
|     Citizenship | 18 | 18.2 |
|     Executive | 23 | 23.2 |

(Table 1 continued)

| Variable | f | % |
|---|---|---|
| Fashion | 9 | 9.1 |
| Food & Fitness | 14 | 14.1 |
| Science, Engineering, & Technology (SET) | 13 | 13.1 |
| Shooting Sports | 22 | 22.2 |
| How often they were present at board events | | |
| Seldom | 4 | 4 |
| About half the time | 4 | 4 |
| Often | 45 | 45.5 |
| All of the time | 46 | 46.5 |

Table 2

Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Board Members Demographic Characteristics

| Item | Min. | Max. | M | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| How many years have you been a 4-H member? | 3 | 10 | 8.01 | 1.496 |
| What is your age? | 15 | 20 | 17.16 | 1.037 |
| How many years have you served on a Louisiana State 4-H Leadership Board? | 1 | 5 | 2.30 | 1.025 |

**Research Objective Two**

Objective two sought to measure the development of leadership life skills in terms of the State Leadership Boards as measured by the Youth Leadership Life Skills Development Scale. Based on a 4 point scale, the overall construct mean was 3.55. The two items with the

highest means were (a) *As a result of my 2013-2014 Louisiana 4-H State Board experience I: Get along with others* (*M* = 3.71, *SD* = .556) and (b) *Respect others* (*M* = 3.70, *SD* = .543). The two items with the lowest means were (a) *As a result of my 2013-2014 Louisiana 4-H State Board experience I: Am sensitive to others* (*M* = 3.33, *SD* = .958) and (b) *Trust other people* (*M* = 3.20, *SD* = .869). Data are reported using the mean by each item and overall construct mean (see Table 3).

Table 3
Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Board Members Leadership Life Skills Development

| Item | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|
| As a result of my 2013-2014 Louisiana 4-H State Board experience I: | | |
| Get along with others | 3.71 | .556 |
| Respect others | 3.70 | .543 |
| Can set goals | 3.67 | .553 |
| Have a friendly personality | 3.67 | .670 |
| Recognize the worth of others | 3.66 | .538 |
| Show a responsible attitude | 3.65 | .594 |
| Have good manners | 3.63 | .648 |
| Consider the needs of others | 3.62 | .618 |
| Can solve problems | 3.61 | .603 |
| Can delegate responsibility | 3.60 | .588 |
| Can use information to solve problems | 3.59 | .589 |
| Create an atmosphere of acceptance | 3.58 | .716 |

(Table 3 continued)

| Item | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| Can handle mistakes | 3.58 | .608 |
| Use rational thinking | 3.58 | .656 |
| Can be flexible | 3.56 | .610 |
| Can clarify my values | 3.56 | .717 |
| Can set priorities | 3.55 | .659 |
| Am open to change | 3.55 | .704 |
| Am open-minded | 3.54 | .704 |
| Can listen effectively | 3.52 | .676 |
| Have a positive self-concept | 3.51 | .705 |
| Can be honest with others | 3.51 | .747 |
| Can consider alternatives | 3.51 | .612 |
| Can be tactful | 3.49 | .691 |
| Can select alternatives | 3.47 | .595 |
| Can express feelings | 3.40 | .783 |
| Can determine needs | 3.37 | .664 |
| Am sensitive to others | 3.33 | .958 |
| Trust other people | 3.20 | .869 |
| Construct Mean | 3.55 | .474 |

*Note.* Real limits: 1.00 to 1.49 = No Gain, 1.50 to 2.49 = Slight Gain, 2.50 to 3.49 = Moderate Gain, and 3.50 to 4.00 = A Lot of Gain

**Research Objective Three**

Objective three sought to measure the perceptions and experiences of youth on the

State Leadership Boards in terms of youth-adult relationships as measured by the Involvement

and Interaction Rating Scale.  Youth were asked questions to rate their experiences on the state

boards according to youth involvement indicators, adult involvement indicators, and youth-

adult interaction indicators.  Mean scores of each item are reported below in Table 4.

Table 4
Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Board Members Youth Involvement, Adult Involvement, and
Youth-Adult Interaction

| Item | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|
| Youth Involvement | 7.70 | 2.27 |
| Adult Involvement | 7.87 | 2.44 |
| Youth-Adult Interaction | 8.10 | 2.38 |

*Note.* Real limits: 1.00 to 5.49 = Low, 5.50 to 10 = High

**Research Objective Four**

Objective four sought to determine if a relationship existed between development of

leadership life skills and youth-adult partnerships for youth on the State Leadership Boards. The

analyses revealed that there was no significant relationship between development of

leadership life skills and youth-adult partnerships (see Table 5).

Table 5
Relationship Between Leadership Life Skills and Youth-Adult Partnerships

| | Youth Involvement | Adult Involvement | Youth-Adult Interaction |
|---|---|---|---|
| Leadership | .085 | .087 | .030 |

*Note.* Pearson-product moment Correlation Coefficient; *$p$ < .05

**Research Objective Five**

Objective five sought to determine if a relationship existed between the development of leadership life skills and members' select demographic characteristics.  The analyses revealed a positive and low relationship between leadership life skills development and age ($r_s$ = .27); and leadership life skills and how often respondents were present at board sponsored events ($r_s$ = .29).  In addition, leadership life skills and how many years the respondent had served on a state board was found to be related moderately and positively ($r_s$ = .30; see Table 6). No statistically significant relationships were found between leadership life skills and all other demographic characteristic variables.

Table 6
Relationship Between Leadership Life Skills and Selected Demographic Characteristics

|  | Age | Years on a State Board | Presence at board sponsored events |
|---|---|---|---|
| Leadership | .28 | .30 | .29 |

*Note.* Spearman rho Correlation Coefficient; *$p$ < .05
*Note.* Pearson-product moment Correlation Coefficient; *$p$ < .05

**Research Objective Six**

Objective six sought to determine if a relationship existed between youth involvement, adult involvement, and youth-adult interaction; and select demographic characteristics of youth on the State Leadership Boards.  No statistically significant relationships were found between youth involvement, adult involvement, and youth-adult interaction and all other demographic characteristic variables.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

**Summary of Findings**

The results of the study displayed that two-thirds of the members of the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards were female, were white, and were from small or rural areas.  This is representative of the overall population of the 2013-2014 state boards (J. Fox, personal communication, February 9, 2015). This is not representative of the entire membership of 4-H members in Louisiana regarding gender (Louisiana 4-H Youth Development Department, 2015). The 4-H members serving on the leadership boards had an average age of 17, had been a member of 4-H for eight years, and had served on a Louisiana 4-H State Leadership board for two years.  Two-thirds of the responding members belonged to the Executive Board, the Citizenship Board, and the Shooting Sports Ambassadors.

Overall, 4-H members who served on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards perceived they gained "a lot" of leadership life skills from their board involvement.  Specifically, members perceived that serving on the board assisted them with the ability to get along with others and respect others.  This finding is similar to the results of Bruce, Boyd, & Dooley (2004) who concluded that 4-H members get along with others as a result of serving in a leadership role.  Board members perceived they developed a high level of leadership life skills as a result of service.  Similarly, Seevers and Dormody (1994) found that there was a positive relationship between 4-H youth participating in leadership activities and an increase in the development of leadership life skills.

4-H members on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards reported high levels of youth involvement, adult involvement, and youth-adult interaction.  Based on the high levels of

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involvement and interaction, youth-adult partnerships were present on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards according to the Continuum of Youth-Adult Relationships (Jones, 2006). No statistically significant relationship existed between development of leadership life skills and youth-adult partnerships for youth on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards. However, there was a relationship between leadership life skills and age, years served on a state board, and how often members were present at board sponsored events.  As a members age, years served on a state board, and attendance at board sponsored events increased, so did their perceived gain in leadership life skills development.

**Recommendations for Practice**

Youth development professionals who work with youth leadership boards should create opportunities for targeted leadership life skills development.  Even though this study explored the perceived gain of leadership life skills, there was no explanation as to how the skills were developed.  Directed trainings on leadership skills, theories, and practices could increase the gain of leadership life skills (Carter & Spotanski, 1989; Seevers & Dormody, 1994). This study did not explore the training methods of youth on the leadership boards. If trainings are offered, it is also unknown if the training is equivalent for all board members. If there is not a training system in place, an overall youth leadership training should be developed as a means to have directed knowledge gain.  Training materials could be developed using already existing research based curriculum. Redmond and Dolan (2014) developed a youth leadership development conceptual model. Skills suggested that should be developed to assist in a young leader's development are (a) self-awareness, (b) relate to others, (c) confidence, (d) teambuilding, (e) problem solving, (f) conflict resolution, (g) decision-making, (h) communication, (i) oral/written,

(j) presentation skills,  (k) critical thinking, (l) evidence/facts, and (m) ethics (Redmond & Dolan, 2014).

The boards should continue the current practices of youth-adult partnerships.  Similarly to youth members, it is unclear what training adult sponsors are given when they agree to serve as sponsors. Training and instruction should be given to adult sponsors on youth-adult partnerships and mentoring relationships.

The population of the study and the total population of 4-H members in Louisiana are not concurrent with one another in terms of race or gender (Louisiana 4-H Youth Development Department, 2015).  Youth development professionals could vary the recruitment efforts of potential board members to include a more diverse pool of applicants. This could include widening the range of diverse adult sponsors. Many times youth feel more connected to adults of similar backgrounds as themselves (Rhodes, Liang, & Spencer, 2009). Cano and Bankston (1992) found that the presence of minority leaders influenced the recruitment and retention of minority youth in the 4-H program. Jones and Perkins (2006) found that females were more positive toward their experiences because they had female role models.

Board sponsors and leaders should continue the practice of yearly assessments to gauge the impact of serving on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards. The assessments should evaluate if the boards are producing outcomes that coincide with the noted goals of the program.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research should be conducted to determine if there is a difference in youth who serve on the Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards and other 4-H members who do not serve

on the board.  This study did not take into account any other leadership opportunities, like

being members of another club, the youth were exposed to and how that might affect the

study.  This would provide better insight on the outcome of being a member on a state board.

In addition, future research should be conducted to determine if the presence of a

youth-adult partnership relates to the development of leadership life skills. Previous research

concludes that youth-adult partnerships have positive impacts on youth in many ways including

skill-building (Zeldin, McDaniel, Topitzes, & Calvert, M., 2000). This study looked at the

aforementioned relationship but did not account for other external variables like exposure to

the adult sponsors in terms of length, previously established relationships with adults, and

direct training on leadership skills by adults. Future research could investigate the subject

deeper to determine why in this study the two variables had no significant relationship.

As mentioned previously, this study did not explore the training or lack of training the

board members were exposed to on the subjects of leadership life skills and youth-adult

partnerships.  Future research should be conducted to assess any training that is provided and

the impact on skills or competencies.

Finally, research on females in leadership positions and the transition from high school

to the workforce would be an interesting subject of exploration. Youth serving on the Louisiana

4-H State Leadership Boards were mostly female.  However, in the workforce, people in

leadership positions are a mostly male (Warner, 2014).  According to Warner (2014) in a report

for the Center for American Progress, women hold almost 52 percent of all profession level

jobs.  However, women "are only 14.6 percent of executive officers, 8.1 percent of top earners,

and 4.6 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs" (Warner, 2014, p. 1).  Research should be conducted to

see if other youth development organizations have the same ratios of female to male youth in

leadership roles.  If so, what is the transition that happens from high school to the workforce?

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Welcome to the 2014 Louisiana 4-H State Board Program Evaluation. The purpose of this survey is to gather information about your experience serving as a member on the Louisiana State Leadership Boards.

All State Board members for the 2013-2014 year are invited to participate in this program evaluation. Your participation in this evaluation is strictly voluntary. There are 65 questions. This survey will take approximately 10-12 minutes to complete, and your responses to the questions are anonymous.

Your participation in this study will help program coordinators provide a better experience for Louisiana 4-H State Board Members. No risks are anticipated from taking part in this study. The results of this study may be published; however, no identifying information will be included in the publication.

If you have any questions about this evaluation, please contact Leslie Moran, the Principal Investigator, at 225-578-2196 or LMoran@agcenter.lsu.edu or Dr. JC Bunch, Major Professor, at jcbunch@lsu.edu.

By beginning the survey, you acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to participate in this program evaluation, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty.

○ Yes, Please take me to the survey
○ No, I do not wish to participate

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What leadership skills have you improved because of your involvement on a Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Board during the 2013-2014 year? Please answer each item by selecting the choice (No Gain, Slight Gain, Moderate Gain, or A Lot of Gain) that you feel represents your gain for each skill on the State Leadership Board during the 2013-2014 year.

As a result of my 2013-2014 Louisiana 4-H State Board experience I:

| | No Gain | Slight Gain | Moderate Gain | A Lot of Gain |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Can determine needs | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Have a positive self-concept | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can express feelings | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can set goals | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can be honest with others | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can use information to solve problems | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can delegate responsibility | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can set priorities | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Am sensitive to others | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Am open-minded | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Consider the needs of others | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Show a responsible attitude | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Have a friendly personality | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Consider input from all group members | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can listen effectively | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can select alternatives | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Recognize the worth of others | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Create an atmosphere of acceptance | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Can consider alternatives | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Respect others | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can solve problems | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can handle mistakes | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can be tactful | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can be flexible | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Get along with others | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Can clarify my values | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Use rational thinking | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Am open to change | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Have good manners | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Trust other people | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

>>
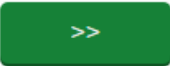
For the items below, think of your experience on a state board during the 2013-2014 year. The purpose of this survey is to allow you to rate the levels of youth involvement with other youth, adult involvement with other adults, and youth working together with adults.

Select the number nearest the statement that you believe best describes the situation. Or if you believe both statement are accurate or somewhat accurate, then you would select a number near the middle.

## Youth Involvement Indicators

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Youth take little initiative in working on projects | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth take lots of initiative in working on projects |
| Youth show up late for meeting/events | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth arrive to meetings/events on times |
| Youth make few decisions for themselves, often relying on the decisions of adults | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth rely on themselves to make key decisions |
| Youth have very little access to information that is needed to make decisions | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth have full access to information that is needed to make decisions |
| Youth rarely share ideas about things that matter to them | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth frequently share ideas about things that matter to them |
| Youth do not have an equal vote in the decision-making process | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth have an equal vote in the decision-making process |
| Youth do not help one another in developing new skills | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth help one another in developing new skills |
| Youth have no interest in being involved with the board | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth are very excited about being involved with this board |

## Adult Involvement Indicators

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adults display a sense of wanting to control youth | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults display a willingness to accept and nurture youth leadership |
| Adults never listen to the suggestions of youth | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults always listen to the suggestions of youth |
| Adults always take over everything when working on board activities | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults never totally take over everything when working on board activities |
| Adults do not learn new skills from one another | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults learn new skills from one another |
| Adults never take the ideas of youth seriously | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults always take the ideas of youth seriously |
| Adults command youth to follow the directions of adults | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults encourage youth to come up with their own ideas |
| Adults have no interest in being involved with this board | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults are very excited about being involved with this board |
| Adults are not very concerned with community change | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults are very concerned with community change |

## Youth-Adult Interaction Indicators

|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| There is arguing/tension among youth and adults | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth and adults get along well together |
| Youth appear uneasy and intimidated by adults | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth seem comfortable working with adults |
| Adults appear uneasy and afraid of youth | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults seem comfortable working with youth |
| Adults do not consult with youth on project activities at all | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults actively and consistently consult with youth on project activities |
| Adults provide little or no direction and mentoring for youth | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Adults provide direction and mentoring for youth |
| Youth and adults rarely agree with one another | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth and adults often agree on most decisons |
| Youth and adults work separately on project tasks | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth and adults work together as partners on project tasks |
| Youth and adults learn little from one another | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth and adults indicate mutual learning from one another |
| Youth and adults rarely help one another develop new skills | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth and adults frequently help one another develop new skills |
| Youth and adults never engage in respectful conversations | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | Youth and adults always engage in respectful conversations |

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For the 2013-2014 year, I served on the _____ board.

- ○ Citizenship
- ○ Executive
- ○ Fashion
- ○ Food & Fitness
- ○ Science, Engineering, & Technology (SET)
- ○ Shooting Sports

How many years have you served on a Louisiana State 4-H Leadership Board?

[                                                                              ]

How often were you present at board sponsored events during the 2013-2014 year

- ○ Never
- ○ Seldom
- ○ About half the time
- ○ Often
- ○ All of the time

How many years have you been a 4-H member?

[                                                                              ]

Race

- ○ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ○ Asian
- ○ Black or African American
- ○ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ○ White
- ○ Other (please specify)
  [                    ]

Ethnicity

- ○ Hispanic or Latino
- ○ Not Hispanic or Latino

Gender

- ○ Male
- ○ Female

What is your age?

[                                                                    ]

Which choice below best describes the area in which you live?

- ○ Farm or rural area
- ○ Town under 10,000
- ○ Town and city (10,000 - 50,000)
- ○ Suburb or city over 50,000
- ○ Central city over 50,000

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**Moran, Leslie**

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| | |
|---|---|
| **From:** | Jones, Kenneth R <krjone3@email.uky.edu> |
| **Sent:** | Wednesday, June 04, 2014 2:39 PM |
| **To:** | Moran, Leslie |
| **Subject:** | RE: Use of Youth-Adult Partnership Instrument |

Hi Leslie,

You have my permission to use the scale. Please be sure to share your findings with me once your study is complete.

Ken

---

**From:** Moran, Leslie [mailto:LMoran@agcenter.lsu.edu]
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 04, 2014 12:30 PM
**To:** Jones, Kenneth R
**Subject:** Use of Youth-Adult Partnership Instrument

Hi Dr. Jones,

I am contacting you to seek permission to use your instrument, Youth-Adult Partnership Involvement and Interaction Rating Scale. I am a current graduate student at LSU working on completing my master's thesis and also work for 4-H here in Louisiana. I am conducting my thesis through a correlational study on Leadership Skills and Youth-Adult Partnerships with our Statewide Leadership Boards in Louisiana. Dr. Melissa Cater is on my committee and suggested using your survey as the instrument for rating Youth-Adult Partnerships. I look forward to hearing back from you and if I have permission to use your instrument.

Thank you,

Leslie A. Moran
4-H Youth & Family Development
169 Knapp Hall, LSU
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
(225) 578-2196

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*for the latest research-based information on just about anything, visit our Web site at www.lsuagcenter.com*

**Moran, Leslie**

| | |
|---|---|
| **From:** | Dormody, Tom <tdormody@ad.nmsu.edu> |
| **Sent:** | Wednesday, June 04, 2014 5:26 PM |
| **To:** | Moran, Leslie |
| **Cc:** | Seevers, Brenda |
| **Subject:** | Re: Use of Youth Leadership Instrument |

You bet, Leslie: Dr. Seevers and I are pleased to see it used again in another study. Your study sounds very interesting and valuable for Louisiana 4-H Youth Development.

Good luck,

Dr. Dormody

Thomas J. Dormody, Ph.D.
Professor, Agricultural and Extension Education
College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences
New Mexico State University
Tel. (575) 646-4511

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**From:** <Moran>, Leslie <LMoran@agcenter.lsu.edu>
**Date:** Wednesday, June 4, 2014 2:26 PM
**To:** CAHE IT <tdormody@ad.nmsu.edu>
**Subject:** Use of Youth Leadership Instrument
**Resent-From:** <tdormody@nmsu.edu>

Hi Dr. Dormody,

I am contacting you to seek permission to use your instrument, Youth Leadership Life Skills Development Scale . I am a current graduate student at LSU working on completing my master's thesis and also work for 4-H here in Louisiana. I am conducting my thesis through a correlational study on Leadership Skills and Youth-Adult Partnerships with our Statewide Leadership Boards in Louisiana. Dr. Melissa Cater is on my committee and suggested using your survey as the instrument for rating Leadership Skills. I look forward to hearing back from you and if I have permission to use your instrument.

Thank you,

Leslie A. Moran
4-H Youth & Family Development
169 Knapp Hall, LSU
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
(225) 578-2196

## Application for Exemption from Institutional Oversight

**LSU**

Unless qualified as meeting the specific criteria for exemption from Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversight, ALL LSU research/ projects using living humans as subjects, or samples, or data obtained from humans, directly or indirectly, with or without their consent, must be approved or exempted in advance by the LSU IRB. This form helps the PI determine if a project may be exempted, and is used to request an exemption.

Institutional Review Board
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair
130 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.5983
irb@lsu.edu | lsu.edu/irb

-- Applicant, Please fill out the application in its entirety and include the completed application as well as parts B-F, listed below, when submitting to the IRB. Once the application is completed, please submit the completed application to the IRB Office by e-mail (irb@lsu.edu) for review. If you would like to have your application reviewed by a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee before submitting it to the IRB office, you can find the list of committee members at http://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/ored/human-subjects-screening-committee-members/.

-- A Complete Application Includes All of the Following:
(A) This completed form
(B) A brief project description (adequate to evaluate risks to subjects and to explain your responses to Parts 1&2)
(C) Copies of all instruments to be used.
   *If this proposal is part of a grant proposal, include a copy of the proposal and all recruitment material.
(D) The consent form that you will use in the study (see part 3 for more information.)
(E) Certificate of Completion of Human Subjects Protection Training for all personnel involved in the project, including students who are involved with testing or handling data, unless already on file with the IRB. Training link: (http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.pdf)
(F) Signed copy of the IRB Security of Data Agreement: (https://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/ored/files/2013/07/Security-of-Data-Agreement.pdf)

**1) Principal Investigator:** Leslie Moran   **Rank:** Extension Associate

**Dept:** 4-H Youth Development   **Ph:** 225-578-2196   **E-mail:** LMoran@agcenter.lsu.edu

**2) Co Investigator(s):** please include department, rank, phone and e-mail for each
*If student, please identify and name supervising professor in this space

Dr. J.C. Bunch, Assistant Professor, College of Agriculture, 225-578-2108, jcbunch@lsu.edu
Dr. Melissa Cater, Assistant Professor, LSU AgCenter Organizational Development & Evaluation, 225-578-2903, MCater@agcenter.lsu.edu
Dr. Janet Fox, Associate Department Head, LSU AgCenter 4-H Youth Development, 225-578-2196, JFox@agcenter.lsu.edu

**3) Project Title:** Louisiana 4-H State Leadership Boards: Measuring Leadership Life Skills and Youth-Adult Relationships.

**4) Proposal? (yes or no)** No   **If Yes, LSU Proposal Number** [ ]

Also, if YES, either   ○ This application completely matches the scope of work in the grant
OR   ○ More IRB Applications will be filed later

**5) Subject pool** (e.g. Psychology students) 4-H State Board Members (13-18 years of age)

*Indicate any "**vulnerable populations**" to be used: (children <18 the mentally impaired, pregnant women, the ages, other). Projects with incarcerated persons cannot be exempted.

**6) PI Signature** *Leslie A Moran*   **Date** 7/4/2014 (no per signatures)

** I certify my responses are accurate and complete. If the project scope or design is later changes, I will resubmit for review. I will obtain written approval from the Authorized Representative of all non-LSU institutions in which the study is conducted. I also understand that it is my responsibility to maintain copies of all consent forms at LSU for three years after completion of the study. If I leave LSU before that time the consent forms should be preserved in the Departmental Office.

**Screening Committee Action:** ● Exempted   ○ Not Exempted   Category/Paragraph [ ]

**Signed Consent Waived?:** ● Yes or ○ No

**Reviewer** *Michael Keenan*   **Signature** *Michael Keenan*   **Date** 7-29-2014

*LSU Ag Ctr   HE 14-9*

Continue on the next page

## PART 3: Consent Forms

\* The consent form must be written in non-technical language which can be understood by the subjects. It should be free of any exculpatory language through which the participant is made to waive, or appears to be made to waive any legal rights, including any release of the investigator, sponsor, institution or its agents from liability for negligence. (Note: the consent form is not a contract.)
\* For example consent forms, please refer to our website, www.lsu.edu/irb
\* The IRB prefers using signed informed consent; However, if that is impractical, an application to waive signed consent can be requested below. However, even if this waiver is requested, the **IRB must be provided with the consent script** that will present the information to human subjects regarding the study/research. All consent forms or scripts must include a statement that the study was approved or exempted by the IRB and provide IRB contact information to participants.

**I am requesting waiver of signed Informed Consent because:**

○ (a) Having a participant sign the consent form would create the *principal risk* of participating in the study.

*or that*

● (b) The research presents *no more than minimal risk* of harm to subjects and involves no procedures for which having signed consent is normally required.

Now that your application is complete, please send it to the IRB office by e-mail (irb@lsu.edu) for review. If you would like to have your application reviewed by a member of the Human Subjects Screening Committee before submitting it to the IRB office, you can find the list of committee members at http://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/ored/human-subjects-screening-committee-members/.

Institutional Review Board
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair
130 David Boyd Hall
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irb@lsu.edu | lsu.edu/irb

**VITA**

Leslie Alison Moran is the daughter of Anthony E. Moran and Dunbar Moran of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.  She was raised in Bueche, LA.  She graduated from Redemptorist High School in 2006.

Leslie earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Human Resource Education with a concentration in Leadership Development from Louisiana State University.  She graduated with cum laude honors in May 2010.  Leslie has been an employee with the LSU AgCenter's 4-H Youth Development Department since May 2009.  In August of 2010, Leslie was hired as the Operation Military Kids program coordinator for the Louisiana 4-H State Office. Leslie is currently the Louisiana 4-H State Office Coordinator of State Events and Youth Leadership Program.

Leslie is a current member of the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents (NAE4-HA) and the Louisiana Association of Extension 4-H Agents (LAE4-HA). She currently serves as the Treasurer for LAE4-HA.  She also serves as faculty advisor of Collegiate 4-H at LSU. Leslie has been recognized by her peers as a 2014 LAE4-HA Achievement in Service award winner.