2005

Effectiveness of the 4-H advisory committee process as perceived by 4-H professionals and advisory committee members

Mark Gerard Tassin
Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, mgtassin@agctr.lsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations
Part of the Human Resources Management Commons

Recommended Citation
Tassin, Mark Gerard, "Effectiveness of the 4-H advisory committee process as perceived by 4-H professionals and advisory committee members" (2005). LSU Doctoral Dissertations. 406.
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations/406

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized graduate school editor of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
EFFECTIVENESS OF THE 4-H ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROCESS AS PERCEIVED BY 4-H PROFESSIONALS AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The School of Human Resource Education and Workforce Development

by

Mark Gerard Tassin
B.S., Louisiana State University, 1981
M.S., Louisiana State University, 1988
August 2005
Acknowledgements

The author wishes to express his sincere appreciation to the many people who assisted and contributed to this study. A special thanks to the 4-H youth development professionals in Louisiana and parish 4-H advisory committee members for their participation in the study.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Michael Burnett for his assistance, guidance, suggestions and encouragement throughout the course of this study. The author is grateful to Dr. Satish Verma, Dr. Earl Johnson, Dr. Krisanna Machtmes, and Dr. Charles Teddlie for serving on the committee. I would like to especially thank Dr. Machtmes for her assistance with the qualitative portion of the study.

Special acknowledgements are extended to Mr. Terril Faul 4-H Department Head and the entire state 4-H staff for their support and assistance in this study.

The author is deeply indebted to his wife Janet and his two daughters Lindsey and Emily for their patience and support that was shown throughout the course of this program.
# Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................ ii

LIST OF TABLES ................................................................................................................. vi

LIST OF FIGURES ................................................................................................................ xi

ABSTRACT ................................................................................................................................. xii

CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................1
  Justification/Rationale ........................................................................................................1
  Problem Statement .............................................................................................................7
  Purpose of Study ................................................................................................................8
  Objectives ............................................................................................................................8
  Significance of the Study .................................................................................................11
  Definition of Terms .........................................................................................................12

CHAPTER TWO. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .............................................14
  History of Cooperative Extension Service .................................................................14
  History of 4-H Program .................................................................................................16
  Program Development .................................................................................................17
    Theoretical Model .........................................................................................................17
  Program Planning ...........................................................................................................20
    Organizational Initiatives .............................................................................................20
    Professional Input .........................................................................................................26
    Stakeholder Input: Overall Advisory Groups ............................................................31
    Stakeholder Input: Cooperative Extension System and 4-H ..................................33
  Structure of Advisory Process ......................................................................................37
    Cooperative Extension System and 4-H .................................................................37
  Function of Advisory Process ......................................................................................43
    Cooperative Extension System and 4-H .................................................................43
  Program Evaluation .......................................................................................................48
    Participation ...................................................................................................................48
    Outcomes .......................................................................................................................49
    Program Description ....................................................................................................50
    Stakeholders’ Perception (Cooperative Extension) ......................................................51
    Stakeholders’ Perception (4-H) ....................................................................................55

CHAPTER THREE. METHODOLOGY .............................................................................57
  Population and Sample .................................................................................................57
  Instrumentation ...............................................................................................................58
  Data Collection ...............................................................................................................59
  Data Analysis ...................................................................................................................63
C. QUESTIONNAIRE 4-H ADVISORY MEMBERS ....................... 220

D. LETTER 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS ........................................... 226

E. LETTER 4-H ADVISORY MEMBERS ........................................................ 227

F. REMINDER POSTCARD 1 ........................................................................ 228

G. REMINDER POSTCARD 2 ........................................................................ 229

H. QUALITATIVE QUESTIONS .................................................................... 230

VITA .................................................................................................................. 231
List of Tables

Table 1. Age of 4-H youth development professionals ........................................70

Table 2. Highest level of education completed by 4-H youth development Professionals ..........................................................................................................71

Table 3. Number of years reported employed as a 4-H youth development Professional ............................................................................................................71

Table 4. Number of advisory committee trainings attended by 4-H Youth Development professionals in the last 3 years .................................................................72

Table 5. Number of advisory committee meeting conducted by 4-H youth development professionals in the past three years .............................................................73

Table 6. Meeting Logistics of 4-H Advisory Committee as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals ........................................................................................................76

Table 7. Factor loadings for the one factor solution of the meeting logistic items as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals ........................................76

Table 8. Planning and preparation for 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals ......................................................77

Table 9. Factor loadings for the two-factor solution of the planning and preparation items as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals ..........................80

Table 10. Advisory Meeting Process utilized at parish 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals ...............................83

Table 11. Factor loadings for one factor solution of the advisory meeting process items as perceived by LSU AgCenter 4-H Youth Development Professionals ........86

Table 12. Parish 4-H Program Development items conducted as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals ..............................................................88

Table 13. Factor loadings for three-factor solution of the Parish 4-H Program Development items as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals ..........93

Table 14. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and 4-H youth development professionals perceptions of meeting logistics ..........................................................96
Table 15. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and 4-H youth development professionals perception of planning and preparation factor organization for the meeting.....................................................97

Table 16. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and 4-H youth development professionals perception of the planning and preparation factor involvement of membership.......................................................98

Table 17. Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and 4-H youth development professionals perception of the advisory meeting process factor .........................................................................................................99

Table 18. Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and education level of 4-H youth development professionals..........................100

Table 19. Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and years served as 4-H youth development professional ..................................101

Table 20. Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and number of training sessions attended as reported by 4-H youth development professionals .................................................................................................102

Table 21. Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and number of advisory committees meetings conducted as reported by 4-H youth development professionals .........................................................................103

Table 22. Age of parish 4-H advisory committee members ...............................105

Table 23. Educational level attained by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................................105

Table 24. Years as former 4-H member as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members .........................................................................................................107

Table 25. Number of times volunteered for 4-H activities in past three years as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members........................................108

Table 26. Number of years serving as club or organization leader as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................109

Table 27. Number of years parish 4-H advisory committee members reported serving on advisory committee..................................................................................110
Table 28. Number of advisory committee meetings attended in the last two years as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..................111

Table 29. Method of contacted as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee Members ..............................................................................................................111

Table 30. Individual that influenced decision to participate on the parish 4-H advisory committee as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................113

Table 31. Item that influenced decision to participate on the parish 4-H advisory committee as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................114

Table 32. Meeting Logistics of parish 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................118

Table 33. Factor loadings for one factor solutions of the meeting logistic items as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................119

Table 34. Planning and preparation for 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................120

Table 35. Factor loadings for one factor solution of the planning and preparation items as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................122

Table 36. Factor loadings for one factor solution of the planning and preparation items as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................123

Table 37. Process utilized at parish 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................125

Table 38. Factor loadings for one factor solution of the process items as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................128

Table 39. Parish 4-H programs conducted as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................129

Table 40. Factor loadings for one factor solution of the program development item Input Regional and State 4-H Staff as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ..............................................................................................................132
Table 41. Factor loadings for one factor solution of the program development item Input 4-H Advisory Committee as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ........................................................................................................... 134

Table 42. Factor loadings for one factor solution of the program development item Input Parish 4-H agents as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members ........................................................................................................... 135

Table 43. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and the ranking of the youth interest item that influenced parish 4-H advisory committee member’s decision to participate ........................................ 137

Table 44. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and the rankings of the community interest item that influenced parish 4-H advisory committee member’s decision to participate .............................. 137

Table 45. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and the rankings of the desire to collaborate with other organizations item that influenced parish 4-H advisory committee member’s decision to participate .............................................................................................................. 138

Table 46. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and the rankings of the other interest item that influenced parish 4-H advisory committee member’s decision to participate .............................. 138

Table 47. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and meeting logistic factor ......................................................................................................................... 139

Table 48. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and planning and preparation factor Organization for the meeting ...................... 140

Table 49. Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and planning and preparation factor Involvement of membership ..................... 141

Table 50. Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and the meeting process factor ......................................................................................................................... 142

Table 51. Whether parish 4-H advisory committee member received training .......................................................................................................................... 142

Table 52. Whether parish 4-H advisory committee member received a job Description .......................................................................................................................... 143
Table 53. Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and number of years served on parish 4-H advisory committee member............144

Table 54. Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and the number of parish 4-H advisory committee meeting attended by parish 4-H advisory committee members.................................................................144

Table 55. Comparison between “White” and “Non White” 4-H advisory committee members on the three Parish 4-H Program Development factors.....145

Table 56. Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and education level of parish 4-H advisory committee members......................146

Table 57. Ratings of sub-scales Meeting Logistics, Planning and Preparation, Meeting Process, and Parish 4-H Program Development as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals and parish 4-H advisory committee members........................................................................167
List of Figures

Figure 1. Program Development Model adapted from Boyle (1981).................19

Figure 2. Cole (1980) Advisory Council Model.............................................20
Abstract

The 4-H advisory process is crucial to program development in the 4-H youth development program in Louisiana. Parish 4-H advisory committees in each of the 64 parishes are involved in the addressing the needs of the clientele.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the 4-H Advisory Process as perceived by 4-H professionals in Louisiana and primary stakeholder groups of the LSU Agricultural Center’s 4-H Program.

Data for the study were obtained through surveys completed by 104 4-H youth development professionals and 142 parish 4-H advisory committee members. Additionally, six parish advisory committee members were interviewed for the qualitative portion of the study. The data were analyzed to determine the two groups’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the parish 4-H advisory committee process. Also the two groups’ were compared to determine if their perceptions differed.

The majority of the 4-H youth development professionals were white (90.5%). Their average age was 37.4 years of age and they served an average of 10.23 years as a 4-H youth development professional. The majority of the parish advisory committee members in the study were white (76.1%), female (75.4%), were/had been a 4-H member (76.1%), volunteered for 4-H activities in the past (75.9%), and had not received any training to perform their duties as a parish 4-H advisory committee members (79.4%).

The findings indicated that both groups perceived that the parish advisory process was effective. The parish 4-H advisory committee members had a higher level of
agreement on the effectiveness of the advisory process than the 4-H youth development professionals on all measured scales. The interviews conducted with advisory committee members confirmed the findings of the survey data from the parish 4-H advisory committee members.

Based on the results of the study it was concluded that the main focus of some parish advisory committees was the planning and evaluating of 4-H events and activities. Additionally it was concluded that the membership on the parish 4-H advisory committee is not diverse in their representation.
Chapter One

Introduction

Justification/Rationale

Youth development is defined as the natural process of one’s developing one’s capacities (Annual 4-H Youth Development Enrollment Report 2003). The Annual 4-H Youth Development Enrollment Report of 2003 stated that positive youth development involves an intentional process that promotes positive outcomes by providing opportunities, choices, and relationships and support necessary for youth to fully participate. Youth development takes place in many venues: families, peer groups, schools, and clubs. The 4-H program offers a place for young people to grow and develop and is one of the largest programs in Louisiana, involving 85,000 youth with total enrollments throughout the United States of over seven million young people (Annual 4-H Youth Development Enrollment Report 2003).

The Cooperative Extension System has been in existence since 1914 with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. The 4-H Youth Development program is part of the Cooperative Extension System which is part of the Land-Grant University; however, the 4-H club program has roots dating back to 1902. The Cooperative Extension Service and agricultural education started before there was legislation establishing financial support and national uniformity (Hillison, 1996). Based on his research, Hillison (1996) concluded that some Extension activities were recorded in Iowa as early as 1903, and in 1906 a Division of Agricultural Education was established by a branch of the USDA. The longevity of this program offers some insight to its significance and importance to youth development.
Although survival and longevity are important justifications, the program’s claim of positive youth development has been at issue. With this in mind, a national 4-H impact assessment was undertaken. In 1999-2000, youth and adults associated with 4-H were surveyed to gather data on their perceptions regarding the benefits of the 4-H Youth Development Program. A total of 2,467 youth and 471 adult respondents nationwide offered their perceptions of 4-H. The results were published as a report by the USDA (2001) entitled, “Prepared and Engaged Youth National 4-H Impact Assessment Project.”

The results of the project indicated an overall positive view of 4-H particularly in areas of positive youth development such as “belonging,” “physical and emotional safety,” and “positive relationship with a caring adult.” The data indicated that respondents felt 4-H helps youth in decision-making and planning, learning to value and practice service for others, and learning new things.

Although the survey suggested many positive responses, it concluded that the effort should not stop. 4-H needs to consider more ways for adults in 4-H to significantly and sincerely involve youth in decision-making. By involving youth and more adults in the planning phase of programs, chances for successful implementation would be improved. According to the study, youth leaders are likely to feel involved in the decision-making process, but it is advisable to involve other youth as well. True involvement in the advisory process on the local, state and national levels could create more buy-in and address client needs. The report concluded that by involving youth in positive social relationships, one can influence youth comfort with trying new things without worrying about making mistakes (USDA, 2001 Prepared and Engaged Youth National 4-H Impact Assessment Project). Encouraging young people and providing
plenty of opportunities for them to teach others can also have a positive impact on caring for others within the group.

The Montana 4-H Research Summary 6000 (n.d.) reported the results of a study which was recently completed in Montana that involved 24 randomly selected counties. Two school districts within each county were randomly selected. In total, approximately 2500 students in the 5th, 7th, and 9th grades were surveyed. Preliminary results from the study indicated Montana 4-H members were more likely than other youth to “… succeed in school, getting more A’s than other kids, are involved as leaders in their school and the community, and are looked up to as role models by other youth” (p. 4). Montana 4-H members were less likely than other youth to “… shoplift or steal, use illegal drugs of any kind to get high, ride in a car with someone else who had been drinking, smoke cigarettes, damage property for the fun of it, and skip school or cut classes without permission” (p. 5).

As times have changed so has the focus of the 4-H youth development program. Once rooted in rural America the program now is very expansive with programs developed to reach urban, suburban, and rural youth. In the Annual 4-H Youth Development Enrollment Report 2003, only 10% of 4-H youth lived on farms compared to 25% living in cities larger than 50,000 in population. The 4-H program has a long tradition of involving stakeholders in decision-making and program determination. 4-H advisory committees operate at the parish and state levels, involving thousands of citizen stakeholders. In most states these advisory committees are comprised of teen 4-Hers and volunteer leaders. Their involvement includes determining and managing local programs for nearly a century (Annual 4-H Youth Development Enrollment Report, 2003).
These advisory committees have identified many delivery modes that play a role in participation of youth. Time constraints brought on by changing societal needs and roles make it necessary to alter delivery for the 4-H program. The 4-H club program in a school setting traditionally has been the main emphasis of delivery for educational programming in 4-H in Louisiana. However, as identified by advisory committees, several other modes of delivery have been utilized successfully throughout the nation and in parts of Louisiana. After-school programming, school enrichment, special interest, project clubs, and community clubs are viable delivery methods that can be utilized in the 4-H program. Although these modes are available, they may not be convenient for participation of youth throughout the state for various reasons.

The success of youth educational programming sometimes goes unnoticed. Typically, the development of life skills, such as leadership, responsibility, decision-making, and problem solving is not a short term endeavor. Many times the results of a program are not realized until youth have graduated and completed the program. A study by Ball, Garton, and Dyer (2001) measured college freshman performance. They collected data on students who had been involved in 4-H and FFA in comparison to those who had not been involved in the program as youth. The data indicated students who were involved in agricultural youth organizations possessed important differences in performance measures associated with cumulative GPA. Students who were involved in agricultural associations scored approximately two points higher on the ACT. They also found that involvement in agricultural youth organizations had a significant association with retention through the sophomore year of college. The researchers concluded prior experiences such as involvement in agricultural youth organizations had a positive
influence on performance and retention in the college of agriculture. These results led researchers to make several recommendations. They recommended that colleges of agriculture should continue to recruit individuals with prior experiences in agricultural youth organizations to enhance success. Also, colleges of agriculture should continue to educate quality individuals in the fields of agricultural and extension education to maintain quality FFA chapters and 4-H clubs from which future college of agriculture students may be recruited.

In an earlier study completed by Dyer, Lacey, and Osborne (1996), similar results were found concerning former 4-H and FFA members. They concluded students who had been 4-H or FFA members were more likely to complete a degree in the college of agriculture than were students who had not. The freshmen in this study at the University of Illinois viewed agriculture as being both scientific and technical, and viewed high school agriculture courses as good preparation for college. They also recommended that college recruiters target recruiting efforts toward former FFA and 4-H members.

The 4-H youth program has affected the lives of countless youths throughout its first 100 years. Although the first youth development activities probably do not mirror the activities that are provided for today’s youth, the impact of 4-H continues to be felt by many. The data from 1996 has shown the positive influence 4-H has had on youth. For this influence to continue and 4-H programming to remain relevant, 4-H must change to meet the needs of its clients (Dyer et al., 1996).

Just as society has changed at a rapid pace so should programs that impact the youth in today’s society. Ignoring changes and differences could prove fatal to programs throughout this country. The task of keeping up with fast-pace change is not an easy one.
Involvement of clientele and stakeholders in the decision-making process when it concerns pertinent and effective programs is mandatory. Many times the involvement sought is a function of structure and form of the program.

Early involvement of clientele and stakeholders correlates to a better chance for positive results in the program. Involvement should not stop with the decisions on program types and needs; it should be an ongoing process that is both creative and evaluative. A successful process should be developed into a system that is continually implementing, evaluating and reporting on progress due to the changing societal needs.

The 4-H program in Louisiana is challenged with remaining up-to-date and meeting the needs of the youth in the state through non-formal, research-based experiential education activities. Through these programs, 4-H participants gain knowledge and skills enabling them to become positive, productive, capable, and compassionate members of their communities. In order to accomplish this mission, the 4-H program must have a process that involves its clients and stakeholders in determining program needs. The current process utilized to identify youth needs relative to 4-H is the advisory process.

Recent trends in 4-H participation may suggest a shift in programming to address the needs of the youth in Louisiana. According to the Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report 2000 Fiscal Year, participation on the club level in Louisiana has dropped by nearly 20% (65,595) from the year 2000 to the year 2003 (52,872) (LSU AgCenter Cooperative Extension System 2003-2004 Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report Louisiana State Report 2004). Another indicator is the drop in the state-level high school competition by about 25% according to data obtained from the 4-H Department of
the LSU AgCenter. The number of 4th through 6th graders participating at 4-H camp, in
the summer of 2002 (2,182) (Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report 2002 Fiscal Year),
also decreased by over 17% from 1998 (2645) (Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report
1998 Fiscal Year). According to a study by Louque (1987) 4-Hers in Louisiana failed to
re-enroll due to programmatic concerns. His study concluded that the second largest
factor concerning re-enrollment was that youth perceived the program as not interesting
and boring. The advisory committee on both the parish and state level should address
these trends. The results of this study indicated that the advisory committees’
effectiveness to address member retention in recent years may be in question. A measure
of the effectiveness of this process is essential to establish its worth. Participants in this
process, members and 4-H professionals would be the most knowledgeable to measure
the effectiveness of the process. A determination of the effectiveness would allow for
evaluation of the process and insight on alterations and changes needed. Advisory
members and 4-H youth development professionals’ attitudes and beliefs concerning the
functioning of the advisory process as it relates to the goals of the committee would
provide valuable information. The information gleaned would be a useful tool to the
Louisiana 4-H program. Information could help determine training needs of both 4-H
youth development professionals and advisory committee members.

**Problem Statement**

Although research stated that input at both local and state levels is essential for
Extension to meet the needs of future clientele groups (Adelaine & Foster, 1990), it is
questionable that the advisory system in Louisiana 4-H has the structure or mechanism
currently in place to accomplish this goal as documented by the legislative audit and the

1. Not all Extension agents had parish advisory committees.
2. Several members of parish advisory committees according to parish records were not aware that they were members.
3. Some of the contact information for advisory members provided by the parish staff was incorrect.

A recommendation from the auditor’s report indicated that all Extension clientele groups and interests should be represented on the parish advisory committee. In addition, the parish staff should help facilitate the involvement of advisory committee members.

**Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the 4-H Advisory Process as perceived by 4-H professionals in Louisiana and primary stakeholder groups of the LSU Agricultural Center’s 4-H Program.

**Objectives**

Specific objectives formulated to guide the researcher include:

1. The first objective is to describe LSU AgCenter parish 4-H youth development professionals in Louisiana on the following selected demographic characteristics and perceptual measures:
   a. Ethnic Background;
   b. Gender;
   c. Age;
   d. Highest level of education completed;
   e. Years served as a 4-H youth development professional;
   f. Number of trainings attended relative to advisory committee responsibilities;
   g. Whether or not they were aware of specific job responsibilities regarding advisory committees;
h. The number of advisory committee meetings planned and conducted by the professional.

2. The second objective was to determine the perception of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process:
   a. Meeting logistics;
   b. Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
   c. Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
   d. Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

3. The third objective of the study was to determine if the perceptions of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program are influenced by each of the following perceptual measures and demographic characteristics:
   a. Meeting logistics;
   b. Planning and preparation for the meeting;
   c. Process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
   d. Highest level of education completed;
   e. Years served as 4-H youth development professional;
   f. Number of training sessions attended relative to advisory committee responsibilities;
   g. Whether or not they were aware of specific job responsibilities regarding advisory committees;
   h. The number of advisory committee meetings planned and conducted by the professional.

4. The fourth objective of the study is to describe members of 4-H parish advisory committees in Louisiana on the following demographic characteristics and perceptual measures:
   a. Ethnic Background;
b. Gender;
c. Age;
d. Highest level of education completed;
e. Involvement in the 4-H organization as:
   i. A student member,
   ii. An adult volunteer,
   iii. A club or organizational leader,
f. Length of service on the 4-H advisory committee;
g. Number of meetings attended in the past two years;
h. Whether or not selected contact methods were used to solicit their participation in the advisory committee process;
i. Whether or not selected individuals influenced their decision to participate in the 4-H advisory committee process;
j. The factor they perceived to have had the greatest influence on their decision to participate in the 4-H advisory committee process;
k. Their self-assessed knowledge of the 4-H youth development process;
l. Whether or not they received training for participating in the 4-H advisory committee process and;
m. Whether or not they received a job description regarding their participation in the 4-H advisory process.

5. The fifth objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of members of parish 4-H advisory committees in Louisiana on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process:

   a. Meeting logistics;
   b. Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
   c. Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
   d. Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

6. The sixth objective of the study was to determine if the perceptions of the members of parish 4-H advisory committees in Louisiana regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program are influenced by each of the following demographic characteristics and perceptual measures:

   a. The member’s primary motivation to participate in the advisory committee process;
   b. Member’s perceptions regarding meeting logistics;
c. Member’s perceptions regarding effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
d. Member’s perceptions regarding effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
e. Whether or not the members received training on the advisory process prior to the meeting;
f. Whether or not the members received a detailed advisory committee job description prior to the meeting;
g. Years served on the advisory committee;
h. Number of advisory committee meetings attended in the last two years;
i. Ethnic background;
j. Highest level of education completed.

7. The seventh objective of the study was to compare the perceptions of parish 4-H advisory committee members in Louisiana with the perceptions of LSU AgCenter 4-H Youth Development professionals on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process:

a. Meeting logistics;
b. Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
c. Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
d. Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

**Significance of the Study**

This study will enable the researcher to determine the advisory committee’s impact on program direction on the local or parish level and the state level. Alterations in the committee structure, makeup and function will address any inadequacies in the system. Training to develop a better understanding of the advisory system will enable Extension professionals to transfer this information to local committee members. Job descriptions developed for Extension professionals will detail specific tasks and expectations concerning the advisory system. Advisory committee members will have the potential to increase leadership capacity and involvement in the total 4-H program.
Parish programs will benefit from increased volunteer involvement which will ultimately increase the outreach of the program to more youth locally.

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined to assist in the interpretation of the study.

**Parish** – a civil district in the state of Louisiana that corresponds to a county (Webster’s II New Riverside Dictionary, 1996)

**4-H club** – an organized group of youth, led by an adult, with a planned program that is carried on throughout all or most of the year. 4-H clubs may meet in any location and typically have elected officers and a set of rules approved by the membership to govern the club. (Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report, 2002)

**4-H school enrichment programs** – Groups of youth receiving a sequence of learning experiences in cooperation with school officials during school hours, to support the school curriculum. Involves direct teaching by Extension staff or trained volunteers, including teachers. This must include a series of at least six sessions of 45 minutes or a total series of not less than 4 ½ hours. (Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report, 2002)

**4-H special interest/individual study/mentoring/family learning programs** – planned learning which occurs independent of a formal group setting such as a club, as an individual, paired, or family learning effort. Self-directed, usually with limited adult involvement except for parents (or mentor) (Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report, 2002)
4-H after school or child care education programs – educational programs offered to youth outside of school hours, usually in a school or other community center and incorporating 4-H curricula (Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report, 2002)

4-H project club – a 4-H club designed to emphasize work in a specific project such as livestock, nutrition, wildlife, electricity, etc… (Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report, 2002)

4-H community club – an organized 4-H club that meets within the community and not organized within the school (Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report, 2002)

curriculum – planned sequential learning experiences integrating subject matter and life skills, supported by written, audio, video or computer instructional guidance (Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report, 2002)

effective 4-H advisory committee process – consists of three components: Structural component which involves general framework for the operation of the council, Programming Component which involves the working of the committee to accomplish the development of programs, and Group Behavior component which involves group skills such as openness, trust, communication, conflict resolution, and decision making (Cole & Cole, 1983)
Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

History of Cooperative Extension Service

The first organized activity in the United States relating to agricultural education was the development of an agricultural society at Philadelphia in 1785 (Sanders, Arbour, Bourg, Clark, Frutchey, & Jones, 1966). These types of organizations spread throughout the country with two main functions. The first function was to educate the populace on the problems and concerns in agriculture. The second purpose was to actively promote agriculture in general. Subsequently the United States Department of Agriculture was created in 1790. The next major occurrence in the field of agriculture was the establishment of the Land-Grant University with a bill sponsored by Justin Morrill of Vermont, which was eventually passed as an act of the federal government in 1862. The Morrill act created the land-grant college system dedicated to general education and the improvement of agricultural and mechanical arts (Wessel & Wessel, 1982).

Although the education of agriculture had been officially instituted into the university system in 1862, it took several years before the idea of the Cooperative Extension Service was widely practiced and accepted. Many consider Seaman A. Knapp as the father of the Cooperative Extension Service (Sanders et al., 1966). Knapp was from New York and educated to be a teacher. He taught in Vermont and then changed careers to become a farmer in Iowa. While in Iowa he served as professor of agriculture at Iowa State College. It was not until Knapp moved to Lake Charles, Louisiana to establish a business of selling land in southwest Louisiana to Middle Western farmers did...
he begin the idea, that later spawned the development of the Cooperative Extension Service.

He established five demonstration farms in Louisiana and Texas to demonstrate the solutions of agricultural problems specific to each area. These farms led to improved practices and production that was one of the first steps of disseminating knowledge from the university level to the local level. Knapp did not stop with just the adult population. In 1909 he organized a formalized system known as the boys’ corn club (Sanders et al., 1966). It was believed that the concept of the 4-H youth development program could be dated back to the development of the boys’ corn club.

The official establishment of agriculture Extension work was the legislation passed by the federal government called the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 (Sanders et al., 1966). The act stated that agricultural extension work would be conducted by the state Extension organizations in cooperation with the United Department of Agriculture. It further stated that the work should be conducted in a mutually agreed upon manner between the secretary of agriculture and the state agriculture colleges. Federal funds were provided through this act. From the federal establishment of the Cooperative Extension Service in 1914 with the Smith-Lever Act the program has grown into a unique partnership involving federal, state, and local governing bodies, which has functioned effectively for nearly a century (Seevers, Graham, Gamon & Conklin, 1997). Each of the partners performs distinct functions that are vital to the success of the organization. The Cooperative Extension organization links the research efforts of USDA and land-grant institutions in order to provide scientific knowledge produced to the appropriate users of the information (Seevers et al., 1997). Seevers et al. characterized the
organization as one that is ever changing and dynamic and is charged with meeting the country’s needs for research, knowledge, and educational programs to enable people to make practical decisions that can improve their lives.

**History of 4-H Program**

The establishment of the 4-H program can be dated back to the early 1900’s, but many believe it got its beginning with dissemination of nature study leaflets to rural schools by Liberty Hyde Bailey of Cornell University (Wessel & Wessel, 1982). Cornell University established organized clubs in schools to ensure this information was used by rural school children. Later Albert B. Graham a superintendent of schools in Springfield Township, Ohio began meeting outside of the school setting in 1902 which involved rural farm youth. Graham taught these youth the value of soil testing and stimulated interest in science by utilizing the microscope (Wessel & Wessel, 1982). Graham’s efforts expanded to include the Ohio Agriculture Experiment Station and the dean of agriculture at Ohio State University. The agricultural clubs Graham organized were a perfect setting for university and experiment station faculty to pass on information to a receptive section of the farm community, the youth.

By 1907 with Graham’s efforts the principal ingredients of 4-H had been tested and proved successful (Wessel & Wessel, 1982). Prior to the formal establishment of the Cooperative Extension Service with the Smith-Lever Act, Seaman A. Knapp formed an agreement with the federal government and the USDA Bureau of Plant Industry (Wessel & Wessel, 1982). Knapp was able to secure the appointment of Oscar B. Martin in 1908 to coordinate the establishment of corn clubs in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi,
Louisiana and Arkansas. These corn clubs were believed by many to be the precursor to the currently known 4-H clubs.

Louisiana’s first 4-H club was organized in Avoyelles Parish. A teacher while visiting the Mid-West was exposed to the program and brought back information concerning the 4-H club program to Louisiana (Sanders, 1983). The teacher proposed establishment of the program to then superintendent of schools in the parish, V.L. Roy who embraced the idea. Roy’s passion and pursuit of the idea grew, and he later served as 4-H Club leader with the Agricultural Extension Service in Louisiana (Sanders, 1983). From the early beginning the 4-H program was delivered to rural children through the club format. Today the program is offered to urban, suburban, and rural youth through a variety of delivery modes. Today the organizational structure of the 4-H program conducted by the Cooperative Extension Service includes clubs, both in school and in communities, short-term activities, school enrichment and other delivery methods as identified by localized clientele (Seevers et al., 1997). In fact the 4-H program mainly delivered initially in the club setting has involved more youth in activities other than clubs according to Seevers et al. They noted the enrollment in clubs from 1980 to 1992 decreased to approximately 1.75 million in 1992, while the participation in other 4-H delivery methods increased during the time period.

**Program Development**

**Theoretical Model**

Program development as defined by Boyle (1981) “… is essentially the art of designing and implementing a course of action to achieve an effective educational program” (p.42). Through this definition Boyle (1981) concluded that decisions are based on information
the educator obtains through rational planning or some type of developmental model. The problem exists when you involve people in planning, and a rational model is almost never achieved. An achievement of the model can be accomplished by utilizing an approach which involves “… the most appropriate practices and procedures that allow for utilization of the concepts implied in an acceptable program development framework” (Boyle, p. 42). Boyle (1981) developed a conceptual model which depicted the relationship between procedures and program development. The model involves input from clientele through advisory committees in a formalized setting and telephone and other visits in an informal setting. Clientele are involved in needs identification and assessment. The involvement phase is where the clientele participate in developing a plan of action to address the assessed needs. The implementation of the plan can also involve the clientele or advisory group, but generally the educator is the main deliverer of the program. An adaptation of this model which encompasses the program development aspects of the Extension Service is found in Figure 1.

The model illustrates the steps and stages involved in program planning and development. It evolves from the origination stage or need, to the delivery stage or educator. The steps between origination and delivery are important to the process. Advisory committees in Cooperative Extension which includes 4-H Youth Development are included in one of the steps displayed in the model.

The functioning of Extension advisory committees can involve a complexity of procedures and issues. Cole (1980) developed a model for Extension advisory committees which presented a framework for explaining the components of the system. Her model included three components: structural, programming skill, and group skill.
The structural portion dealt mainly with items such as Extension organizational structure, philosophy, roles and functions of the committee, membership guidelines, meeting structure, bylaws, and power and limitations. The programming skill component included need assessments, goals, objectives, planning, evaluating, and disseminating. Program development evolves from the programming component. The group process portion addressed the group dynamics such as: listening, trust, openness, understanding roles, problem solving, and productivity. The group process component is the system

**Figure 1 Program Development Model adapted from Boyle (1981)**
utilized at council meetings to develop the programming component. If the council has a weakness in any of the three areas identified by Cole (1980), the effectiveness of the council is diminished substantially. The Cole Model (Cole,1980, p. 10) is displayed in Figure 2.

![Cole (1980) Advisory Council Model](image)

**Figure 2 Cole (1980) Advisory Council Model**

**Program Planning**

**Organizational Initiatives**

The inception of the Extension Service found agents servicing a specific target audience. In recent times, Congress, State Legislatures and Extension Agents have added educational programs and services to Extension’s line of offerings each year (LaMuth, 1998). These offerings included educational workshops, classes, fact sheets, bulletins, displays, and presentations developed from science-based information. The target audience has broadened from rural America to just about everyone. With the expansion from rural audiences to a larger clientele base, many professionals failed to prepare appropriately before expansion. Diversifying the programs to include activities and events which reach all types of youth is high priority in many states and counties. In a study done of Ohio State Extension 4-H Youth Educators, Borden and Harris (1998) indicated that agents working with traditional clientele had competencies which differed from agents serving non-traditional audiences. They listed the tasks of those agents
working with traditional clientele as: “(a) maintain and support long-term clubs, (b) provide and educate clientele on the policies and standards for competing in local events, (c) work closely with fair boards, and work with multiple advisory and planning committees” (p. 62). This compared to the challenges facing agents who work with non-traditional audiences which were: “(a) manage short-term programs, (b) recruit new clients and volunteers to participate in programs, (c) find locations for meetings, and (d) meet basic human need prior to providing educational opportunities” (p. 62). They concluded that designing a new model to identify variations in duties and skills required by a 4-H agent would assist both the agent and the supervisor. It would allow them to determine those skills and duties “… most relevant to particular clientele and those which were core or universal regardless of clientele served” (p. 63).

LaMuth (1998) suggested adopting an organized product development model which would assist agents in making better choices and maybe improve the number of participants. Many private companies did not make significant changes without customer input or surveys of potential product users. Private companies risked losing profits or even their entire business by making poor choices. Extension could also risk losing credibility, audiences and local funding if it made too many poor choices (King, 1993). LaCava (2001) offered some unique insight into the purpose and function of an organization in her article, “Becoming a Learning Organization: The Road Less Traveled.” She described the success of a learning organization as one where decision-making, creativity, innovation, and responsibility were spread across staff. Advisory committees with similar purpose and function operated much as this organization does. She stated instead of being governed by role-based job descriptions, learning
organizations are governed by clear purpose, vision, and core values. A learning organization rewarded teamwork and collaboration instead of individual accomplishments. Staff were encouraged to take risks and not be penalized for failures. These were viewed as a learning experience. Instead of focusing on roles and jobs positions, learning organizations focus on their customers, their values, and their vision. Organizations adopting these principles fostered deeper levels of commitment and released humans’ natural motivation and desire to learn.

Yanowitz, Ober, and Kantor (1999) in their article, “Creating Business Results Through Team Learning,” which appeared in the book, “Organizational Learning at Work,” emphasized that input should be filtered from the bottom up and that each person should be committed to the company’s vision and values. The structure of the organization often impeded this process. The upper level executives in the business found themselves unable to make basic decisions about how to ensure the company’s continued growth and success. In the article, they discussed how the company’s middle management met frequently and absorbed many hours, but this resulted in few real decisions made and little, if any, progress observed. The upper level was perceived as having conflicting political agendas, and managers below upper level felt as if they were in the position of implementing contradictory orders. This resulted in poor morale, middle managers were frustrated and trust between upper and middle managers was low. The need for team learning was proposed as a solution to the company’s problems in the article. For team learning to be successful and seen as a viable option, it must be linked directly to results. As in this case in the business world, Extension organizations must
link program input to the state level with some success. Extension upper management first should be open to see local youth and volunteers as equal members of the team.

A systemic map of teams was offered by Yanowitz et al., (1999). They defined team learning as an ongoing process which was systematic and involved systemic activities that continually increases the organization’s ability to create desired results. Through organizational observations they identified three levels of structure that exerted powerful influences on success of teams: social structures, face-to-face structures, and individual structures. Social structures included the organization, business practices of the organization and the cultural environment in which the organization operated influenced the team’s performance. Face-to-face structures were part of the visible work of the team. This included clarifying results, setting direction, managing team process, designing and structuring activities, and executing day-to-day tasks. These types of activities involved and depended on effective interpersonal interactions with others, which could either enhance or impede the team’s ability to produce results. Individual structure was what each individual brings to the team in terms of ability and participation. This included the individual’s genetic makeup, life experiences, belief system and mental models and feelings about how the organization should work. They concluded that this structure illustrated the broad nature of forces at play in team functioning. These forces intersect at the face-to-face level. Face-to-face structures were the window through which a team discovered how broader organizational structures and deeper personal structures influenced performance.

Creative tension was one option that allowed organizations to change high-level structure which enhanced performance (Yanowitz et al., 1999). They suggested that
when an individual or group of people had a clear picture of what needs to be accomplished while simultaneously maintaining an awareness of their current reality, they generated natural tension that could be used to move an organization toward its goal. They offered three things that helped organizations move toward goals through creative tension: 1) be clear about intended results; 2) understand the structure that influences the organization ability to create; and 3) work on changing those structures that hinder the goal of bringing current reality in line with desired results.

For any organization to have buy-in or participation from the bottom to the top, the structure of the organization must facilitate this process. If the structure does not allow this process to occur, or fragmentation of the structure or process exists failure was eminent. Identifying and altering the structure of the organization to expedite this process involved several factors. As the organization utilized the principles of creative tension to identify flaws in the structure that prevent groups from reaching their goals, there were opportunities to observe how the structures played a role (Yanowitz et al., 1999). The group’s task became the identification of these problems in the structure, to understand their role for creating and sustaining them, and then begin to experiment with new structures and behaviors.

In the article, Yanowitz et al. (1999) offered four guidelines in the process of identifying and changing structures to fit the team-building concept. They recommended the first step be for the group to work to create real results. The organization used real current issues that face the organization as the opening to begin the team learning process. They stated that team learning should be tied directly to creating desired results and not become an end in itself. The second step was to learn to identify and change
face-to-face structures. These structures affected how the team interacted and flaws in the structure must be altered to achieve desired team results. The third step was for the group to begin to see how the relationships among the different structures affected the entire process. Interactions between face-to-face, organizational and individual structures were recognized as one of the important aspects of determining how an organization works. Without this recognition and knowledge very little can be accomplished. The fourth step was probably the most important, but often the one which took the longest to accomplish. It was to learn to influence the broad organizational structure. They suggested that for a group to accomplish this task it must first identify those parts of the structure it can change, parts of structure it can have influence over, and recognize the other portions, and realize it can not have any direct influence to change these.

Extension Services throughout the country to advocate grass roots participation and program direction led by clientele, but many times the structure is not in place to allow this system to work efficiently. Bits and pieces of this process did surface, but as Yanowitz et al. (1999) reported in their article a structure must be in place to promote the concept of team learning and participation. Also, once the structure was in place to function effectively, the team or group recognized where they were in the structure. The fourth step in their process which entailed recognizing what can be changed, what can be influenced and what cannot be changed was essential for the team to operate efficiently in the business world and in governmental organizations.

King (1993) in his article, “Facing the Image Deficit,” emphasized the fact that for the Extension Service and land-grant system to achieve success the organization must evolve and change in response to the potential customers’ demands. Are the Extension Service
and land-grant systems developing and implementing programs based on customer needs or do they have some other agenda? He reported that for the Extension Service and land-grant systems to uphold their image, its directors and communicators must be committed to this charge. To find a solution to the image deficit, he stated it would take an interesting combination of factors that may have yet to be found in the system. He said it would take new coalitions; a cooperative effort by all involved especially the communicators of the program, and it would take a cooperative national effort.

**Professional Input**

Many Extension professionals believe they are being responsive to client needs through development of programs based on current events, new research and requests from local organizations and agencies. Although many in Extension may share this perception, a study done in Nebraska in 1990 had conflicting results. Adelaine and Foster (1990) completed a survey of 2,903 users of Extension that rated which group had the most influence on program direction in the Extension Service, and they found the general public had the least influence. The most influence on program direction was attributed to the Extension faculty. The client group served stated they believed they had only a slight influence on program direction; whereas, the Extension agents surveyed stated they had “considerable influence” on program direction. Jayaratne and Gamon (1998), in a study done in Illinois, found job performance was negatively affected when Extension agents redefined and worked with a different target audience. Many professionals felt they were not prepared to work with non-traditional clientele, and the anxiety level and lack of expertise had a negative influence on job performance.
Researchers in this study recommended establishing in-service training sessions to meet the needs of Extension agents.

Rennekamp and Gerhard (1992) listed barriers that reduced the effectiveness of the process which allowed youth program needs to be filtered from the local level to the state level. They found one barrier was the lack of access to university departments with relevant expertise. Locating volunteers with knowledge related to identify program needs also presented some problems. One of the main barriers recognized was the resistance by local Extension to become involved in a particular program such as youth-at-risk. Many barriers beyond the structure of the organization existed in terms of delivering programs identified as needs by local grass root clientele. Rennekamp and Gerhard (1992) identified some of these barriers. Their research dealt with at-risk youth programming, and these programs, although identified as a need by the clientele, faced many obstacles of implementation. The barriers of highest importance identified by these researchers were: “(1) Demands of traditional clientele limit time and resources for initiating youth-at-risk programs. (2) Lack of knowledge, experience, or skills for working with at-risk youth. (3) Management of current program occupies all available time” (Rennekamp and Gerhard 1992, Results Section, ¶ 2). Other barriers were also identified as causes of willingness to implement this program. They found participants in the survey felt lack of access to university experts in the field was a hindrance along with location of volunteers to assist with youth-at-risk experience. Also because the program need did not arise in every county, local boards or councils who did not identify this program as a need felt they should not have to administer the program. One of the recommendations of the study was to make advisory groups more active in making
decisions concerning program priorities and direction. For this to happen the group must represent all clientele sectors and Extension must be willing to allow the groups to actively participate in the planning phase. Programs identified and planned by these groups must be recognized by the Extension Service for success of the organization.

A study to determine factors influencing participation and non-participation of ethnic minorities in Ohio 4-H programs yielded results which included several barriers to participation by these groups (Cano & Bankston, 1992). The respondents in the study were current and former 4-H youth, and current and former 4-H parents. Youth in the study indicated several barriers affected participation in 4-H. They reported conflicts with other activities and inequities in several activities were major concerns. Specifically, they felt judging and other animal-related activities did not afford urban youth a chance to participate because they required farm animals. Some of the minority youth in the study felt isolated at the state fair and similar events. They also felt 4-H was not advertised extensively enough to their group. They suggested organizing events with music and related events which appeal to youth in the urban area. Other suggestions that were offered to break down barriers were to hold meetings in neighborhoods where minority youth live, display projects 4-Hers had made and display posters promoting 4-H in schools and neighborhoods.

Parents in the study suggested similar barriers to participation of ethnic minority youth in the 4-H program (Cano & Bankston, 1992). One of the main barriers was the lack of knowledge about the program and its benefits. Lack of advertising targeted at minority youth was another major concern. 4-H advertising generally did not include minority youth and was not written in the language urban parents could understand.
concerning the offerings of the program. An additional barrier outlined in the findings was the lack of minority adult role models in 4-H. Parents emphasized to increase minority involvement, minorities within the system or volunteers had to get into these communities and promote the program to children in their own backyard. Lack of funds for urban youth to purchase materials and projects was also cited as a limiting factor. The state fair and judging events were also mentioned by parents as a big deterrent to participation in 4-H. The parents felt these events were not judged fairly and discrimination against minority youth was perceived (Cano and Bankston 1992).

Cano and Bankston (1992) concluded in their study minority youth and parents perceived 4-H as an organization for rural, white, youth with farm animals because most of the events at the state fair involved animals. They recommended the 4-H Department review project offerings and provide equal opportunities for non-farm youth in the areas involving competitive events and awards. Those projects offered should be the type which did not involve animals. It was recognized in some urban areas that materials and activities must be adapted and new materials developed to address concerns and social circumstances of urban youth. The lack of funds available to some minority youth was seen as a deterrent to participation. Potential funding sources to alleviate this problem were recommended.

In order for advisory groups to feel a part of the process, they needed to not only be involved in the process, but the Extension staff has to value their involvement. As a result of a study by Adelaine and Foster (1990), it was concluded that the role of clientele groups identified by the state director did not totally agree with the principles of adult education which provided for clientele input and participation in the program planning
process. The identified clientele groups in the Nebraska study were not impacting program direction. The university faculty and the Extension agent population were found to have the most influence on program direction and policy. As a result of the study, recommendations to increase involvement of clientele and increase their perception that programs identified by them will be implemented.

Adelaine and Foster (1990) recommended the grassroots approach should be utilized in determining program direction. This should involve all clientele groups and not just those currently involved in Extension’s programs. Clientele not currently involved or not utilizing Extension programs should be accessed to set future program goals and direction. There was a need to develop a mechanism to increase clienteles’ positive perceptions about program ownership. Clientele needed to see the system at work from the planning stage locally, to implementation stage state-wide, and based on their recommendations. Their final recommendation was to make a major effort to introduce new programs or enhance current ones based on client needs, especially in the areas of new technology, agriculture, home economics and business. Their report concluded by emphasizing the Extension directors need to recognize that Extension’s primary mission of transferring technology to audiences can best be done by following the philosophical principles on which the program was established. For Extension to survive, input and involvement from all clientele groups affected by proposed programming efforts were needed to establish priorities, programming content, and policies. They reiterated input was needed at both the local and state levels for Extension to meet the needs of future clientele groups.
Stakeholder Input: Overall Advisory Groups

Dormody, Seevers, and Clason (1996) found in Vocational Educational programs studied, the most common arrangement was to only have an advisory committee. The main goal of the committee was to advise agricultural education teachers on course content. The next two goals mentioned in order of importance were to assess equipment and facility needs of the agricultural education department and evaluate the agricultural education programs. They found other adult organizations such as alumni groups of FFA and the NYFEA were not meeting these goals. The researchers found that because these three goals were important to ensuring the strength and development of secondary agricultural education programs, schools should focus on continuing to develop and utilize advisory committees as part of the program. Researchers in the study also recommended secondary agricultural education programs be held accountable for active advisory committees by state departments of education and encourage teacher education, and state departments of education to cooperate in offering pre-service and in-service teacher education related to establishing and maintaining effective advisory committees.

Whaley and Sutphin (1987) found support for the advisory committee process in their study. They concluded effective advisory committees in California focused most of their attention on curriculum development, management of teaching facilities, equipment selection and use, program evaluation, and articulation with the school science curriculum. Also, agricultural advisory committees had influence in the school and community which translated into improved support to the overall program. The researchers recommended agricultural advisory committees should be established and maintained for all vocational agriculture programs. They recommended advisory
committees focus on significant issues which impacted programs and not be charged with handling small insignificant matters.

Although the Extension organization’s tradition involved the advisory process, many other private and public entities have adopted this idea. One such instance was reported in the Strategy Series, 1999. A school system in West Des Moines, Iowa adapted a form of the advisory process to help strengthen the school’s academic performance, teacher performance, and community support. They recognized the importance of community buy-in and stakeholder participation. In the report, a chart points out the “Old Way of Doing Business” and the “New Way of Doing Business.” The old way was that programs and policies were mandated by the school board and top administrators, with minimal stakeholder input; whereas, the new way was that major programmatic and policy decisions were made only after the community and school staff participated through new structures developed, which facilitated participation in the decision making process. Decisions were originally made by a few, and the budget was managed centrally under the old system. The new system instituted a process where participation was by dozens of stakeholders in numerous budget-shaping committees. Long-term strategic and systemic direction was established with change and continuous improvement pursued under the new system. The old system had short-range strategic plans with 12-month implementation cycles. The report stated that one of the major components in sustaining long term organizational change was the inclusion of a diversity of stakeholders in the process.
Stakeholder Input: Cooperative Extension System and 4-H

“The adult learner must be the key player as a program participant as well as a central figure in the program planning process” (Adelaine and Foster 1990, ¶1). Policy and program direction must be determined from an investigation of the adult learner’s needs in order for success to be achieved. Development of successful programs must have client input and utilizing their advice and suggestions are instrumental.

Involvement of people served in determining program directions has been a cornerstone in the development of the Extension Service since its inception. Knowles (1980) stated that one can confidently predict participation in a program based solely on the people planning the program. He emphasized that programs planned by staff, based on what they think people would be interested in are usually poorly attended. Whereas, programs planned with the assistance of a planning committee which utilized client needs surveys produced a thriving well-attended program. Long (1984) re-emphasized involving citizens as advisors to the Extension process as an important determiner of success. He said “involvement speeds up the process of planned change; it results in better decisions; and in itself, it’s a beneficial learning experience for participants.” (Long 1984, ¶1).

Determining program needs for an increasingly diverse audience continues to be a priority of the Extension Service. To effectively meet the educational needs of all populations, advisory committees of Extension programs must reflect the needs and interests of the entire community (Ingram & Nyangara, 1997). Advisory committees are an integral part of determining program efforts and assessing educational need and interests of under-represented populations in the community, according to Ingram and
Nyangara. They emphasized these types of groups were charged with developing and implementing relevant educational programs, which addressed specific needs and interests of a diverse audience. Typically, Extension has derived its educational programmatic agenda from the people it served (Adelaine & Foster, 1990). They stated Extension has made effective use of several adult education principles. One of the key principles was the adult learner plays a key role as a program participant as well as a central figure in the program planning process. Therefore, if the adult learner was to be a central figure, program direction and policy must be generated from an analysis of the learners’ needs.

Advisory committees varied from locale to locale on purpose and function. Generally, the working of the committees fit the need as identified by the group. Although this was common, many were organized with similar tasks. Black, Howe, Howell, and Bedker, (1992) enumerated several appropriate tasks deemed necessary for the functioning of the committee. They found the committee did not want to manage the local Extension program, but wanted to advise and in many cases approve or disapprove of programs. Development and implementation of Extension programs at the local and state level were at the top of the list of tasks (Black et al., 1992). The committee should also oversee the expenditures of local funds allocated for Extension programming, as well as, the hiring and firing of local Extension educators and support staff in county offices. Salary adjustments of local Extension educators and support staff should also be reviewed by the advisory group. They also found that the council should be an integral component of the needs assessment program as well as key to program direction. The group should be used to ensure Extension programming is germane to the needs of the
people and the programming efforts were effective. Black et al. emphasized that advisory councils must represent all the clientele to be effective.

For any committee to be effective, input by all involved was essential. Agents and leaders must be more effectively involved in all aspects of programming. Baker and Verma (1993) reported that agents and leaders must be an integral part of planning, implementation and evaluation of Extension programs. Barnett, Johnson, and Verma (1999) stated effective advisory committees were the cornerstones of relevant, quality Extension programs. In their findings they reported committee members were very involved in the advisement phase, had limited involvement in legitimating and communication, and no involvement in interpretation related to the advisory committee process. This breakdown in involvement limited the effectiveness of the overall committee. In the programming phase of the committee process, members were strongly involved in programming and implementation, had limited involvement in planning and none in evaluation. One positive result of the study was agents and committee members did have a good working relationship. This was essential to the effectiveness of the committee. In the study, members perceived serving on the advisory committee as a positive experience. They reported the process was not perceived as effective by members in terms of educational experience or for interpreting situations and communicating decisions about programming.

Barnett et al. (1999) also found Extension agents perceived that advisory members enhanced program acceptance; a perception not shared by the advisory members. Advisory members felt their input into program planning led to the development of effective programs, but Extension agents did not share this view.
Extension agents felt advisory committees had no impact on evaluation but members felt their attendance at Extension programs was an effective form of evaluation in itself. Barnett et al. indicated that advisory members expressed the following concerns regarding the process:

(a) the need for a more defined purpose, (b) a written agenda prior to the meetings, (c) greater utilization of committee members in a liaison role between Extension and the agriculture community, and (d) better public awareness and recognition of advisory membership and activities (Results Section, ¶ 20).

Barnett et al. concluded their report with several recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the advisory process. They recommended training of agents to increase their understanding of the advisory committee process and required volunteer leadership skills. Barnett et al. recommended that the Extension agent’s management of the committee needed to be improved by the following:

(a) providing members with a written agenda and clearly understood purpose for advisory meetings, (b) increasing public recognition of members, (c) maintaining one-on-one contact with members throughout the year, (d) preparing and mailing out minutes of advisory committee meetings to all producers and others involved in the industry (Results Section, ¶ 12).

Conone (1991) in her article, “People Listening to People… Or Are We Really?” offered several recommendations she reported were vital for the continuation of a viable Extension organization. She stated Extension needed to involve people in the strategic/long-range planning process who did not have a vested interest in any phase of structure or programming. These people contributed in an objective means to the
development of mission statements, program direction, and staffing patterns. The Extension Service should collect needs assessment data from both users and non-users of Extension according to Conone (1991) recommendations. Every effort should be made to gather information from a variety of audiences using multiple data collection techniques. Drastic changes were needed if the Extension system expected to empower people through improved programming. Strategic long range planning involving a diversity of clientele was key to identifying direction. She concluded, “People are telling us what their priority problems are, but are we really listening?” (Conone 1991, The Challenge Section, ¶ 2).

Structure of Advisory Process

Cooperative Extension System and 4-H

The structure of the advisory committee can lead to success or failure of the programming effort. Selection of membership, length of service on the committee and the actual type and structure of the meeting can influence outcomes. In the publication “Guidelines for Developing Effective Advisory Committees” (Hammatt, McCrory & Mullen, n.d.), it was recommended that membership be representative of the community, including ethnic and racial minorities. Those represented should be 1/3 youth, 1/3 member of the immediate 4-H family (current parents and leaders), and 1/3 community at large (business leaders, civic leaders, school or farm organizations, senior citizens’ groups, elected officials, service or fraternal organizations). The committee should consist of 12 to 15 members. Gamon (1987) suggested the size of the committee or council is significant. She stated the meetings should be structured so each person saw himself/herself as a contributing member. Large numbers on committees made this task
Through the “Valuing Differences” program conducted in Oklahoma, Buck (1997) reported the program increased diversity of membership on program advisory committees. This in turn increased collaborations with organizations and agencies that supported diverse populations. The Oklahoma Extension staff reported this arrangement allowed them to reach new audiences and potential clientele.

Black et al. (1992) found one characteristic in need of change at the county advisory level was the membership makeup. They stated, “In general, the people who comprise the local councils still come from groups primarily associated with farming, 4-H, home economics, and forest management.” (Black et al. 1992, ¶ 2). In other words, the immediate family or clients professionals work with on an intimate basis composed the county councils. This was an indication that Extension advisory councils haven’t kept up with the changing times, clientele base and programming emphasis (Black et al., 1992). One major area of concern that arose from their study was the method of advisory council member selection. In the study, almost 50% of the council responded they were members of the council as a result of action by Extension educators. Another 41% stated they were members as a result of balloting; however, the balloting was done with an audience with strong Extension ties and history. This meant that 89% of the members strongly focused or influenced programs in a particular Extension area. As a result of this large percentage, the council maintained a vested interest to continue current programming efforts. They emphasized if Extension is going to embark on new programming initiatives, it should also embark on a new selection process, and it should include all sectors of the local society. The council should do internal needs assessment and fill any missing sectors by recruiting members to fill these gaps.
Ebling (1985) in her paper “Using the Advisory Committee Effectively,” observed that typically the County Extension Advisory Committee has been dominated by a small agricultural group. They met occasionally to appoint someone to district or state committees or to interview a candidate for a vacant staff position. She further stated that timing was right to change this concept and a reorganization of the committee’s function and form took place. The local Extension Service identified 15 leaders, not necessarily Extension users but known to be potentially interested in Extension’s mission. The advantages to this approach of utilizing a different committee approach were multiple, according to Ebling. Competition between users for Extension limited resources was minimized because the citizenry was viewed in a broader context. The members weren’t intimately involved in the program, therefore, able to raise critical questions that prompt agents, and occasionally administrators as well to re-evaluate their outlooks on issues. These people had substantial experience themselves which allowed for the flow of fresh ideas that often worked well. Their legislative contacts were also an added incentive to the county.

Rennekamp and Gerhard (1992) found the composition of advisory groups made it difficult to engage in meaningful assessments of community needs and priorities. Advisory group members tended to be involved in core Extension programs, which allowed programming to be very narrow in scope. Programming for areas, such as youth-at-risk, was often not represented according to their findings. Many advisory groups recognized youth problems, but often did not de-emphasize on-going programs to strengthen programs targeted for at-risk youth. They concluded that Extension must actively make advisory group membership more representative of the at-risk population.
To succeed in addressing this problem, the two top priorities they referenced were to aggressively seek making program advisory groups more representative of the at-risk population and involve program advisory groups in making decisions about program priorities and resource allocations.

Structure of the committee and the working of the committee were just as important as the membership. Hammatt et al. (n.d.) emphasized subcommittees played an important role to the entire process. They recommended subcommittee numbers and type be designed according to need in a local parish. When considering meeting dates, times, and places, they recommended checking dates and availability several weeks ahead of time with as many members as possible. The meeting date, time, and location should be set considering convenience and avoiding possible conflicts. They also suggested the advisory committee meet at least three times a year. Gamon (1987) emphasized these very points in her report. She stated the group should meet at a convenient time and familiar place. Choosing the right time could be the difference between good and poor attendance. A technique she found beneficial was to inform members during recruitment the time of day and general day of the week or month that meeting would be held. If potential members responded they could not attend at those times, she would recruit someone else. She also offered alternatives to actually assembling a group to hold formal meetings. Telephone conferences, mailed reports and individual contact, either by telephone or face-to-face, can be just as effective in certain situations as formalized meetings. Ebling’s (1985) report indicated meetings were held four times a year. The format suggested was a luncheon meeting. She also indicated if
subcommittees were appointed they should meet on an as-needed basis when special concerns arise.

The tenure a person served on an advisory committee differed from place to place. Some type of rotational setting was generally recommended. Ebling (1985) suggested membership should be based on a staggered three-year term with the Extension representative appointing the chairperson. She also recommended before being reappointed to the committee, a person was required to serve a one-year hiatus. A length of two to three year term was recommended by Hammatt et al. (n.d.).

Wegenhoft and Holt (1988) identified six steps to help ensure the success of the advisory process. The first step was to develop confidence in volunteers or lay leaders. They suggested getting to know committee members. The second step involved choosing one of these volunteers to serve as chairperson of the committee. The process to select a chairperson differed depending upon the situation, but they suggested this be a well thought out process. After the selection, officers received adequate training and literature outlining job responsibilities. The third step involved developing a professional working relationship with the chairperson. They suggested the chairperson be as familiar with the process as if the Extension agent was leading the committee themselves. The fourth step was to be prepared for the advisory committee meetings. The Extension professional met with officers and communicated prior to the meetings in order to develop process and agendas. A meeting place was secured, along with time and other details worked out well in advance so notice of meeting allowed members adequate opportunity to make arrangements for attendance. After meetings, copies of the minutes and activities of the meeting were sent to all members along with a note of appreciation recognizing their
participation in the process. Step five was to continually include the advisory committee in carrying out program objectives, goals, and evaluation. The final step was to turn the entire process over to the committee. Developing enough confidence in the members to allow them to carry out tasks on their own was an important aspect of a successful committee. This enabled them to develop leadership and confidence in their abilities. It also allowed them to have total buy-in to the process and overall program.

In order for Extension professionals and volunteers to perform specified tasks, some type of format or description of activity was generally utilized. Hammatt et al. (n.d.) suggested at the first advisory meeting member’s roles be clearly defined. They recommended using a 4-H Program Advisory Committee Job Description. Using a job description is basic to volunteer management. People wanted to know what they were being asked to do and what was expected of them. Not only do volunteers need training, but many Extension professionals did not have a good understanding of the advisory process. Barnett et al. (1999) recommended that agents receive training to increase their understanding of the advisory committee process and required volunteer leadership skills. Agents should be trained not only on the functioning of the committee but also the management of the committee. Extension professionals should do a minimum of four tasks (Barnett et al., 1999). These were provide members with written agenda and purpose of advisory committee, increase public recognition of committee members, maintain contact with members throughout the year, and prepare and furnish members copies of minutes as well as the clientele committee affects.

Rebori (2001) suggested many board members accept the position with the expectation of receiving training in areas such as capacity-building skills. She found
70% of citizens joined local advisory boards to be involved in their community and help create local change. A training program was established to fill the gap. The board training program focused on five training components. Members were trained in time and meeting management, along with conflict management. Problem-solving, goal-setting and action-planning were also involved in the training sessions. The last area of training addressed was decision-making styles and techniques. This program was developed and conducted through a collaborative effort among governmental liaisons in Reno and Washoe County, along with the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. This became a voluntary training program for local advisory boards in 1998. Rebori (2001) found through this process programming efforts re-focused on improving the operating process for the advisory boards and building the relationships between county officials and the boards themselves. The program became more that just a training program on capacity-building skills. It evolved into a community development process that modeled community capacity, improved government participation in the process, and engaged in civic dialogue.

**Function of Advisory Process**

**Cooperative Extension System and 4-H**

Hammatt et al. (n.d.) listed nine functions of an effective advisory committee. The committee should be responsible to survey communities to determine youth needs, interests and priorities. They were charged with evaluation of existing 4-H programs and activities. Based on this evaluation, they should recommend methods and procedures for carrying out programs. Members were involved in the planning and implementing of new programs. Another task identified was working with Extension educators to develop
a plan to expand volunteer involvement including determining appropriate volunteer roles in the parish. This included identifying and recruiting volunteer leaders and organizing leader orientation, training, support, and recognition. The responsibility of receiving and approving local budgets was an important function of the committee. Formulation of local policy and promotion of the 4-H program to the general public were two additional tasks mentioned. The final purpose outlined by Hammatt et al. was probably one of the most important as far as funding and support, which entailed representing the 4-H program to elected officials.

Syracuse (1996), in her report “Extension’s Free Lunch,” detailed an activity conducted by an advisory committee in Lake County, Ohio. She noted that this group wanted to do more than just advise and offer suggestions for programming. The group wanted to take a more active role in the community, by conducting educational programs and events. The idea of an annual Leader’s Luncheon to acquaint local leaders with programming opportunities of the Extension family and consumer science program was developed by the committee. In planning this program, the committee served numerous functions. The committee identified community leaders and sent special invitations to participate. A follow-up telephone call was made to invitees by the committee members. The invitees identified by the committee included: local legislators, county commissioners, presidents of local women’s groups and junior leagues, clergy, librarians, and home economics/family and consumer science instructors. Also, individuals who were under consideration for future advisory positions were invited to provide them with background information on the FCS committee and programs. Advisory members were responsible for setting up the facility for the event, provided refreshments, served as
hostesses and presenters. As a result of the committee’s actions, the luncheon provided many positive results for the county Extension office. It created awareness among local legislators and political leaders and increased awareness of Extension programming. It served as a recruitment tool for new volunteers and a recognition opportunity for current volunteers. It offered a chance to receive broad-based recommendations for local programming needs and increase use of Extension-taught program by typical non-users.

“Tabloids--- A Tool for Public Issues Education” (Bloome, Duncan, Rost & Novak, 2002) chronicled a different function and approach to the use of advisory systems. In Oregon a tabloid-format was begun in 1998 as a delivery vehicle for Extension programming. An advisory team was assembled to oversee the process and also act as reviewers of the tabloid. The team brought all perspectives of the issue to the table. Although this was a specialized advisory team, this perspective offered a clientele approach to a program from the initial stages to final completion. The advisory team on this project was charged with identifying story lines and developing a list of source contacts. A one-day review session to review, mark-up, and discuss draft articles was held by the advisory team. Utilizing this approach, the results indicated from a random telephone survey that 45% of the constituents with an interest in the issue had utilized the information, and 37% of those not aware also utilized the information. In addition, 26% of those with an interest and 19% without had discussed the information with others.

In Kansas, Brannan and Gray (1998) reported an advisory group was instrumental in performing tasks essential to the working of a rapid response center to support Extension agents. The charge of the center was to acquire and maintain database materials and literature reviews, to write informational pieces and to contribute
newsletters and training relating to information retrieved. The advisory committee was formed to review the center’s progress and to plan appropriate strategies for marketing and improvements to the center. An evaluation of the center’s effectiveness was also conducted by the advisory committee. As a result of the evaluation conducted by the group, input was used for expansion of the center. Ludwig (2002) identified the advisory committee as instrumental in identifying global markets and issues that affected local Extension clientele. She reported that at an advisory meeting the group initiated a lengthy discussion on programming that related to global and international concerns.

Initially at the committee meeting, the group was to discuss Extension and research programming and what we should emphasize to elected officials and state leaders. Through the advisory process, global and international issues were identified and tied to local agricultural concerns in Ohio. These concerns and programming efforts were communicated to state and local officials.

In Ohio, Owen, Ludwig, and Thorne (1988) looked at a concept instituted by a local Extension advisory council that highlighted Extension’s impact in a unique manner. A local advisory member with a financial background suggested the committee determine what revenues Extension programming generated for the county general fund. The questions were asked. “Did Extension pay its own way?” (Owen et al., 1988 ¶ 2) “Would reducing the budget with an impact of staff loss cost the county more money than was initially saved?” (Owen et al., 1988 ¶ 2) These questions were addressed both from the perspective of new funds generated as well as dollars saved by each Extension program area. The committee determined that Extension programming generated funds in two methods: (1) increased permissive sales tax collected on new sales and (2) personal tax
collected on increased inventory and equipment. Each program area was evaluated carefully to determine if new businesses, increased sales, or new jobs resulted from the activities of the Extension service. The committee demonstrated a total of $78,000 in new income was generated for the county general fund in that particular year, with the community and natural resources development generating the most income. Another method used to determine impact to the general fund was to document expenditures not made by commissioners because of Extension activities. Well documented cases of savings were included such as; consultant work provided by agents, value of a county-wide litter prevention program, saving as individuals got off the welfare roles, and children kept out of detention center by 4-H involvement. In this area, a savings of $55,000 was realized. The total impact of Extension developed by the advisory committee in the Ohio county was reported as $140,000. The total local budget from this Ohio county was $50,000. Utilizing the figures generated by the advisory committee, the Extension Service generated $90,000 for the county. The advisory committee reported these findings, along with information on the social impact of Extension programming to the county commissioners. They stressed in their report that proposed cuts to Extension programming would eliminate programs that generated a return of nearly 200%. As result of the work done by the advisory committee and this report, the county commissioners approved a $30,000 increase in funding to the Extension program.

For local 4-H needs to be addressed by state programs, some type of system to facilitate this process must exist. Long (1984) recognized that building advisory groups was an important task. He stated, “That we in Extension throughout the US are in this effort together, and we can build on each other’s experiences.” (Long 1984, ¶ 7). There
was no single recipe to build groups to utilize local input to provide recommendations to
the state level. He pointed out because of the diversity in the country, with each state
working with different social systems, it was important to learn from each other.

**Program Evaluation**

**Participation**

As society changes, it faces many challenges that are complex and interrelated.
“Educators, community leaders, and concerned citizens are working toward effective
ways to alleviate some of the problems facing youth and families” (Ferrer & Chambers,
1999, ¶ 1). An approach that may help pull these groups together is the collaborative
strategy. Ferrer and Chambers (1999) reported on an effort in Orange County, Florida.
Many agencies collaborated to plan and conduct programs that reached needed clientele.
The agencies involved in the effort were: East Orange Community Action Inc., Orange
County Sheriff’s Office B.A.D.G.E., Orange County Department of Human Services,
Family Education, and the Cooperative Extension Service. Each of these agencies played
an important role in providing various services to families for the attainment of a safer
neighborhood. After two years of collaborating an audit of the effectiveness of this effort
was done. The audit found there was an increase of 64% in participation in the program.
Also, two hundred thirty 4th and 5th grade students were evaluated in three different
schools. A pre-and-post test was administered with results indicating a 25% increase in
knowledge of personal safety. They concluded, “keeping the collaborative mission and
common outcomes in the forefront helped focus the work efforts toward meeting the
needs of children and families in the community” (Ferrer & Chambers 1999, Conclusion
Section, ¶ 1). As a result of their efforts in this Florida county, the contract for this collaborative group had been extended by three years.

**Outcomes**

Hogan (1994) found that involvement of advisory committee members and other leaders was an essential part of a successful public relations effort. He stated people involvement was critical, and the key to the success of the project was determined to be the involvement of advisory committee and other leaders throughout the entire public relations process. The responsibility for securing funding through the county commissioners was placed on the local citizens. Each year, the citizens and advisory group presented program impacts of Extension as they presented the annual budget request to the county commissioners. According to Hogan’s findings, one of the most critical components of involving citizens was the identification of the most appropriate and effective community leaders. One year, the leaders and 4-H members utilized direct quotes and testimonials to deliver Extension’s program impact. This total public relations approach, involving advisory members and other identified leaders, proved productive in the Ohio county with a budget increase of over 116% from 1987 to 1994. This amounted to an increase of $75,000. Hogan (1994) also reported on an equally effective approach instituted by the State Extension Advisory Committee in Ohio. The committee conducted tours for legislative aides of Ohio’s senators and congressional representatives. At this activity, users of Extension’s programs showed legislative assistants the impact of Extension programs and the value of federal funding for Extension. In the report, he also offered a suggestion to strengthen the message delivered by the entire land-grant system. The suggestion was to utilize advisory groups in
Extension, research and resident instruction to work closely to deliver a unified message to the legislature. A unified approach produced greater benefits for the entire land-grant system.

Kieth and Vaughn (1998) utilized parents of 4-Hers to establish program worth and effectiveness in a study done on the value of 4-H competitive activities. The parents in this study enumerated several positive aspects of competition: personal skill development, enhancement of self-esteem, motivation of youth to succeed, setting and attainment of goals, and family social relationships. Although researchers found these positives in the study, several negative aspects of competition were also identified by the parents. Excessive parental involvement, unethical practices by participants, inordinate amounts of money spent, unequal opportunities for all youth in the program, and competition starting with children who were too young were some of the negatives mentioned in the findings. The researchers recommended the positive results of the study be publicized and marketed to other Extension personnel to be utilized as a recruitment emphasizing the benefits of competition. The benefits were identified as self-improvement of young people, and development of strong family relationships.

**Program Description**

LaMuth (1998) concluded the number and ranges of requests for Extension programming continued to increase. Agents and professionals continued to be approached and urged by community organizations and individuals to deliver products that may or may not fit into Extension’s mission. They would continue to be pulled to accommodate the public they serve. To differentiate or determine which programs and
products should be delivered, the professionals must utilize some process. In her work LaMuth (1998) suggested Extension professionals should evaluate several questions.

- Does pursuing the ideas make use of the organization’s strengths?
- Is the idea or program within Extension’s area of expertise?
- Is the idea within the scope of the organization’s mission statement?
- Would developing an alliance with a collaborating agency be advantageous? (LaMuth, 1998, Evaluating Ideas Section, ¶ 2)

These questions offered agents and advisors an opportunity to analyze its place before it was implemented.

The study of successful programs conducted by Casey and Krueger (1991) found advisory committees were only one aspect involved in conducting successful programs. In their study they interviewed 10 agricultural agents identified by administration as excellent programmers. The agents revealed advisory groups were used to sanction and gain support for programs. They stated the Extension professionals gained ideas for programs from other agents, specialists, and people outside of Extension. Agents received information from people in other states and from other agencies. These agents were always searching for new ideas when they read and attended Extension events. They summarized their report by defining agents with successful programs as those who, “got ideas for programs from extended networks not limited to their county or Extension” (Casey & Krueger 1991, Summary Section, ¶ 1).

**Stakeholders’ Perception (Cooperative Extension)**

One measure of effectiveness reported by Ebling (1985) was the level of appropriations for Extension on the local level. Her study on a county in Ohio revealed
their local Extension advisory committee was instrumental in securing double the appropriation level over a seven-year period. She also indicated that private sector funding increased substantially. The committee structure allowed local agents and programs to become more involved in important community affairs. She indicated the effectiveness of the local advisory committee was measured by the amount of participation in the urban power structure. This structure was a key to getting Extension’s voice heard especially in the urban areas. Effective programs have been initiated by advisory committees in many Extension organizations. As reported by Rohs (1988), a local advisory committee was instrumental in identifying the need and developing a 12-session intensive leadership training program. Program participants credited the program with further developing their basic community leadership skills. They were more informed on local issues, gained a broader perspective of their counties and took a more active role in improving their communities. This leadership training session empowered community members to become more active and act as an arm of the local Extension Service. The group was able to obtain a $1.3 million water/sewer grant for the local county. This was only one in a long list of accomplishments reported (Rohs, 1988).

The development of programs can take numerous approaches and sources of input. Reporting program impact in Extension has been instrumental in securing governmental funds. Although program impact was often reported, program failure was seldom discussed in Extension. Program failure can result from several factors that include, “inappropriate content, inadequate implementation, or low achievement on outcomes” (Decker 1990, ¶ 3). He reported that in recent years many Extension
educators have focused their evaluative activities exclusively on program impacts. He stated Extension educators needed to be more conscientious and precise as they developed programs and be willing to have these scrutinized by peers. The programs should be examined closely during the planning stage and have input from user groups. Programs often failed due to lack of input or examination in the planning process. Success of programs could be improved through a structure that allowed for stakeholder input into the establishment and planning phases.

In the report prepared by the Strategic Planning Council and accepted by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy and Extension Service, USDA (1991) entitled, “Patterns of Change,” several conclusions were drawn. In the report several components were recognized as essential to the Extension System’s continued success in organizational change and strategic planning at both the state and local level. The key points outlined in the conclusion were Extension’s commitment to change and willingness to cross traditional subject-matter boundaries. The report also emphasized the need for staffs to be continually flexible and creative. Success will be determined by the organization’s ability to respond quickly and effectively as issues change. Clientele must be willing to communicate their needs readily, openly, and often. They must be afforded the opportunity to accomplish through involvement on the local and state level. Extension must be committed to increased collaboration and cooperation with business and industry, with other agencies and organizations, and with other educators within and beyond the land-grant university system to multiply program delivery, impact and satisfy demand according to the report, “Patterns of Change” (USDA, 1991).
A prediction of where programming in Extension will be in the future is a complex issue. Meeting the needs of clientele in these changing times will be a challenge. In a study to determine national trends in programming, preparation and staffing at the county level State Extension Directors offered their input (Agnew & Foster, 1991). Their recommendations for programming in the future included pre-service educational programs which promoted the development of human relations skills as well as technical skills for field-based faculty. Educational activities developed should be consistent with trends in programming, such as team or multi-discipline and multi-county planning and administration, high-tech communications and information delivery systems, and quality programming with limited resources. To prepare field faculty to deliver pertinent programs, they should participate in training which included high-tech educational methodologies, program planning and delivery for youth and adults, and program administration and evaluation. The study concluded alternative program delivery approaches involving variations in staff size, educational background, and technical expertise should be studied to determine economic benefit and effectiveness in meeting the goals of Cooperative Extension Service programs.

In a study done by Habeeb, Birkenholz, and Weston (1987), they suggested Extension make improvements in their delivery methods and program variables. They recommended Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service workers examine alternatives to improve the methods used in delivering information and enhance the focus of programs. Researchers concluded that for the Extension Service to provide more effective services at the local level, they should plan and conduct Extension meetings for expanded target audiences. The respondents in this study indicated the amount of
personal contacts and number of informational meetings was related to their perception of the Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service. For Extension to enhance its perception, programs should develop more innovative opportunities to provide information to an expanded audience.

**Stakeholders’ Perception (4-H)**

Identifying programs which are no longer effective in meeting the needs of clientele was a problem encountered by many educational organizations during these fast pace, changing times. Methods organizations utilize to identify ineffective programs and establish new programs may be essential to their survival. Burnett, Johnson, and Hebert (2000) utilized 4-H Youth Development agents as the vehicle to determine the educational value and worth of programs, events and activities in Louisiana. Their findings indicated most events, activities, and programs conducted by Louisiana 4-H agents were perceived to have educational value. Summer camp was identified as having the most educational value followed by 4-H club meetings. The researchers concluded many of the activities should be continued because of the educational value scores, but some were targeted for elimination. They targeted six activities for elimination and recommended six activities not currently conducted for addition to the program.

Program planning and maintenance was identified as the number one instructional topic to be taught for an undergraduate methods class and student internship program (Legacy & Wells, 1987). This topic was ranked as highly important or important by 96% of the respondents. The importance of training potential Extension employees in the area of programs was verified by Legacy and Wells (1987) in their results. Programming and the designing of appropriate educational activities to fit the needs of clientele were
emphasized in a study by Rollins, Scholl, and Scanlon (1992). They concluded the challenge for Extension was to continue to provide educational opportunities for the development of youth in areas such as leadership, self-esteem, and citizenship. Extension has an opportunity to design and deliver research-based, prevention-oriented programs. The programs would teach life skills such as thinking and problem solving, belonging to a group, recognition, responsibility and being successful. They stated through the process of teaching youth how to think, Extension can teach 4-H youth how to become better thinkers and use their cognitive abilities which is one of the most basic life skills.
Chapter Three

Methodology

Population and Sample

This study was designed to gather information from two different populations that are stakeholder groups of the 4-H youth development program. One target population was the professionals in the LSU AgCenter in parish offices who have assigned 4-H responsibility. The frame was determined by utilizing the Extension Personnel List. The total number of Extension professionals with assigned 4-H responsibility was 117. A 100% sample (census) of this target population was used in the study, with 104 of the 117 possible participants responding to the survey.

The second target population was 4-H advisory committee members in each of the 64 parishes in Louisiana who had attended at least one advisory committee meeting in 2002, 2003, or 2004. Data from 4-H regional coordinators who participated in 59 advisory meetings in 2002 and 2003 indicated that the overall average participation was 10 to 12 members. The size of this target population was estimated to be between 640 and 768. For purposes of determining minimum sample size the larger of these figures was used. The minimum required sample size was determined using Cochran’s (1977) Sample Size determination formula. Calculations are as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
n_0 &= \frac{t^2 \times s^2}{d^2} \\
&= \frac{(1.97)^2 \times (.80)^2}{(.125)^2} \\
&= \frac{(3.8809) 	imes (.64)}{.015625} \\
n_0 &= 2.483776 = 159 \quad \text{(rounded up)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
0.015626
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
n_0 &= 159 \\
n_0 &= 132
\end{align*}
\]
The frame to select the four names in each parish was determined from records supplied by each parish office. A letter was sent by the Vice Chancellor and Director of the Extension Service (letter can be found in Appendix A) by e-mail to request that each parish submit the 4-H advisory committee list to the researcher. All of the 64 parishes responded to the request. The researcher utilized the submitted lists, and conducted a systematic random sample to obtain the four names per parish. This allowed for a sample size of 256.

**Instrumentation**

With two separate target populations identified, two similar but separate instruments were designed. One instrument was designed to be administered to LSU AgCenter Extension professionals with 4-H responsibility. To design this instrument the researcher reviewed several studies utilizing instruments that addressed similar objectives. A study done by Adelaine and Foster (1990) was administered to Extension field personnel in Nebraska. This instrument was designed to determine who influenced Extension’s program direction. Another instrument, which influenced the design of the instrument the researcher utilized, was that used in the Prepared and Engaged Youth National 4-H Impact Assessment Project 2001 (2001). An evaluation of advisory committee meetings by Cole and Cole (1983) was reviewed and was instrumental in the process section of the survey designed for this study. The instrument was designed to measure or capture information to meet the objectives outlined in the study.

The second instrument was designed to be administered to parish advisory committee members. Once again, an instrument created by Adelaine and Foster (1990)
that surveyed advisory committee members in counties in Nebraska was reviewed. The Prepared and Engaged Youth National 4-H Impact Assessment Project 2001 (2001) instrument offered valuable information that was used in the design of the researcher’s instrument. The instrument was designed by the researcher carefully to capture the objectives of the study.

A copy of both instruments is included in the appendix (Appendix B contains the instrument for 4-H youth development professionals and Appendix C contains the instrument for the parish 4-H advisory committee members) for review. A panel comprised of 11 individuals with expertise in 4-H, advisory committees, and instrument design reviewed the instrument. Minor modifications were made based on their recommendations.

**Data Collection**

Data was collected in two phases. The first phase involved collection of data with the researcher administering the instrument to LSU AgCenter Extension professionals responsible for 4-H at the LSU AgCenter Annual Conference 2005. The second phase of the data collection involved a mailed survey to randomly selected advisory committee members. These members represented each parish and were mailed an instrument with instructions on how to complete the survey.

The phase one data was collected from the survey of LSU AgCenter Extension professionals with assigned 4-H responsibility during the LSU AgCenter Annual Conference. The researcher contacted the appropriate individuals and secured time on the program to administer the survey. On the second day of the conference, at a required session for 4-H professionals, the researcher initiated the data collection with an
explanation of the study and data collection procedures. Along with the instrument, an instructional cover letter (Appendix D) was included with Vice Chancellor Paul Coreil’s signature. The instruments were not coded or numbered and they were distributed to all personnel who met the requirements. Respondents were asked to complete the instrument during the session and then submit it to their respective regional 4-H coordinator at the end of the session in a sealed envelope ensuring confidentiality. The five regional 4-H coordinators collected and recorded the 4-H professionals’ data from their region who had turned in the instrument in the sealed envelope. At the meeting, 106 (90.5%) participants turned in the survey instrument. Useable data was collected on 104 of the instruments. Two of the participants were newly employed and had never conducted a parish 4-H advisory committee meeting. No follow-up survey had to be mailed since the target of 90% response rate was achieved.

The phase two data collected from the survey administered to advisory committee members was done by mail. The survey was numbered to track non-respondents and contained a cover letter (Appendix E) explaining the importance of the study. The packet was mailed to four randomly selected advisory committee members from each parish. Instructions on survey completion accompanied the survey, and an addressed stamped envelope was enclosed that allowed the respondent to return the survey at no cost. The initial mailing requested advisory members to complete the survey within one week. Five of the instruments were returned due to incorrect addresses. After contacting the parish of the participants with incorrect addresses it was determined that no additional mailing would be possible due to the parish only having one address for the participant. Two weeks after the initial mailing of the survey, non-respondents were sent a postcard
reminder (Appendix F). One week following the mailing of the postcard the remaining non-respondents were mailed an additional copy of the survey (Appendix C). A third mailing to non-respondents followed two weeks after the second, which contained a cover letter (Appendix E), postcard (Appendix G) and copy of the survey (Appendix C). One hundred forty-two (55.5%) parish advisory members responded with data from the survey. An additional 18 (7.0%) responded by returning the blank survey indicating that they had not been a participant on the parish 4-H advisory committee in 2002, 2003, or 2004. Due to a respondent rate below 80%, a random sample of non-respondents was contacted by phone to answer 10 randomly selected questions. Initially phone numbers were solicited from parish 4-H youth development professionals for 40 randomly selected names. Of the initial 40 name 15 answered the 10 randomly selected survey questions from the survey. Thirteen of those contacted responded that they were not current members the parish 4-H advisory committee. The remaining 12 potential respondents were phoned three times at three different times of the day and days of the week with no answer. Responses to the 10 randomly answered questions from the 15 fifteen phone respondents were compared with the responses from all of the study parish 4-H advisory committee member respondents. Using an independent t-test for nine of the items and a chi square for the tenth item, no significant difference was found between the phone responses and the mailed responses on any of the 10 questions. Therefore, the non-respondents were not considered different from the respondent group.

A qualitative component of the study was accomplished through an interview process. To provide additional information concerning the work of Parish 4-H advisory committees six interviews were conducted by the researcher. A purposeful sample to
qualify the quantitative findings of the survey was conducted. The possible interview candidates were selected through a reputational selection procedure (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The selections of the potential candidates to be interviewed were based on the recommendation of experts in the parish 4-H advisory process. The experts selected were the five regional 4-H coordinators who work with parishes throughout the state of Louisiana. The five coordinators were identified two “weak” parish advisory committees and two “strong” parish advisory committees. “Weak” was defined as a parish advisory committee that did not have an advisory member serve as chairman of the committee, did not meet on a consistent basis (did not meet at least twice a year), focused on events and activities, were not diverse in their membership, and did not involve the majority of the members during the meeting process. “Strong” was defined as a parish advisory committee that did have an advisory member serve and function as chairman of the committee, did meet on a consistent basis (at least twice a year), focused on youth issues and total program development, were diverse in their membership, and did involve the majority of the members during the meeting process.

From the 10 “weak” and 10 “strong” parishes identified the researcher then selected six parishes (three “weak” and three “strong”) from the list based on population differences and differences in location throughout the state. The researcher verified the possible candidates with the survey responses returned. Parish 4-H youth development professionals from the six selected parishes were contacted to assist in determining the best candidate to be interviewed. The six parish 4-H youth development professionals recommended the candidates and they were contacted by the researcher to determine if they would agree to the interview. All six contacted agreed to the interview process.
These interviews were conducted with members of advisory committees from six different parishes. With the assistance of the 4-H youth development professionals the researcher arranged the six interviews which were conducted by the researcher at locations convenient to the interviewees participating in the study. The interviews were tape recorded for accuracy with the permission of the interviewee. The responses were then transcribed and information from the transcriptions was analyzed and reported in the findings section of Chapter 4 under objective six.

**Data Analysis**

Each of the objectives of the study were analyzed utilizing the procedures described below:

1. The first objective was to describe LSU AgCenter parish 4-H youth development professionals in Louisiana on the following selected demographic characteristics and perceptual measures:
   
   a. Ethnic background;
   b. Gender;
   c. Age;
   d. Highest level of education completed;
   e. Years served as a 4-H youth development professional;
   f. Number of trainings attended relative to advisory committee responsibilities;
   g. Whether or not they were aware of specific job responsibilities regarding advisory committees;
   h. The number of advisory committee meetings planned and conducted by the professional.

Data analysis procedures employed to accomplish this objective consisted of descriptive statistics. Variables which were measured on an interval scales were summarized using means and standard deviations. Variables that were measured on a
categorical scale of measurement (nominal or ordinal) were summarized using frequencies and percentages in categories.

2. The second objective was to determine the perception of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process:
   a. Meeting logistics;
   b. Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
   c. Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
   d. Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

Data analyses used to accomplish this objective included an exploratory factor analysis of each of the four scales included as part of the instrument to determine if multiple underlying constructs existed within each of the scales. Based on the results of the factor analyses, a factor score was computed for each of the constructs identified in each of the scales. These factor scores were used as dependent (item d) or independent variables (items a, b and c) in subsequent analyses to accomplish additional study objectives. The factor scores were computed as mean of the items included in each factor. Standard deviations were reported to describe variances associated with each of the factor scores.

3. The third objective of the study was to determine if the perceptions of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program are influenced by each of the following perceptual measures and demographic characteristics:
a. Meeting logistics;
b. Planning and preparation for the meeting;
c. Process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
d. Highest level of education completed;
e. Years served as 4-H youth development professional;
f. Number of training sessions attended relative to advisory committee responsibilities;
g. Whether or not they were aware of specific job responsibilities regarding advisory committees;
h. The number of advisory committee meetings planned and conducted by the professional.

Data analyses used to accomplish this objective were determined by the level of measurement of the specified independent variable. For variables that were measured as continuous (interval or higher level) a Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient was calculated between the perception score(s) regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program and the demographic/perceptual measures (e.g. Years as 4-H youth development professional). Variables measured on a categorical scale were analyzed by comparing the perception score(s) regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program by categories of each of the respective demographic/perceptual measures.

4. The fourth objective of the study described members of 4-H parish advisory committees in Louisiana on the following demographic characteristics and perceptual measures:

   a. Ethnic Background
   b. Gender
   c. Age
   d. Highest level of education completed
   e. Involvement in the 4-H organization as:
      i. A student member,
      ii. An adult volunteer,
iii. A club or organizational leader,
f. Length of service on the 4-H advisory committee,
g. Number of meetings attended in the past two years,
h. Whether or not selected contact methods were used to solicit their participation in the advisory committee process
i. Whether or not selected individuals influenced their decision to participate in the 4-H advisory committee process
j. The factor they perceived to have had the greatest influence on their decision to participate in the 4-H advisory committee process
k. Their self-assessed knowledge of the 4-H youth development process,
l. Whether or not they received training for participating in the 4-H advisory committee process, and
m. Whether or not they received a job description regarding their participation in the 4-H advisory process.

Data analyses used to accomplish this objective consisted of descriptive statistics.

Variables measured on an interval scale were summarized using means and standard deviations. Variables measured on a categorical scale (nominal or ordinal) were summarized using frequencies and percentages.

5. The fifth objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of members of parish 4-H advisory committees in Louisiana on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process:

a. Meeting logistics;
b. Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
c. Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
d. Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

Data analyses used to accomplish this objective included a factor analysis of each of the four scales included as part of the whole instrument to determine if multiple underlying constructs existed within each of the scales. Based on the results of the factor analyses, a factor score was computed for each of the constructs identified in each of the scales. These factor scores were used as dependent (item d) or
independent variables (items a, b and c) in subsequent analyses to accomplish additional study objectives. The factor scores were computed as the mean of the items included in each factor. Standard deviations were reported to describe variances associated with each of the factor scores.

6. The sixth objective of the study was to determine if the perceptions of the members of parish 4-H advisory committees in Louisiana regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program were influenced by each of the following demographic characteristics and perceptual measures:

a. The member’s primary motivation to participate in the advisory committee process;
b. Member’s perceptions regarding meeting logistics;
c. Member’s perceptions regarding effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
d. Member’s perceptions regarding effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
e. Whether or not the members received training on the advisory process prior to the meeting;
f. Whether or not the members received a detailed advisory committee job description prior to the meeting;
g. Years served on the advisory committee;
h. Number of advisory committee meetings attended in the last two years;
i. Ethnic background;
j. Highest level of education completed.

Data analyses used to accomplish this objective were determined by the level of measurement of the specified independent variable. For variables measured as continuous (interval or higher level) a Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient was calculated between the perception score(s) regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program and the demographic/perceptual measure (e.g. Years served on the advisory
Variables measured on a categorical scale were analyzed by comparing the perception score(s) regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program by categories of each of the respective demographic/perceptual measures.

7. The seventh objective of the study was to compare the perceptions of parish 4-H advisory committee members in Louisiana with the perceptions of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process:

   a. Meeting logistics;
   b. Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
   c. Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
   d. Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

Data analyses to accomplish this objective included an independent t-test with each of the perceptual factor scores for the four specified scales included as part of the research instrumentation utilized as dependent variable and the position (specified as either an advisory committee member or a youth development professional) utilized as the independent variable.
Chapter Four

Results

First Objective

The first objective of the study was to describe LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals in Louisiana on selected demographic characteristics and perceptual measures. One of these demographic characteristics was their ethnic background. Respondents indicating they were white comprised the majority of the group (n = 86, 90.5%). The only other category selected was black. Nine (9.5%) of the respondents indicated they were black. Nine people did not respond to this item on the survey.

The second characteristic of the respondents that was examined was gender. Forty (42.6%) of the respondents indicated that they were male, whereas 54 (57.4%) indicated they were female. There were 10 respondents who did not choose to answer this question on the survey.

Age of the respondent was another demographic characteristic included in this objective. Study participants were asked to respond to the question, “What is your age as of your last birthday”? The mean age of the 83 members of the sample who provided the requested information was 37.42 (SD = 9.45). The reported ages ranged from a low of 24 years to a high of 54 years. When the data was summarized in age categories the largest group of respondents (n = 20, 24.1%) reported ages in the 26-30 category. Generally, the respondents were uniformly distributed across the range of ages represented in the study (See Table 1).
Another characteristic used to describe the respondents was highest level of education completed. The category selected most frequently was “more than college masters degree” ($n = 38, 39.6\%$). Only one (1.0\%) respondent indicated that they had completed a doctorate. Information regarding education level of respondents is presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Age of 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 or less</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 or more</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83$^a$</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Mean Age = 37.42, $SD = 9.45$, Range 24-54
$^a$Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

The study participants were also described on number of years they had served as a 4-H youth development professional. They were asked to answer the question, “How many years have you been a 4-H youth development professional?” Responses provided by the 95 individuals who answered the question ranged from a low of one year to a high of 27 years. The mean number of years reported as a 4-H youth development professional was 10.23 ($SD = 7.10$). When the variable was examined in categories, the largest group of respondents ($n = 22, 23.2\%$) indicated years of experience in the “3 or
less” category. Additionally, seven (7.6%) reported that they had worked as a 4-H youth development professional for 22 or more years (see Table 3).

Table 2: Highest level of education completed by 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than College Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Master’s Degree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than College Master’s Degree</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>96</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

Table 3: Number of years reported employed as a 4-H youth development professional

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Service</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 or more</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Mean years served = 10.23, SD= 7.10

*Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.
The number of trainings that 4-H Youth Development professionals attended on the advisory process in the past three years was included in objective one. Responses provided by the study participants ranged from 0 to 12 with a mean number of training sessions attended of 2.19 (SD = 1.88). The number of training sessions reported by the largest group of respondents was one (n = 37, 37.4%). Additionally, 25 (25.3%) of the respondents indicated that they had attended two training sessions. Eight (8.1%) of the respondents reported having attended no training sessions in the past three years (See Table 4). One respondent indicated having attended a total of 12 trainings.

**Table 4: Number of advisory committee trainings attended by 4-H Youth Development professionals in the last 3 years**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of trainings</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>99a</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Mean number of trainings attended = 2.19, SD = 1.88

*aNumber of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

The 4-H youth development professionals participating in the study were also asked to indicate whether or not their responsibilities relative to advisory committees
were included in their most recent job description. Of the 97 participants who responded to this item, 79 (81.4%) indicated that their advisory committee responsibilities were included in their job description, while 18 (18.6%) reported that their advisory committee responsibilities were not included in their job description. Seven of the study participants did not respond to this item.

The 4-H youth development professionals were asked to report the number of advisory committee meetings they had conducted in the past three years. The average number of advisory committee meetings conducted was 4.69 (SD = 3.18). When the number of meetings conducted was examined in categories, the largest group of respondents (n = 49, 48.0%) provided responses in the “4-6” category. Additionally, 43 (42.2%) reported a number of meeting conducted in the “1-3” category. None of the responding professionals reported that they had conducted “0” meetings in the past three years (See Table 5).

Table 5: Number of advisory committee meeting conducted by 4-H youth development professionals in the past three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Meetings</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 or more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Mean number of meetings conducted = 4.69, SD = 3.18, Range 1-25
aNumber of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.
Second Objective

The second objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process: (a) Meeting logistics; (b) Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting; (c) Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting; and (d) Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development). Information used to accomplish this objective was derived from responses to items in four sub-scales included on the survey instrument. Each of these sub-scales addressed one of the aspects included in the objective. Study participants were asked to respond to the items in the sub-scales using a six point Likert-type scale with values as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. To facilitate the interpretation of the information provided by the respondents, the researcher established an interpretive scale with values corresponding to the response scale as follows: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.

Advisory Committee Meeting Logistics

Regarding “Meeting Logistics” respondents were asked to respond to five items. Mean responses to all of the items were classified using the researcher established interpretive scale as “Agree” with values ranging from 4.54 to 5.42 (See Table 6). The item with which the respondents had the highest level of agreement was “The meeting was held at an accessible location” (mean = 5.42, SD = .76). To further examine the
information regarding responses to the “Meeting Logistics” sub-scale, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted with the five items to determine if underlying constructs existed in the sub-scale. The method used was the principal components analysis with a varimax rotation. Prior to interpreting the factor analysis, the researcher first examined the anti-image correlation matrix to determine the appropriateness of applying the factor analysis procedure to the data set. This was accomplished by examination of the measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) for each of the individual items in the scale. According to Hair et al. (1998) if the MSA’s are above .50, factor analysis is an appropriate procedure for use with the data. When the MSA’s were examined for the items in the Meeting Logistics scale, the values ranged from .74 to .83 indicating that the factor analysis was appropriate for use with this scale.

The first step in conducting the factor analysis was to determine the appropriate number of factors to be extracted. A combination of the latent root criterion and the scree plot criterion was used to make this decision. When the items in this sub-scale were analyzed, one factor was extracted with an eigenvalue of 2.50. This factor accounted for 50% of the variance in the sub-scale. In addition, all the factor loadings for all of the items were acceptable with values ranging from .79 to .56 (See Table 7).

Based on the results of the factor analysis, the items in the “Meeting Logistics” sub-scale were combined into a single score defined as the mean of the five sub-scale items. The “Meeting Logistics” scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 3.00 to a high of 6.00 with a mean of 5.09 ($SD= .67$). According to the interpretive scale established by the researcher, this overall “Meeting Logistics” score was classified in the “Agree” category.
Table 6: Meeting Logistics of 4-H Advisory Committee as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Logistics item</th>
<th>n(^a)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The meeting was held at an accessible location</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The refreshments provided at the meeting(s) were adequate.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting time was scheduled at a convenient time for the committee</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The day of week the meeting(s) were held fit my schedule.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of meetings held during the year were adequate.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Response based on Likert-type scale with values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Interpretive scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.

\(^a\)Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

Table 7: Factor loadings for the one factor solution of the meeting logistic items as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Logistics</th>
<th>Factor 1(^a) Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The meeting was held at an accessible location.</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting was scheduled at a convenient time for the committee</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The refreshments provided at the meeting(s) were adequate.</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The day of week the meeting(s) were held fit my schedule.</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of meeting(s) held during the year were adequate.</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Eigenvalue = 2.50, Percent of Variance Explained = 50.0

Advisory Meeting Planning and Preparation

The 4-H Youth Development professionals were asked to respond to items on the instrument designed to determine their perception as it relates to the planning and
preparation aspects of the 4-H advisory committee meeting. Study participants were asked to respond to the items in the sub-scale using a six point Likert-type scale with values as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Of the 14 items included in the planning and preparation scale, the item which had the highest mean rating by the responding 4-H youth development professionals was “A copy of the agenda was provided to participants when they arrived for the meeting(s)” (mean = 5.55, SD= .67). Based on the interpretive scale established by the researcher, the rating of this item was classified in the “Strongly Agree” category. In fact, this was the only item in the “Strongly Agree” category. A mean score of 3.44 (SD= 1.58) was indicated on the item “The membership of the committee has representatives from other youth groups (Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother, Big Sister, etc…).” This was the lowest score recorded and was interpreted as “Mildly Disagree.” Complete listings of all of the scores and interpretations on the meeting planning and preparation sub-scale are reported in Table 8.

Table 8: Planning and preparation for 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning and Preparation Item</th>
<th>n²</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A copy of the agenda was provided to participants when they arrived for the meeting(s).</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership of the committee has youth involvement.</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goals of the advisory committee were clearly defined.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members were prepared to contribute through communication with 4-H agents.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
| The membership of the committee represents all segments of the parish population. (ethnic background, parts of parish, age, gender, etc…) | 103 | 4.82 | 1.12 | Agree |
| Members were prepared to contribute through their prior knowledge of 4-H. | 104 | 4.72 | 1.14 | Agree |
| The agenda for the meeting was provided before the meeting. (mail, e-mail or other form of communication) | 103 | 4.69 | 1.28 | Agree |
| The leadership in conducting the meeting was provided by 4-H agent(s). | 103 | 4.54 | 1.39 | Agree |
| The membership is rotational. (members serve specific terms and are replaced when term expires) | 104 | 4.52 | 1.30 | Agree |
| Members were prepared to contribute through communication with other 4-H advisory committee members. | 104 | 4.32 | 1.20 | Mildly Agree |
| Member were encouraged to be aware of current youth issues in their parish prior to the meeting. | 104 | 4.31 | 1.32 | Mildly Agree |
| The leadership in conducting the meeting was provided by an advisory committee member identified as the chairman of the committee. | 104 | 3.93 | 1.60 | Mildly Agree |
| Members were encouraged to collect information concerning youth issues in their parish prior to the meeting to prepare for discussion during the meeting. | 104 | 3.82 | 1.54 | Mildly Agree |
| The membership of the committee has representatives from other youth groups. (Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother, Big Sister, etc…) | 104 | 3.44 | 1.58 | Mildly Disagree |

*Note.* Response based on Likert-type scale with values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Interpretive scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.

*aNumber of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.*
To further examine the information derived from the responses to the “Meeting Planning and Preparation” sub-scale, a factor analysis was conducted with the scale items to determine if underlying constructs existed in the sub-scale. The method used was the principal components analysis with a varimax rotation. Prior to interpreting the factor analysis, the researcher first examined the anti-image correlation matrix to determine the appropriateness of applying factor analysis to the sub-scale data. This was accomplished by examination of the measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) for each of the individual items in the scale. According to Hair et al. (1998) if the MSA’s are above .50, factor analysis is an appropriate procedure for use with the data. When the MSA’s were examined for the items in the “Meeting Planning and Preparation” sub-scale, one item (“The leadership in conducting the meeting was provided by the 4-H agent(s)”) was found to have an MSA of .45 which is below the minimum acceptable level of .50. Therefore this item was removed from the sub-scale prior to conducting the factor analysis. When the factor analysis was completed without this item, the MSA’s ranged from .88 to .62 indicating that the factor analysis was appropriate for use with this revised scale.

The first step in conducting the factor analysis was to determine the optimum number of factors to be extracted. This was accomplished using a combination of the latent root criterion and the scree plot criterion. Based on these criteria, three potential solutions were examined including the three-factor solution, the two-factor solution and the one-factor solution. When these three potential solutions were examined, the most appropriate number of factors was determined to be two. This decision was based on the adequacy of the factor loadings in this solution (all were above .45), the limited number
of substantial cross-loadings in this solution (there were only two cross-loadings above .30 in this solution), and the fit of the items grouped together in this solution. The results of the two-factor solution are presented in Table 9. These two factors were labeled by the researcher as “Organization for the meeting” and “Involvement of membership.” Items included in the first factor (“Organization for the Meeting”) related to membership makeup, preparation for the meeting by the 4-H youth development professional, and establishment of clearly defined goals of the advisory committee. The loadings for this factor ranged from .76 to .58 and explained 36.7% of the variance in the scale. Loadings for the second factor (“Involvement of Membership”) ranged from .84 to .46.

Table 9: Factor loadings for the two-factor solution of the planning and preparation items as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization for the Meeting</th>
<th>Factor 1 (^a) Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 2 (^b) Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member were prepared to contribute through prior knowledge of 4-H.</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership of the committee has youth involvement.</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A copy of the agenda was provided to participants when they arrived for the meeting(s).</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership is rotational (member serves specific term and are replaced when their term expires).</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members were prepared to contribute through communication with 4-H agents.</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The agenda for meeting was provided before the meeting (mail, e-mail or other form of communication).</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership of the committee represents all segments of the parish population (ethnic background, parts of parish, age, gender, etc…).</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goals of the advisory committee were clearly defined.</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued.
Involvement of Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 1 Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 2 Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Scores were computed for each of the two identified factors in the sub-scale for each of the study participants. These scores were identified as the mean of the items included in each of the factors. For the first factor “Organization for the meeting” the individual subject mean scores ranged from a low of 2.67 to a high of 6.00 with the overall mean score of 4.86 (SD = .72). The interpretation for the overall mean of this factor utilizing the interpretive scale was “Agree.” The second factor labeled “Involvement of membership” had a range of individual subject mean scores from a low of 1.00 to a high of 6.00. The overall mean for this factor was 3.88 (SD = 1.09) which was interpreted using the researcher established interpretive scale as “Mildly Agree.”

Note: Factor cross loading values less than .10 were excluded from the table.

Factor 1
- Loadings
- Eigenvalue = 4.77, Percent of Variance Explained = 36.7

Factor 2
- Loadings
- Eigenvalue = 1.67, Percent of Variance Explained = 12.8

Members were encouraged to collect information concerning youth issues in their parish prior to the meeting to prepare for discussion during the meeting.

Members were encouraged to be aware of current youth issues in their parish prior to the meeting.

The membership of the committee has representatives from other youth groups (Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother, Big Sister, etc…).

The leadership in conducting meeting was provided by an advisory committee member identified as the chairman of the committee.

Members were prepared to contribute through communication with other 4-H advisory committee members.
Advisory Meeting Process

Measuring 4-H Youth Development professionals’ perception of the effectiveness of the process utilized at parish 4-H advisory meetings was determined within the second objective. Study participants were asked to respond to the items in the “Meeting Process” sub-scale using a six point Likert-type scale with values as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. The majority of the items in this scale were worded such that the more positive response regarding the advisory meeting process was indicated by the assignment of a higher value (higher level of agreement) on the response scale. However, three of the items in the scale were worded such that a higher level of disagreement indicated a more positive response. For example, agreement with the item “One member of the group dominated the discussion” would be indicative of a negative perception of the effectiveness of the advisory committee process, while disagreement with this item would indicate a positive response regarding the advisory process. The other two items which were worded in this reverse direction included: “The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities)” and “Each member was not given a chance to participate.” For these three items, the values that were assigned to the study participants’ responses were: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Mildly Agree, 4 = Mildly Disagree, 5 = Disagree, and 6 = Strongly Disagree. Therefore, when the summated scale scores were computed in subsequent data analyses, all of the positive responses were assigned the higher values and the negative responses the lower values. Additionally, a corresponding reverse interpretive scale was established by the researcher as follows: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly
Agree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Agree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Agree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Disagree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Disagree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Disagree.

Item 12 (Mean = 4.46, SD= 1.38) was reverse coded and stated that, “One member of the group dominated the discussion.” Using the researcher established interpretive scale this item was classified as “Mildly Disagree.” Item 14 (Mean = 3.30, SD= 1.41) was reverse coded and stated, “The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities).” Using the researcher established interpretive scale this item was classified as “Mildly Agree.” Item 11 (Mean = 4.95, SD= 1.45) was reverse coded and stated, “Each member was not given a chance to participate.” Using the researcher established interpretive scale this item was classified as “Disagree.” The item that 4-H Youth Development professionals had the highest level of agreement in the process utilized at the parish 4-H advisory committee meetings was “The group listened to each member when they spoke” (mean = 5.21, SD= .89). A complete list of the process section scores can be found in Table 10.

Table 10: Advisory Meeting Process utilized at parish 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advisory meeting process</th>
<th>n²</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The group listened to each member when they spoke.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every member’s opinion was taken seriously and meant something.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the meeting every member was made to feel part of group.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The group was open.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The group was trusting.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
The agenda was followed closely.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The agenda was followed closely.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When decisions were made the entire group participated.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each member was not given a chance to participate.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All members felt like a part of the group.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting(s) focused on identifying youth needs in the parish.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The overall meeting was effective.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goals that were established in the meeting were attainable.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leader of group was effective in conducting the meeting.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each member’s talents were utilized in the group.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One member of the group dominated the discussion.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>Mildly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input of member was sought to develop agenda.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities).</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Response based on Likert-type scale with values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Interpretive scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.

Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

Reverse coded items, 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Mildly Agree, 4 = Mildly Disagree, 5 = Disagree, 6 = Strongly Disagree. Interpretive Scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Agree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Agree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Agree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Disagree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Disagree; 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Disagree
To further examine the information derived from the “Meeting Process” sub-scale, a factor analysis was conducted. Prior to interpreting the factor analysis, the researcher first examined the anti-image correlation matrix to determine the appropriateness of applying factor analysis to the data set. This was accomplished by examination of the measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) for each of the individual items in the scale. According to Hair et al. (1998) if the MSA’s are above .50, factor analysis is an appropriate procedure for use with the data. When the MSA’s were examined for the items in the “Meeting Process” sub-scale, the item “The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities)” was found to have an MSA of .29 which is well below the minimum acceptable level of .50. Therefore this item was removed from the sub-scale prior to conducting the factor analysis. When the factor analysis was completed without this item, the MSA’s ranged from .94 to .59 indicating that the factor analysis was appropriate for use with this revised scale.

The first step in conducting the factor analysis was to determine the optimum number of factors to be extracted. This was accomplished using a combination of the latent root criterion and the scree plot criterion. Based on these criteria, four potential solutions were examined including the four-factor solution, the three-factor solution, the two-factor solution, and the one-factor solution. When these four potential solutions were examined, the most appropriate number of factors was determined to be one. This decision was based on the adequacy of the factor loadings for most of the items in this solution, and the fit of the items grouped together in this solution. The one-factor solution explained 45.8% of the variance in the sub-scale. The highest loaded item had a value of .82 and the lowest value of the item included had a value of .49. The eigenvalue
of the one-factor solution was 7.78. The factor loadings for the one factor solution, advisory meeting process, are presented in Table 11.

Based on a minimum loading of at least .40 two of the items were not included in the one-factor solution. The item “input of membership was sought to develop the agenda” was eliminated because of a loading of .39. “Each member was not given a chance to participate” was eliminated because of a loading value of .25. The one-factor “Meeting Process” mean scores were computed for each study participant in this factor sub-scale. The subject mean scores included in the factor ranged from a low of 2.57 to a high of 6.00. An overall study participant’ mean score of the factor was computed at 4.90 (SD= .75). Utilizing the interpretive scale established the rating was “Agree.”

Table 11: Factor loadings for one-factor solution of the advisory meeting process items as perceived by LSU AgCenter 4-H Youth Development Professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Process Item</th>
<th>Factor 1ª Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The overall meeting was effective.</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every member’s opinion was taken seriously and meant something.</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The group was trusting.</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The group was open.</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the meeting every member was made to feel part of the group.</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The group listened to each member when they spoke.</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each member’s talents were utilized in the group.</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All members felt like a part of the group.</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goals that were established in the meeting were attainable.</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When decisions were made the entire group participated.</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
The agenda was followed closely.  
The meeting(s) focused on identifying youth needs in the parish.  
The leader of the group was effective in conducting the meeting.  
One member of the group dominated the discussion.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The agenda was followed closely.</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting(s) focused on identifying youth needs in the parish.</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leader of the group was effective in conducting the meeting.</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One member of the group dominated the discussion.</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Eigenvalue = 7.78, Percent Variance Explained = 45.8

**Parish 4-H Program Development**

Parish 4-H programming involves input from a variety of sources. Determining the 4-H youth development professionals’ perceptions regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development) was contained within the second objective. Twenty-four items were included in this sub-scale and respondents indicated their level of agreement utilizing a six point Likert-type scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. The item with which the 4-H youth development professionals had the highest level of agreement (mean = 5.00, SD = 1.15) was “4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by the parish 4-H agents.” The item with the lowest level of agreement (mean = 3.28, SD = 1.42) was “4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H state staff.” Subsequently in this research report, this sub-scale will be operationally referred to as Parish 4-H Program Development. A complete list of the items level of agreement with the ratings by parish 4-H youth development professionals on the perceptions of Parish 4-H Program Development items presented in Table 12.
Table 12: Parish 4-H Program Development items conducted as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish 4-H Program Development Items</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by the parish 4-H agents.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from the advisory committee was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to implement the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from the advisory committee was used to plan the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from the advisory committee was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from the advisory committee members was used to implement the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by the advisory committee.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to plan the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to prioritize parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers recommended by the parish 4-H agents.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers recommended by the advisory committee.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
Input from 4-H state staff was used to plan parish 4-H program.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Input from regional 4-H staff was used to plan parish 4-H program.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by regional 4-H staff.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Input from 4-H regional staff was used to implement parish 4-H program.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Input from 4-H state staff was used to implement parish 4-H program.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Input from 4-H state staff was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Input from 4-H regional staff was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Input from 4-H regional staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Input from 4-H state staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H regional staff.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by 4-H state staff.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H state staff.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mildly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Response based on Likert-type scale with values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Interpretive scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.

aNumber of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.
In order to further examine the information derived from the responses to the “Parish 4-H Program Development” sub-scale, a factor analysis was conducted with the scale items to determine if underlying constructs existed in the sub-scale. This sub-scale involved the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program. The analysis procedure used was principal components analysis with a varimax rotation. Before interpreting the factor analysis, the researcher first examined the anti-image correlation matrix to determine the appropriateness of applying factor analysis to the sub-scale data. This was accomplished by examination of the measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) for each of the individual items in the scale. According to Hair et al. (1998), if the MSA’s are above .50, factor analysis is an appropriate procedure for this data. When this data was examined the MSA’s for the items in the sub-scale ranged from .88 to .68.

The first step in conducting the factor analysis was to determine the optimum number of factors to be extracted. This was accomplished by using a combination of the latent root criterion and the scree plot criterion. Based on these criteria, four potential solutions were examined including the three-factor solution, the four-factor solution, the five-factor solution, and the six-factor solution. When these four potential solutions were examined, the most appropriate number of factors was determined to be three. This decision was based on the adequacy of the factor loadings in this solution (all were above .40), the limited number of substantial cross-loadings in this solution (there were only six cross-loadings above .30 in this solution), and the fit of the items grouped together in this solution. The three factors extracted from the sub-scale were labeled by the researcher
as, “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agents.”

In carefully examining the cross-loadings that existed in the selected three-factor solution, the researcher identified two items that clearly had a better conceptual fit with a factor other than the one with the highest loading. In both of these instances, the item had a cross-loading that met the criteria for inclusion with the second highest factor. For example, the item, “4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by the advisory committee” initially loaded on the factor, “Input Parish 4-H Agents” with a loading of .44. However, this item clearly seemed to fit better conceptually with the factor, “Input 4-H Advisory Committee.” Since the loading of this item with the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” factor was .42 and the conceptual fit was better, the researcher moved the item to the secondary loaded factor. The same situation existed for the item “4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers recommended by parish 4-H agents.” The initial loading of this item was with the factor, “Input 4-H Advisory Committee;” however, since the loading on the factor “Input Parish 4-H Agents” also met the established criteria (.40 or greater) and it fit conceptually better with this factor, the researcher moved the item to the secondary loading. It is worth noting that for both of these items, the item moved was the item with the lowest loading among the initial loadings.

“Input from regional staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program” had the highest loading, .78, in the first factor, “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff.” The lowest loading in this factor was “Input from 4-H state staff was used to plan the parish 4-H
program,” .70. The first factor “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff” accounted for 34.3% of the variance.

The second factor, “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” had loadings that ranged from a high of .88 for the item “Input from advisory committee was used to plan the parish 4-H program” to a low of .42 for the item “4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by the advisory committee.” Factor two explained 13.6% of the variance.

The highest loading of .83 for the item “Input from parish agents was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program” was computed in factor three, “Input Parish 4-H Agents.” The lowest loading in this factor was .40 and the item with this loading was “4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers recommended by parish 4-H agents.” Factor three explained 9.9% of the variance.

Results of the three-factor solution factor analysis are presented in Table 13.

The mean scores for the first factor “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff” were computed for the study participants. An overall subject mean score of 3.70 (SD= .96) was computed for the first factor “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff.” According to the interpretive scale used in the study this equated to “Mildly Agree.” The range of means for this factor was from a low of 1.50 to a high of 5.67. The “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” factor had mean scores that ranged from a low of 1.50 to a high of 6.00 with the overall subject mean equaling 4.70 (SD= .92). According to the interpretive scale this mean value equaled a classification of “Agree.” The third factor “Input Parish 4-H Agents” had a subject mean score of 4.65 (SD= .81). The range of subject means was a low of 1.50 to a high of 6.00. This factor had an interpretive rating classified as “Agree.” As established ‘a priori’ the dependent variable(s) in the study would be derived from the
level of agreement ratings from the Parish 4-H Program Development items as perceived by the 4-H youth development professionals. According to the factor analysis three dependent variables were determined appropriate, “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agents.”

Table 13: Factor loadings for three-factor solution of the Parish 4-H Program Development items as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</th>
<th>Factor 1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 2&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 3&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt; Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H regional staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H regional staff was used to implement the parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H regional staff was used to plan the parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H state staff</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H regional staff</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H state staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H state staff was used to plan parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>-.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H state staff was used to implement parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>-.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from state staff was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>-.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H regional staff was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by 4-H state staff
4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by 4-H regional staff

### Input 4-H Advisory Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 1(^a) Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 2(^b) Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 3(^c) Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input from advisory committee was used to plan parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from advisory committee was used to prioritize parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from advisory committee members was used to implement parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from advisory committee was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by advisory committee</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by the advisory committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Input Parish 4-H agents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 1(^a) Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 2(^b) Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 3(^c) Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to prioritize parish 4-H program</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to plan parish 4-H program</td>
<td></td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to implement parish 4-H program</td>
<td></td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by parish 4-H agents</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
Input from parish 4-H agents was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program  | .29 | .50
4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers recommended by parish 4-H agents | .40

Note. Factor cross loading values less than .10 were excluded from the table.

*Eigenvalue = 8.23, Percent of Variance Explained = 34.3
bEigenvalue = 3.25, Percent of Variance Explained = 13.6
cEigenvalue = 2.39, Percent of Variance Explained = 9.9

**Third Objective**

Objective three was to determine if the perceptions of 4-H youth development professionals regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development) are influenced by each of the following perceptual measures: (meeting logistics, planning and preparation, and meeting process) and demographic characteristics: (highest level of education completed, years served as 4-H youth development professional, number of training sessions attended relative to advisory committee responsibilities, whether or not their specific job responsibilities regarding advisory committees were included in their most recent job description, the number of advisory committee meetings conducted by the professional). The perceptions of 4-H youth development professionals regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development) was defined as the factor scores derived from the 4-H youth development professionals’ responses to the items included in the instrument sub-scale which addressed these areas. As identified in the findings for Objective two of the study, three factors were identified in the scale and were labeled by the researcher as “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agents.” To accomplish this objective, the relationship between
each of the perceptual and each of the specified demographic measures and these three outcome measures was examined.

To determine if a relationship exists between Parish 4-H Program Development, which included three factor scores (“Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agent”) and the perception of the 4-H youth development professionals regarding meeting logistics, Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated. The highest correlation coefficient identified was with the program development factor “Input from 4-H Advisory Committee” \( (r = .602, p < .001) \). The remaining two program development factors were also significantly correlated with the perceptions of meeting logistics. The correlation coefficients between the perceptions of the advisory committee meeting logistics and program development factor scores are presented in Table 14.

**Table 14: Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and 4-H youth development professionals’ perceptions of meeting logistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development Factors</th>
<th>( r )</th>
<th>( n^a )</th>
<th>( p \ )</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.602</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.490</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.288</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).  

\(^a\)Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

The second perceptual measure which was examined for relationships with the perceptions of the 4-H youth development professionals regarding the Parish 4-H Program Development sub-scale factors, were the two factor scores of the planning and preparation sub-scale. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated
between the two planning and preparation factor scores and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores to accomplish this objective.

When the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores were correlated with the first planning and preparation factor score (Organization for the meeting) all of the computed coefficients were significant. The highest correlation ($r = .614, p < .001$) with the Organization for the meeting score was with the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” Parish 4-H Program Development score. This correlation was described using Davis’ (1971) descriptors as a substantial association. The nature of this relationship is that higher scores on the “Organization for the Meeting” factor (which indicates that the 4-H youth development professionals had more positive perceptions regarding the concept being measured) tended to be associated with higher scores on the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” Parish 4-H Program Development score (also indicating that they had more positive perceptions regarding the concepts being measured). All three correlations identified were in the same direction (See Table 15).

Table 15: Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and 4-H youth development professionals’ perception of planning and preparation factor organization for the meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development Factors</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$n^a$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.614</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.454</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.301</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

$^a$Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

When the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores were correlated with the second planning and preparation factor score (Involvement of membership) two
of the computed coefficients were significant. The highest correlation ($r = .482, p < .001$) with the “Involvement of membership” score was with the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” Parish 4-H Program Development score. This correlation was described using the Davis’ (1971) descriptors as a moderate association. The nature of this relationship is that higher scores on the “Involvement of membership” factor (which indicates that the 4-H youth development professionals had more positive perceptions regarding the concept being measured) tended to be associated with higher scores on the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” Parish 4-H Program Development score (also indicating that they had more positive perceptions regarding the concepts being measured). All three correlations were in the same direction but one was not significant. The lowest correlation ($r = .111, p = .260$) with the “Involvement of membership” score was with “Input Parish 4-H Agent” Parish 4-H Program Development score. This correlation was described using the Davis’ (1971) descriptors as a low association. The correlations are presented in Table 16.

Table 16: Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and 4-H youth development professionals perception of the planning and preparation factor involvement of membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development Factors</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$n^a$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.482</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.462</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

$^a$Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

The third perceptual measure that was examined for relationships with the perceptions of the 4-H youth development professionals regarding the Parish 4-H
Program Development sub-scale factors was the one-factor score of the advisory meeting process sub-scale. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated between the meeting process factor score and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores to accomplish this objective.

When the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores were correlated with the meeting process factor score all of the computed coefficients were significant. Using Davis’ (1971) descriptors a substantial correlation was recorded between the Parish 4-H Program Development factor “Input from 4-H Advisory Committee” and the “Meeting Process” factor ($r = .605, p < .001$). The nature of this relationship is that higher scores on the “Meeting Process” factor score (which indicates that the 4-H youth development professionals had more positive perceptions regarding the concept being measured) tended to be associated with higher scores on the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” Parish 4-H Program Development score (also indicating that they had more positive perceptions regarding the concepts being measured). All three correlations identified were in the same direction. The correlations between “Meeting Process” factor scores and the Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores are presented in Table 17.

Table 17: Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and 4-H youth development professionals perception of the advisory meeting process factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development Factors</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$n^a$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.602</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.285</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

*aNumber of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.*
The first demographic characteristic included in the analysis was “Highest level of education completed.” To determine if there was a relationship between highest level of education completed by the 4-H youth development professionals and the factor scores of the perceptions regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development), Kendall’s tau correlation coefficients were computed. When these correlations were examined, no significant relationship was found between the factor scores and the highest level of education completed (see Table 18).

**Table 18: Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and education level of 4-H youth development professionals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development Factors</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n^a</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>.458</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>.610</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>.799</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

*a*Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

The second demographic factor examined for relationships with the perceptions of 4-H youth development professionals regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development) factor scores, was the number of years served as a 4-H youth development professional. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated to measure this relationship. No significant relationship was found between years served as a 4-H youth development professional and the factor scores (see Table 19).
Table 19: Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and years served as 4-H youth development professional

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>-.201</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.701</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.734</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

However, when Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated between the number of training sessions attended relative to advisory committees and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores, two of the computed coefficients were determined to be statistically significant. The factor score, “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” had the highest association ($r = .202, p = .045$) with the number of training sessions attended. This association was described using Davis’ descriptors (1971) as a “low” association. The nature of the association was such that 4-H youth development professionals who indicated that they had attended more training sessions on the advisory process in the past three years tended to have higher levels of agreement regarding the use of input from advisory committee members in the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program. A significant relationship ($r = .197, p = .05$) was determined between the factor “Input Parish 4-H Agent” and number of training sessions attended related to advisory committees. The interpretation according to Davis’ (1971) descriptors was a low correlation. (See Table 20).
Table 20: Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and number of training sessions attended as reported by 4-H youth development professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n^</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.197</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

^Number of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.

When the analysis was conducted to determine if a relationship existed between the Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and whether or not the job responsibilities relative to advisory committees were included on the 4-H youth development professional’s most recent job description, the analysis that was determined to be the most appropriate was the independent t-test comparing each of the three factor scores by whether or not the participant indicated that their most recent job description included their advisory committee responsibilities. This analysis was selected primarily due to the ease of interpretation of this procedure as compared to that of point biserial correlation coefficients. When the analyses were conducted, no differences were found in the factor scores for “Input 4-H Regional and State 4-H Staff” (t_{95} = 1.50, p= .138) and “Input Parish 4-H Agent” (t_{20} = 1.79, p= .088). Due to the violation of the homogeneity of variances the separate variance estimate was used in calculating the t-test value. This greatly reduced the degrees of freedom for the factor “Input Parish 4-H Agent.” However, a significant difference was found between the 4-H youth development professionals who indicated that their advisory committee responsibilities were included on their most recent job description and those who indicated that it was not included on
their job description in their responses to the items in the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” Parish 4-H Program Development factor ($t_{95} = 3.84, p < .001$). The mean “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” score for individuals who indicated that their advisory committee responsibilities were included on their most recent job description ($n = 79$) was significantly higher (mean = 4.86, $SD = .835$) than the mean for those who indicated that their advisory committee responsibilities were not included on their most recent job description ($n = 19$, mean = 3.98, $SD = 1.03$).

To determine if a relationship exists between Parish 4-H Program Development three factor scores (“Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agent”) and the number of advisory committee meetings planned and conducted by the 4-H youth development professional, Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated. The results indicated that there was no significant relationship identified. Results of these correlation coefficients are listed in Table 21.

**Table 21: Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and number of advisory committees meetings conducted as reported by 4-H youth development professionals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$n^a$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>.425</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>.572</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>-.043</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>.671</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

*aNumber of the 104 total study participants who responded to this item.*
Fourth Objective

The fourth objective of the study was to describe members of parish 4-H advisory committees in Louisiana on selected demographic characteristics. One of these characteristics was ethnic background. Respondents were asked to select the ethnic background that applied to them from the options provided which included: “White,” “Black,” “Hispanic,” “American Indian,” “Asian,” and “Other (please specify).” The ethnicity which was selected by the largest number of respondents was “White” (n = 105, 76.1%). The next most frequently selected ethnicity was “Black” (n = 29, 21.0%). Only one respondent (.7%) selected “Hispanic” and one (.7%) selected American Indian. Two (1.4%) selected the “Other” category of ethnicity. However, even though the respondents were asked to specify their ethnicity if they responded “Other,” one individual did not comply with this request. One individual indicated that they were Belgian American. Four of the study participants chose not to respond to this item.

Participants were asked, “What is your gender”? In response to this question, 34 (24.6%) indicated they were male and 104 (75.4%) responded that they were female. Four study participants chose not to respond to this question.

Respondents in the study were requested to check the age category that applied to them. The category selected most frequently was “36-45,” by 40 (29.0%) study participants. Additionally, 37 respondents (26.8%) indicated that their age was in the “46-55” category. Therefore, the majority of respondents (n = 77, 55.8%) reported that they were between the ages of 36 and 55. The age category that was reported by the smallest number of respondents (n = 2, 1.4%) was “19-25” (See Table 22).
Table 22: Age of parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 19</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 56</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>138(^a)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Number of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item.

The parish 4-H advisory committee members were asked to indicate the highest level of education that they had attained. The most frequently checked educational level attained was “High School Diploma” (n = 30, 21.6%). Additionally, 23 (16.5%) indicated that their highest level of education was “Less Than High School” (See Table 23).

Table 23: Educational level attained by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate degree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than college bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College master’s degree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parish 4-H advisory committee members were questioned as to whether they had been a member of the 4-H organization. More than three-fourths (n = 107, 75.9%) indicated that they were/had been a member of the 4-H organization, while 34 (24.1%) reported they were not/had not been a member of the organization. One study participant did not respond to this item.

Those individuals who indicated that they were/had been a member of the organization were also asked to indicate the number of years they were/had been enrolled in 4-H. All 107 of the respondents reported a number of years of 4-H membership. However, four of the respondents reported a number of years of 4-H membership that was substantially outside of the maximum years of membership available to youth. Two individuals indicated that they were members for 20 years, while one reported 25 years, and one reported 33 years. Since these data were well beyond the possible range of years of membership, these responses were recorded as missing data to avoid the obvious measurement error. When the responses from the other 103 respondents were examined regarding years of membership, the values ranged from 1 to 13 with a mean value of 6.02 (SD= 2.74). When these data were examined in response categories, 41 (39.8%) of the study participants indicated they were members between seven and nine years. Respondents who indicated they were members for 10 years or more totaled 7 (6.8%) (See Table 24).
Table 24: Years as former 4-H member as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years as 4-H member</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103a</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Mean years as 4-H member = 6.02, SD= 2.74, Range 1-13

*Thirty-four study participants indicated they had not been a 4-H member, 4 respondents provided data that was beyond the possible range of measurement, and 1 study participant did not respond to this item.

Study participants were asked “Have you served as a volunteer for 4-H activities in the past?” A majority of the respondents (n = 99, 83.9%) indicated that they had volunteered, whereas only 19 (16.1%) responded they had not. Twenty-four study participants did not respond to this item.

Those respondents who indicated that they had volunteered for 4-H activities were also asked to indicate how many times they volunteered in the past three years. Every respondent (99) that indicated they had volunteered for activities reported the number of times they had volunteered. However, two of the responses were eliminated due to the large number reported. One reported volunteering 300 times for 4-H activities, and another reported volunteering 100 times for 4-H activities in the past three years. The number of times that a person could volunteer over a three-year period would not be equivalent to 300. Additionally, parishes typically would not conduct 100 different activities over a three-year period that would allow a person an opportunity to volunteer.
Therefore, these responses were eliminated from the data. The mean number of times respondents reported volunteering for 4-H activities was 6.96 (SD= 7.09). The range of number of times volunteered was 1 to 45. Respondents who indicated they volunteered one to three times for 4-H activities in the past three years were 35 (36.1%). Eleven (11.3%) study participants volunteered more than 13 times for 4-H activities in the past three years (See Table 25).

Table 25: Number of times volunteered for 4-H activities in past three years as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteered Number of times</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 or more</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>97a</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Mean times volunteered = 6.96, SD= 7.09, Range 1-45

aNineteen study participants indicated that they had not volunteered for 4-H activities in the past, 2 responses were eliminated as extreme outliers, and 24 study respondents did not respond to this item

Parish 4-H advisory committee members were asked if they served as a 4-H club or organizational leader. The number of study participants reporting they served as a 4-H club or organizational leader was 72 (51.1%). Sixty-nine (48.9%) reported that they had not served as a 4-H club or organizational leader. One participant did not report on this item. Additionally, those participants who indicated that they had served as a 4-H club or organizational leader were asked to report how many years they served as a 4-H club or
organizational leader. Seven of the 72 respondents who reported they served as a 4-H club or organizational leader did not indicate number of years served.

Of those respondents reporting on the number of years served as 4-H club or organizational leader the mean was 7.36 ($SD = 7.36$). The range of years served as reported by the respondents was a low of one year and a high of 39 years. Eight (12.3%) of the respondents reported that they had served as a 4-H club or organizational leader for 16 years or more. The majority of organizational leaders reported that they had served one to six years ($n = 46, 70.8\%$) (See Table 26).

**Table 26: Number of years serving as club or organization leader as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years served as 4-H Club or organizational leader</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 or more</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>65$^a$</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Mean number of years = 7.36, $SD = 7.36$, Range 1-39

$^a$Sixty-nine study participants indicated that were not club or organization leaders, 1 study respondent did not respond to this item, and seven respondents that indicated they were organizational or club leaders did not indicate number of years

Parish 4-H advisory committee members were asked to indicate how many years they had served as an advisory committee member. The mean number of years served as an advisory committee member was 3.17 ($SD = 3.17$). The minimum number of years served was one and the maximum number of years served was 17. Eighty-one (61.4%)
of the study participants reported they served either one or two years. Respondents reporting they had served seven years or more were 15 (11.4%) (See Table 27).

“How many parish 4-H advisory meetings have you attended in the past two years,” was also asked of study participants. The response reported the most frequently was two meetings (n = 43, 32.8%). The next most frequently reported response was one meeting (n = 30, 22.9%). A complete listing of responses can be found in Table 28.

Table 27: Number of years parish 4-H advisory committee members reported serving on advisory committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years served on Parish 4-H Advisory Committee</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 or more</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>132a</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Mean number of years = 3.17, SD= 3.17, Range 1-17

Study participants were asked to identify how they were contacted to participate in the advisory process. They were instructed to select all possible contact methods that applied to them. The choices included “Phone,” “Letter,” “e-mail,” “Personal visit,” and “Other please specify.” The contact method identified by the largest number of participants was “Letter,” (n = 122, 87.8%). “Phone” was the next most frequently identified contact method by 82 (59.0%), of the study participants. “Other” was selected by only six (4.3%) of the respondents, but one failed to specify what other method was used. Two of the six that selected “other” indicated that a “teacher” contacted them to participate in the advisory process. One indicated they were contacted
by a “co-worker,” one was contacted by “other 4-Hers,” and one was contacted by “another (4-H) club leader” to participate in the advisory process. Three respondents chose not to respond to this item. A complete listing of responses can be found in Table 29.

Table 28: Number of advisory committee meetings attended in the last two years as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Advisory Committee meetings attended</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or more</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>131a</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Mean number of meetings = 2.85, SD= 2.21  
aNumber of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item.

Table 29: Method of contact as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact method</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Visit</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other b</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Respondents were instructed to check all that apply  
aNumber of the 139 study participants who selected this contact method  
bTwo of the six that selected other indicated a “teacher,” one indicated a “co-worker,” one “other 4-Hers,” and one was contacted by “another (4-H) club leader”
Study participants were also asked to identify the individuals who had an influence on their decision to participate as an advisory committee member. They were provided with the following response options and asked to check all that applied to them: “4-H Extension Youth Development Agent,” “Parish Chairman,” “Non-extension person,” “Other Extension Employee,” “Child or grandchild is involved in the 4-H program,” and “Other (please specify).” A total of 139 of the 142 study participants provided usable data in response to this item. The response selected by the largest number of respondents was “4-H Extension Youth Development Agent” ($n = 122$, 87.8%). This was the only response option that was selected by a majority of the participants. The response that was selected by the second largest group of participants was “Child or grandchild is involved in the 4-H program” ($n = 44$, 31.7%). The least frequently selected option ($n = 4$, 2.9%) was “Non-extension person.” Fifteen (10.8%) of the respondents indicated that an “Other” individual influenced them to participate as an advisory committee member. These respondents were also asked to specify that “Other” individual. Four of the 15 specifying an “Other” response indicated that a “parent” influenced their decision to participate as an advisory committee member. One person that reported “Other” as a category did not specify the other influence. One of each of the remaining nine respondents selecting “Other” as a category indicated the following: “principle,” “member,” “benefits gained from 4-H as a 4-Her,” “friend,” “Ag teacher and FFA Advisor,” “4-H program involved with community projects,” “Ms. Pam,” “youth group,” and “interest” as influencing their decision to participate as an advisory committee member. (See Table 30).
Table 30: Individual that influenced decision to participate on the parish 4-H advisory committee as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuals that influenced decision to participate</th>
<th>n(^a)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-H Extension Youth Development Agent</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child or grandchild involved in the 4-H program</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Extension Employee</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Chairman</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other(^b)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Extension person</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Respondents were instructed to check all that apply.

\(^a\)Number of the 139 study participants who selected these individuals.

\(^b\)Four indicated “parent,” one person did not specify the other influence, “principle,” “member,” “benefits gained from 4-H as a 4-Her,” “friend,” “Ag teacher and FFA Advisor,” “4-H program involved with community projects,” “Ms. Pam,” “youth group,” and “interest” as influencing their decision to participate as an advisory committee member.

Study participants were requested to rate their current knowledge of the 4-H youth development program. They had five selections available on an anchored scale as follows: 1 = No knowledge; 2 = Some knowledge; 3 = Moderate knowledge; 4 = Much knowledge; and 5 = Very High Knowledge. The range of responses by the study participants was a low of 2 and a high of 5. A total of 138 study participants responded with a mean score of 3.65 (SD= .84). Four respondents chose not to respond to this item.

Respondents were asked to rank the factor they perceived as having had the greatest influence on their decision to participate in the 4-H advisory process. They were instructed to rank the items “interest in helping the youth,” “interest in serving the community,” “desire to collaborate with other organizations,” and “other (please specify),” regarding the degree of influence it had on their decision to participate as a
member of their parish 4-H advisory committee (1 would indicate the highest amount of influence, 2 the next highest level, etc….). If a study participant did not rank an item it received a score of five. The item “interest in helping youth,” had the lowest mean score of 1.58 (SD = 1.22), indicating that it was ranked as the most influential factor in their decision to participate in the parish 4-H advisory committee. Of the response options provided, the item, “desire to collaborate with other organizations,” had a mean of 4.58 (SD = 1.11) (See Table 31). Twenty-one (14.8%) of the respondents indicated some type of ranking in the “other” category. Although three of the respondents ranked the other category they did not specify what other meant to them. The remaining eighteen specified other with the following information: “giving back to a great organization,” “interesting in helping the elderly,” “the honor,” “4-H member,” “child in 4-H,” “knowing that 4-H will always be a credible organization,” “interesting in putting input on 4-H events,” “willingness and desire to assist our 4-H agent,” “retired extension agent and club member,” “believe in parish 4-H program,” “love 4-H program and want to help it be successful,” “to promote values of 4-H,” “desire to further develop the 4-H program,” “belief in the outstanding program provided by 4-H for all youth,” “help our 4-H club,” “agents are wonderful people,” “love of 4-H,” and “firm believer in 4-H.”

Table 31: Item that influenced decision to participate on the parish 4-H advisory committee as reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest in helping youth</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>90.1</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in serving the community</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
Desire to collaborate with other organizations

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Number of the 142 study participants who ranked this item.

<sup>b</sup>Three of the respondents did not specify what other meant to them. The remaining eighteen specified other with the following information: “giving back to a great organization,” “interesting in helping the elderly,” “the honor,” “4-H member,” “child in 4-H,” “knowing that 4-H will always be a credible organization,” “interesting in putting input on 4-H events,” “willingness and desire to assist our 4-H agent,” “retired extension agent and club member,” “believe in parish 4-H program,” “love 4-H program and want to help it be successful,” “to promote values of 4-H,” “desire to further develop the 4-H program,” “belief in the outstanding program provided by 4-H for all youth,” “help our 4-H club,” “agents are wonderful people,” “love of 4-H,” and “firm believer in 4-H.”

Parish 4-H advisory committee members were asked if they received any training prior to the advisory meeting for their position as a 4-H advisory committee member. Only 28 (20.6%) of the study participants indicated they had received training. The number of respondents who indicated they did not receive training was 108 (79.4%). Six respondents chose not to respond to this item. Study participants were also asked if they had received a job description which detailed their responsibilities as an advisory committee member. Seventy-eight (57.4%) respondents indicated they received a job description. Fifty-eight (42.6%) reported they did not receive a job description and six study participants chose not to answer this item. If they had received a job description they were asked when they received it, either prior to the meeting or at the meeting. Fifty-four (70.1%) reported receiving the job description prior to the meeting, and 23 (29.9%) indicated they received the job description at the meeting. One study participant did not indicate where they had received their job description.
Fifth Objective

The fifth objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of parish 4-H advisory committee members on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process: (a) Meeting logistics; (b) Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting; (c) Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting; and (d) Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development). Information used to accomplish this objective was derived from responses to items in four sub-scales included on the survey instrument. Each of these sub-scales addressed one of the aspects included in the objective. Study participants were asked to respond to the items in the sub-scale using a six point Likert-type scale with values as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. To facilitate the interpretation of the information provided by the respondents, the researcher established an interpretive scale with values corresponding to response scale as follows: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.

Since one of the primary objectives of the study was to compare the perceptions of 4-H youth development professionals with those of parish 4-H advisory committee members on each of the measured aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process, it was critical that the constructs measured in each of the sub-scales from the instrument be identified consistently in the data collected from parish 4-H advisory committee members as was done in the data from the 4-H youth development
professionals. However, it was also important to confirm that the constructs measured in the data collected from the parish 4-H advisory committee members were the same as those identified in the factor analysis of the data collected from the 4-H youth development professionals. Therefore, for each of the perception sub-scales in the instrument, each of the factors identified in the data from the youth development professionals were entered into a factor analysis with the specification that the analysis extract one factor from the data. The outcomes were then examined to determine if the items included in a specific factor using the 4-H youth development professionals’ data could be confirmed to exist consistently in the data from the parish 4-H advisory committee members. To be considered adequate, all of the items included in a specific factor must have achieved a factor loading of at least .40.

**Advisory Committee Meeting Logistics**

Study participants were asked to respond to five items in the “Meeting Logistics” sub-scale. The range of the item means was from a low of 5.08 to a high of 5.49. All items were within the “Agree” interpretive scale category (See Table 32). The item which received the highest score was “The meeting was held at an accessible location” (Mean = 5.49, SD= .62). To further examine the information regarding responses to the “Meeting Logistics” sub-scale, a factor analysis (principal components with a varimax rotation) was conducted with the same five items, which were determined to be one factor in the 4-H youth development professionals’ data. These five items were entered into one factor to determine if the parish advisory committee members’ data supported the same factor structure as derived in the 4-H youth development professionals’ data. The eigenvalue of the one factor was 3.13. The item with the highest factor loadings was
“The meeting was scheduled at a convenient time,” and loading at .89. This factor accounted for 62.6% of the variance in the sub-scale. In addition, all the factor loadings for all of the items were acceptable with values ranging from .89 to .65; therefore, the factor identified in the youth development professionals’ data was confirmed in the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data (See Table 33).

Table 32: Meeting Logistics of parish 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logistics</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The meeting was held at an accessible location.</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The refreshments provided at the meeting(s) were adequate.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting time was scheduled at a convenient time for the committee.</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The day of week the meeting(s) were held fit my schedule.</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of meetings held during the year were adequate.</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Response based on Likert-type scale with values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Interpretive scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.*

*Number of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item.

Based on the results of the factor analysis, the items in the “Meeting Logistics” sub-scale were combined into a single score defined as the mean of the five scale items. The “Meeting Logistics” scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 2.20 to a high of 6.00 with a mean of 5.29 (SD= .64). According to the interpretive scale established by the researcher, this overall “Meeting Logistics” score was classified in the “Agree” category.
Table 33: Factor loadings for one factor solutions of the meeting logistic items as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Logistics</th>
<th>Factor 1 Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The meeting was scheduled at a convenient time.</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The day of week the meeting(s) were held fit my schedule.</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting was held at an accessible location.</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The refreshments provided at the meeting(s) were adequate.</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of meeting(s) held during the year were adequate.</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aEigenvalue = 3.13, Percent of Variance Explained = 62.6

Advisory Meeting Planning and Preparation

Parish 4-H advisory committee members were asked to determine their perception as it relates to the planning and preparation aspects of the 4-H advisory committee meeting. Study participants were asked to respond to the items in the sub-scale using a six point Likert-type scales with values as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. The highest mean score was 5.47 (SD=.73) and was recorded for the item “A copy of the agenda was provided when I arrived for the meeting(s).” According to the interpretive scale established by the researcher this item was classified as “Agree”. A mean score of 3.84 (SD= 1.42) was indicated on the item “I collected information concerning youth issues in our parish prior to the meeting and made this available for discussion during the meeting.” This was the lowest score recorded and was interpreted as “Mildly Agree.” Complete listings of all of the scores on the planning and preparation portion of the instrument are listed in Table 34.
Table 34: Planning and preparation for 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning and Preparation</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A copy of the agenda was provided when I arrived for the meeting(s).</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership of the committee has youth involvement.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was prepared to contribute through my prior knowledge of 4-H.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leadership in conducting the meeting was provided by 4-H agent(s).</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership of the committee represents all segments of the parish population. (ethnic background, parts of parish, age, gender, etc....)</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was prepared to contribute through communication with 4-H agents.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goals of the advisory committee were clearly defined.</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The agenda for the meeting was provided before the meeting. (mail, e-mail or other form of communication)</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership is rotational. (members serve specific terms and are replaced when term expires)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was prepared to contribute through communication with other 4-H advisory committee members.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leadership in conducting the meeting was provided by an advisory committee member identified as the chairman of the committee.</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I studied current youth issues in our parish prior to the meeting.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued

120
The membership of the committee has representatives from other youth groups. (Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother, Big Sister, etc…)

| Member were encouraged to collect information concerning youth issues in their parish prior to the meeting to prepare for discussion during the meeting. | 132 | 4.08 | 1.45 | Mildly Agree |
| | | | | |

Note. Response based on Likert-type scale with values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Interpretive scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.

aNumber of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item.

A factor analysis (principal components with a varimax rotation) was conducted to further analyze the information regarding responses to the “Planning and Preparation” sub-scale. The number of factors and the items which were included in the factors were determined using the data from the 4-H youth development professionals. Those items were entered into the appropriate factors to determine if the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data supported the same factor structure as derived from the 4-H youth development professionals’ data. The 4-H youth development professionals’ data yielded two factors “Organization for meeting” and “Involvement of membership.”

When the nine items were entered into the one factor solution which corresponded to the “Organization for the meeting” factor the eigenvalue was 3.71 and explained 41.2% of the variance (See Table 35). The item with the highest factor loading in the “Organization for the meeting” factor was “A copy of the agenda was provided to participants when they arrived for the meeting(s),” and it loaded at .77. In addition, all the factor loadings for all of the items were acceptable with values ranging from .77 to
.48; therefore, the factor identified in the youth development professionals’ data was confirmed in the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data.

Table 35: Factor loadings for one-factor solution of the planning and preparation items as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization for meeting</th>
<th>Factor 1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A copy of the agenda was provided to participants when they arrived for the meeting(s).</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was prepared to contribute through my prior knowledge of 4-H.</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was prepared to contribute through communication with 4-H agents.</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership of the committee represents all segments of the parish population (ethnic background, parts of parish, age, gender, etc…).</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goals of the advisory committee were clearly defined.</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The agenda for meeting was provided before the meeting (mail, e-mail or other form of communication).</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership of the committee has youth involvement.</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was prepared to contribute through communication with other 4-H advisory committee members.</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership is rotational (member serves specific term and are replaced when their term expires).</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Eigenvalue = 3.71, Percent of Variance Explained = 41.2

The four items entered as a one-factor solution corresponding to the “Involvement of membership” factor explained 57.8% of the variance and had an eigenvalue of 2.31.

The item with the highest factor loading in the “Involvement of Membership” factor had a loading of .87 and stated “I collected information concerning youth issues in our parish prior to the meeting and made this available for discussion during the meeting.” In addition, all the factor loadings for all of the items were acceptable with values ranging
from .87 to .63; Therefore, the factor identified in the youth development professionals’ data was confirmed in the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data (See Table 36).

Based on the results of the factor analysis, the items in the “Planning and Preparation” sub-scale were combined into a single score for each of the factors identified. For the first factor “Organization for meeting” a mean of the nine scale items was computed. The “Organization for meeting” scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 3.44 to a high of 6.00 with a mean of 5.18 ($SD=.59$). According to the interpretive scale established by the researcher, this overall “Organization for meeting” score was classified in the “Agree” category. For the second factor “Involvement of membership” a mean of the four scale items was computed. The study participants’ scores for the factor “Involvement of membership” ranged from 1.75 to 6.00 (mean = 4.17, $SD=1.08$). The score was classified as “Mildly Agree” according to the researcher’s established interpretive scale.

**Table 36: Factor loadings for one-factor solution of the planning and preparation items as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members**

| Involvement of Membership                                                                 | Factor 1*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I collected information concerning youth issues in our parish prior to the meeting and made this available for discussion during the meeting.</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I studied current youth issues in our parish prior to the meeting.</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The membership of the committee has representatives from other youth groups (Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother, Big Sister, etc….).</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leadership in conducting meeting was provided by an advisory committee member identified as the chairman of the committee.</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aEigenvalue = 2.31, Percent of Variance Explained = 57.8*
Advisory Meeting Process

Measuring parish 4-H advisory committee members’ perception of the effectiveness of the process utilized at parish 4-H advisory meetings was determined within the fifth objective. Study participants were asked to respond to the items in the sub-scale using a six point Likert-type scales with values as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. The majority of the items in this scale were worded such that the more positive response regarding the advisory meeting process was indicated by the assignment of a higher value (higher level of agreement) on the response scale. However, three of the items in the scale were worded such that a higher level of disagreement indicated a more positive response. For example, agreement with the item “One member of the group dominated the discussion” would be indicative of a negative perception of the effectiveness of the advisory committee process while disagreement with this item would indicate a positive response regarding the advisory process. The other two items which were worded in this reverse direction included: “The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities)” and “I was not given a chance to participate.” For these three items, the values that were assigned to the study participants’ responses were: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Mildly Agree, 4 = Mildly Disagree, 5 = Disagree, and 6 = Strongly Disagree. Therefore, when the summated scale scores were computed in subsequent data analyses, all of the positive responses were assigned the higher values and the negative responses the lower values. Additionally, a corresponding reverse interpretive scale was established by the researcher to facilitate interpretation of the reverse worked items as
follows: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Agree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Agree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Agree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Disagree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Disagree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Disagree.

Item 12 (Mean = 4.91, SD = 1.43) was reverse coded and stated that, “One member of the group dominated the discussion.” Using the researcher established interpretive scale this item was perceived as “Disagree.” Item 14 (Mean = 2.54, SD = 1.40) was reverse coded and stated, “The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities).” Using the researcher established interpretive scale this item was perceived as “Mildly Agree.” Item 11 (Mean = 5.33, SD = 1.29) was reverse coded and stated, “I was not given a chance to participate.” Using the researcher established interpretive scale this item was perceived as “Disagree.” The item that parish 4-H advisory committee members had the highest level of agreement in the process utilized at the parish 4-H advisory committee meetings was “The group listened to each member when they spoke” (mean = 5.50, SD = .65). Using the researched established interpretive scale this item was perceived as “Agree.” A complete list of the meeting process section scores can be found in Table 37.

**Table 37: Process utilized at parish 4-H advisory committee meetings as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advisory meeting process</th>
<th>n^a</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The group listened when I spoke.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt as if my opinion was taken seriously.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt the group was trusting.</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When decisions were made the entire group participated.</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
I felt the group was open. & 137 & 5.40 & .78 & Agree \\
During the meeting I felt like I was part of group. & 138 & 5.38 & .85 & Agree \\
The agenda was followed closely. & 136 & 5.34 & .73 & Agree \\
I was not given a chance to participate. & 137 & 5.33b & 1.29 & Disagree \\
The overall meeting was effective & 137 & 5.29 & .86 & Agree \\
The leader of group was effective. & 135 & 5.25 & .89 & Agree \\
I felt a strong sense of belonging among the members. & 137 & 5.18 & 1.01 & Agree \\
The goals that were established in the meeting were attainable. & 136 & 5.09 & .89 & Agree \\
The meeting(s) focused on identifying youth needs in the parish. & 136 & 5.08 & .97 & Agree \\
I felt as if all of my talents were utilized in the group. & 137 & 5.01 & 1.01 & Agree \\
One member of the group dominated the discussion. & 135 & 4.91b & 1.43 & Disagree \\
My input was solicited concerning the establishment of the agenda. & 135 & 4.41 & 1.60 & Mildly Agree \\
The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities). & 136 & 2.54b & 1.40 & Mildly Agree \\

*Note. Response based on Likert-type scale with values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Interpretive scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.

abNumber of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item.

bReverse coded items, 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Mildly Agree, 4 = Mildly Disagree, 5 = Disagree, 6 = Strongly Disagree. Interpretive Scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Agree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Agree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Agree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Disagree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Disagree; 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Disagree
A factor analysis (principal components with a varimax rotation) was conducted to further analyze the information regarding responses to the “Meeting Process” sub-scale. The number of factors and the items which were included in the factors were determined using the data from the 4-H youth development professionals. Those items were entered into the appropriate factor to determine if the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data supported the same factor structure as derived from the 4-H youth development professionals’ data. The 4-H youth development professionals’ data yielded one factor in the “Meeting Process” sub-scale. As with the data from the 4-H youth development professionals three of the 17 items were eliminated from the one factor solution. The items “My input was solicited concerning the establishment of the agenda,” “I was not given a chance to participate,” and “The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities),” were eliminated from the factor. When the 14 items were entered into the one-factor solution the eigenvalue was 8.66 and explained 61.8% of the variance. The three items “During the meeting I felt like I was part of the group,” “The group listened when I spoke,” “I felt the group was trusting,” all had loadings of .88. In addition, all the factor loadings for all of the items were acceptable with values ranging from .88 to .41; therefore, the factor identified in the youth development professionals’ data was confirmed in the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data (See Table 38).

Based on the results of the factor analysis, the items in the “Meeting Process” sub-scale were combined into a single score for the one factor identified. For the factor “Meeting Process” a mean of the 14 scale items was computed. The “Meeting Process” mean scale item scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 2.07 to a high of
6.00 with a mean of 5.27 (SD = .67). According to the interpretive scale established by the researcher, this overall “Meeting Process” score was classified in the “Agree” category.

**Table 38: Factor loadings for one-factor solution of the process items as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Process</th>
<th>Factor 1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During the meeting I felt like I was part of the group.</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The group listened when I spoke.</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt the group was trusting.</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt as if my opinion was taken seriously.</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When decisions were made the entire group participated.</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The overall meeting was effective.</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The leader of the group was effective.</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt the group was open.</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt a strong sense of belonging among the members.</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The agenda was followed closely.</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt as if all of my talents were utilized in the group.</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The goals that were established in the meeting were attainable.</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The meeting(s) focused on identifying youth needs in the parish.</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One member of the group dominated the discussion.</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Eigenvalue = 8.66, Percent of Variance Explained = 61.8

**Parish 4-H Program Development**

Parish 4-H programming involves input from a variety of sources. Determining the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ perception on the parish 4-H advisory
committee’s input on the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development) was contained within the fifth objective. Twenty-four items were addressed and respondents indicated their level of agreement utilizing a six point Likert-type scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. The item with the highest score (mean = 5.21, \(\text{SD}= .88\)) was the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ perception regarding “Input from parish 4-H agents was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.” Using the researcher established interpretive scale this item value was “Agree.” The item with the lowest score (mean = 4.46, \(\text{SD}= 1.25\)) was “4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H regional staff.” The researcher established interpretive scale value on this item was “Mildly Agree.” A complete listing of programming perception is listed in Table 39.

**Table 39: Parish 4-H programs conducted as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish 4-H Programs conducted</th>
<th>(n^a)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to implement the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by the parish 4-H agents.</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to plan the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by the advisory committee.

Input from the advisory committee members was used to implement the parish 4-H program.

Input from the advisory committee was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.

Input from the advisory committee was used to plan the parish 4-H program.

Input from the advisory committee was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.

4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers recommended by the advisory committee.

Input from parish 4-H agents was used to prioritize parish 4-H program.

4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers recommended by the parish 4-H agents.

Input from 4-H state staff was used to implement parish 4-H program.

Input from 4-H regional staff was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program.

Input from 4-H state staff was used to plan parish 4-H program.

4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by regional 4-H staff.

Input from regional 4-H staff was used to plan parish 4-H program.
Input from 4-H state staff was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program. | 129 | 4.64 | 1.20 | Agree  
Input from 4-H regional staff was used to implement parish 4-H program. | 129 | 4.64 | 1.23 | Agree  
Input from 4-H state staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program. | 131 | 4.63 | 1.19 | Agree  
4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by 4-H state staff. | 118 | 4.57 | 1.37 | Agree  
Input from 4-H regional staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program. | 124 | 4.54 | 1.24 | Agree  
4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H state staff. | 126 | 4.47 | 1.27 | Mildly Agree  
4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H regional staff. | 126 | 4.46 | 1.25 | Mildly Agree  

*Note. Response based on Likert-type scale with values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Mildly Disagree, 4 = Mildly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Interpretive scale: 1.00 to 1.50 = Strongly Disagree; 1.51 to 2.50 = Disagree; 2.51 to 3.50 = Mildly Disagree; 3.51 to 4.50 = Mildly Agree; 4.51 to 5.50 = Agree; and 5.51 to 6.00 = Strongly Agree.*

aNumber of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item.

To further analyze the information regarding responses to the “Parish 4-H Program Development” sub-scale a factor analysis (principal components with a varimax rotation) was conducted. This area involved the identification, planning, prioritization, implementation, recommendation of volunteer assistance, and the reviewing of prior 4-H programming in the parish (Parish 4-H Program Development). The number of factors and the items that were included in the factors were determined using the data from the 4-H youth development professionals. Those items were entered into the appropriate factors to determine if the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data supported the same factor structure as derived from the 4-H Youth Development professionals’ data.
The 4-H youth development professionals’ data yielded three factors which were: “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agents.”

When the 12 items from the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data were entered into the one-factor solution that corresponded with the factor from the 4-H youth development professionals’ data “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” the factor explained 76.0% of the variance and had an eigenvalue of 9.12. The item with the highest loading in the “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff” factor loaded at .91 and was “Input from 4-H state staff was used to implement parish 4-H program.” In addition, all the factor loadings for all of the items were acceptable with values ranging from .91 to .83; therefore, the factor identified in the youth development professionals’ data was confirmed in the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data (See Table 40).

Table 40: Factor loadings for one-factor solution of the program development item Input Regional and State 4-H Staff as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</th>
<th>Factor 1(^a) Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H state staff was used to implement parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H regional staff was used to implement the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H regional staff was used to plan the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H state staff was used to plan parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H regional staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H state staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from 4-H regional staff was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by 4-H regional staff. .86
Input from state staff was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program. .86
4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H state staff. .85
4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H regional staff. .84
4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by 4-H state staff. .83

*Eigenvalue = 9.12, Percent of Variance Explained = 76.0%

The six items entered as a one-factor solution corresponding to the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” factor explained 71.1% of the variance and had an eigenvalue of 4.27. The item “Input from advisory committee members was used to implement parish 4-H program” had the highest loading, .89, in the factor “Input 4-H Advisory Committee.” The range of the loadings for this factor was .89 to .76, which were in the acceptable range (all above .40); therefore, the factor identified in the youth development professionals’ data was confirmed in the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data (See Table 41).

When the six items were entered into the one-factor solution that corresponded to the “Input Parish 4-H Agents” factor, the eigenvalue was 4.00 and explained 66.8% of the variance. The range of factor loadings for the factor “Input Parish 4-H Agents” was .89 to .72. All of the loadings were in the acceptable range, above .40; therefore, the factor identified in the youth development professionals’ data was confirmed in the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ data (See Table 42). The item “Input from parish 4-H agents was used to implement parish 4-H program,” loaded at .89, which was the highest loaded item in this factor.
Table 41: Factor loadings for one-factor solution of the program development item Input 4-H Advisory Committee as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</th>
<th>Factor 1a Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input from advisory committee members was used to implement parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from advisory committee was used to prioritize parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from advisory committee was used to plan parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from advisory committee was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by advisory committee.</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by advisory committee.</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aEigenvalue = 4.27, Percent of Variance Explained = 71.1

Based on the results of the factor analysis, the items in the “Parish 4-H Program Development” sub-scale were combined into a single score for each of the factors identified. For the first factor “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff” a mean of the 12 scale items was computed. The “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff” scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 1.00 to a high of 6.00 with a mean of 4.60 (SD = 1.11). According to the interpretative scale established by the researcher, this overall “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff” score was classified in the “Agree” category. For the second factor “Input Parish 4-H Advisory Committee” a mean of the six scale items was computed. The study participants’ scores for the factor “Input Parish 4-H Advisory Committee” ranged from 1.00 to 6.00 (mean = 5.05, SD = .83). The score was classified as “Agree,” according to the researcher-established interpretive scale. A mean for the six scale items for the factor “Input Parish 4-H Agents” was calculated for the study participants (mean = 5.09, SD = .83). The range of scores for this factor was 1.00 to 6.00.
According to the researcher established interpretive scale the score was classified as “Agree.” As established ‘a priori’ the dependent variable(s) in the study would be derived from the level of agreement ratings from the Parish 4-H Program Development items as perceived by the parish 4-H advisory committee members. As confirmed by the factor analysis three dependent variables were determined appropriate for this study, “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agents.”

Table 42: Factor loadings for one-factor solution of the program development item Input Parish 4-H agents as perceived by parish 4-H advisory committee members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input Parish 4-H agents</th>
<th>Factor 1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to implement parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to plan parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to prioritize parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by parish 4-H agents.</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input from parish 4-H agents was used to identify youth issues related to parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers recommended by parish 4-H agents.</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Eigenvalue = 4.00, Percent of Variance Explained = 66.8

Sixth Objective

The sixth objective of the study was to determine if the perceptions of the members of parish 4-H advisory committees in Louisiana regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development) are influenced by each of the following perceptual measures: the member’s primary motivation to participate in the advisory committee process, member’s perceptions regarding meeting logistics, member’s
perceptions regarding effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting, and member’s perceptions regarding effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting, and the following demographic characteristics: whether or not the members received training on the advisory process prior to the meeting, whether or not the members received a detailed advisory committee job description prior to the meeting, years served on the advisory committee, number of advisory committee meetings attended in the last two years, ethnic background, and highest level of education completed.

Parish 4-H advisory committee members were asked to rank items (“interested in helping the youth,” “interested in serving the community,” desire to collaborate with other organizations,” and “other please specify”) regarding the degree of influence it had on their decision to participate as a member of their parish 4-H advisory committee. A rank of “1” indicated the highest influence, “2” indicated the next highest influence, etc… Pearson moment correlation coefficients were calculated to determine if a relationship existed between the items that influenced their decision to participate as a member of their parish 4-H advisory committee, and the Parish 4-H Program Development three-factor scores (“Input Regional and State 4-H staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agents”). When the analysis was reviewed there was no significant correlation between the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and youth interest as an influence on the decision of parish 4-H advisory committee members to participate (See Table 43). There was also no significant correlation found between the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and
the influence, “interest in serving the community,” on the decision for parish 4-H advisory committee members to serve on the committee (See Table 44).

**Table 43: Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and the ranking of the youth interest item that influenced parish 4-H advisory committee member’s decision to participate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development Factors</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n^a</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>-.112</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>.216</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>-.094</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>.249</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>.522</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).*

*aNumber of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item*

**Table 44: Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and the rankings of the community interest item that influenced parish 4-H advisory committee member’s decision to participate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development Factors</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n^a</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>.652</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>.774</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>.961</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).*

*aNumber of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item*

When the analysis was reviewed the only ranking item that had a significant relationship with one of the factor scores, was the “desire to collaborate with other organizations” item. The item “desire to collaborate with other organizations” had a significant relationship with “Input Parish 4-H Agents” \((r = .302, p = .001)\) (See Table 45).

The relationship was determined to be moderate according to the Davis’ (1971) descriptors.
When the analysis was reviewed there was no significant correlation between the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and other interest as an influence on the decision of parish 4-H advisory committee members to participate (See Table 46).

To determine if a relationship exists between Parish 4-H Program Development, which included three factor scores and “Meeting logistics,” Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated. The coefficients were interpreted using Davis’ (1971) set of descriptors. The highest correlation coefficient was recorded with factor “Input from 4-H advisory committee” and “Meeting logistic” ($r = .613, p < .001$). This
was a substantial correlation according to the Davis' (1971) descriptors. The nature of this relationship is that higher scores on the “Meeting logistic” factor (which indicates that the 4-H advisory committee members had a more positive perceptions regarding the concept being measured) tended to be associated with higher scores on the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” Parish 4-H Program Development score (also indicating that they had more positive perceptions regarding the concepts being measured). The remaining two program development factors were also significantly correlated to meeting logistics. Results of the correlation coefficient between meeting logistics and Parish 4-H Program Development are recorded in Table 47.

Table 47: Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and meeting logistic factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development Factors</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.613</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.567</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

To determine if a relationship exists between the planning and preparation sub-scale that contains two factors with the three factors of the Parish 4-H Program Development sub-scale Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated. It was determined that a significant relationship existed between all of the factors. The highest correlation which was described as substantial (Davis, 1971), occurred between the Parish Program Development factor “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” and the planning and preparation factor “Organization for the meeting” (r =
The nature of this relationship is that higher scores on the planning and preparation factor “Organization for the meeting” (which indicates that the 4-H advisory committee members had a more positive perceptions regarding the concept being measured) tended to be associated with higher scores on the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” Parish 4-H Program Development score (also indicating that they had more positive perceptions regarding the concepts being measured). The complete results for the correlations between the Parish 4-H Program Development factors and the planning and preparation factor “Organization for the meeting” can be found in Table 48.

The three Parish 4-H Program Development factors were significantly correlated with the planning and preparation factor “Involvement of membership.” The lowest of the three correlations, which was classified as moderate according to Davis’ (1971) descriptors, occurred with the Parish 4-H Program Development factor “Input Regional and State 4-H staff” ($r = .319$, $p < .001$) (See Table 49).

**Table 48: Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and planning and preparation factor Organization for the meeting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$n^a$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.567</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.542</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.481</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

$^a$Number of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item
To determine if a relationship exists between the meeting process factor and the three factors of the Parish 4-H Program Development, Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated. The results indicated that all factors were significantly correlated. A very high correlation according to the Davis’ (1971) descriptors was recorded between the Parish 4-H Program Development factor “Input from 4-H Advisory Committee” and the meeting process factor ($r = .722$, $p < .001$). A moderate correlation according to the Davis’ (1971) descriptors was found between Parish 4-H Program Development factor “Input from Regional and State 4-H staff” and the meeting process factor ($r = .435$, $p < .001$). The complete listing of the correlations between the Parish 4-H Program Development factors and the meeting process factor can be found in Table 50.

Independent t-tests were conducted to determine if the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores for the parish 4-H advisory members that received training prior to the meeting for their position as an advisory committee member, was significantly different than those parish 4-H advisory members who indicated they did not receive training. The results indicated that there was no significant different between

---

**Table 49: Correlations between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and planning and preparation factor Involvement of membership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.340</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.319</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).  
*aNumber of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item
the members who received training and those who had not received any training (See Table 51).

Table 50: Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and the meeting process factor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.722</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>very high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.652</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.435</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

*Number of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item

Table 51: Whether parish 4-H advisory committee member received training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Program Development</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>1.790</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No training</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>1.577</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No training</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.725</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Training</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item

Whether parish 4-H advisory members had received a job description detailing their responsibilities as an advisory committee member was a question asked to the study participants. Independent t-tests were conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between those who indicated that they had received a job description, and those who indicated that they did not, on the Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores. Due to the violation of the homogeneity of variances the separate variance
estimate was used in calculating the t-test value. This reduced the degrees of freedom for the factors “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” and “Input Parish 4-H Agent.” Results indicated a significant difference between those receiving a job description and those who did not with the factor score “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” ($t_{79} = 2.825, p = .006$).

Additionally, a significant difference was found in the factor score “Input Parish 4-H Agent,” ($t_{85} = 2.124, p = .037$) (See Table 52). Results indicated that those parish 4-H advisory committee members that received a job description had significantly higher level of agreement with the items in the factors “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agent” than those who reported that they did not receive a job description.

Table 52: Whether parish 4-H advisory committee member received a job description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Program Development</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n$^a$</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>Job description</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>2.825</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No job description</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Job description</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>2.124</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No job description</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>Job description</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.960</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No job description</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$Number of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item

Study participants were asked to specify the number of years they had served on the advisory committee. To determine if a relationship existed between the number of years served on the advisory committee and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores “Input Regional and State 4-H staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and
“Input Parish 4-H Agents,” Pearson Product Moments correlation coefficients were conducted. It was determined that no significant relationship existed between number of years served on the advisory committee and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores (See Table 53).

**Table 53: Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and number of years served on parish 4-H advisory committee member**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development Factors</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n^a</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>.481</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>.527</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>.888</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).

^n^aNumber of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item

Participants were also asked to indicate how many 4-H advisory meetings they had attended in the past two years. Pearson Product Moments correlation coefficients were conducted to determine if there was a relationship between the number of 4-H advisory committee meetings attended in the past two years and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores. There was no significant relationship between the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and the number of 4-H advisory committee meetings attended in the past two years (See Table 54).

**Table 54: Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and the number of parish 4-H advisory committee meeting attended by parish 4-H advisory committee members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>n^a</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>.618</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>.767</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table continued
To determine if there was a difference between “White” and “Non White” 4-H advisory committee members in their perception of Parish 4-H Program Development factors, independent t-tests were conducted. Thirty-four participants indicated that they were some other ethnic background other than white. The number of respondents indicating that they were “White” equaled 105. Three study participants chose not to respond to this item. The results of the test indicated that there was no significant difference between “White” and “Non White” when compared on the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores (See Table 55).

Table 55: Comparison between “White” and “Non White” 4-H advisory committee members on the three Parish 4-H Program Development factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Program Development</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n(^a)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>-905</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non White</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.435</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>.664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non White</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>-.358</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>.721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non White</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Number of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item

To determine if there was a relationship between highest education level obtained by the parish 4-H advisory committee members and the three factors “Input Regional and
State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agent,” Kendall’s tau correlation coefficients were computed. In order to conduct this analysis education level of the parish 4-H advisory committee members was recorded as: less than high school = 1, high school = 2, associate degree = 3, college bachelors degree = 4, more than college bachelors degree = 5, college masters degree = 6, more than college masters degree = 7, and doctorate degree = 8. The results of this analysis indicated that there was significant relationship between education level of parish 4-H advisory committee members and the two factors “Input 4-H advisory committee” ($r = .169$, $p = .008$) and “Input Parish 4-H Agent” ($r = .138$, $p = .032$) (see Table 56). These results suggest that as educational level of the parish 4-H advisory committee members increases, the level of agreement with the items in the Parish 4-H Program Development factors, “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agent” also increases.

**Table 56: Correlation between three Parish 4-H Program Development factors and education level of parish 4-H advisory committee members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$n^a$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input 4-H Advisory Committee</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agent</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State 4-H Staff</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Interpretations according to Davis’s (1971) descriptors: .01-.09 (negligible), .10-.29 (low), .30-.49 (moderate), .50-.69 (substantial), .70-.99 (very high).*

*aNumber of the 142 total study participants who responded to this item.

**Qualitative**

To confirm the data from the parish 4-H advisory committee members a qualitative component was utilized in the study. Six advisory members from six parishes
were selected through a purposeful sample and were interviewed. The questions for the interviews were derived from information asked in the quantitative portion of the survey.

**Interviews**

To provide additional information concerning the workings of Parish 4-H advisory committees six interviews of parish advisory committee members were conducted by the researcher. These interviews were conducted with members of advisory committees from six different parishes. Three parishes were identified as having “weak” advisory committees and three parishes were identified as having “strong” advisory committees. The parishes determined as “weak” were interviewee numbers one, two, and three. The parishes determined as “strong” were interviewee numbers four, five, and six. Participants were asked to respond to questions relating to four major areas of the advisory process. The areas identified were: 1. membership of the committee, 2. preparation for the meeting(s), 3. process utilized at the meeting(s), and 4. advisory meeting focus.

The people interviewed represented a variety of backgrounds and connections to the 4-H program and community. One of the people interviewed was a grandmother of several 4-Hers and a volunteer for the 4-H teen leader program. Another person interviewed was a school teacher who was a 4-H organizational leader that was originally assigned to the 4-H club in their school. This person had no prior experience in 4-H and their children were not participants in the program. An interviewee was a livestock volunteer leader and a parent of former 4-Hers. This person was also a member of the parish 4-H foundation. A high school 4-Her was among those interviewed. A former 4-H organizational club school leader who was a parent of a 4-Her and a volunteer
livestock leader was one of the people interviewed. A community volunteer who also worked as an editor for a local paper and was a curriculum specialist for a local non-public school system was one of the people interviewed.

**Membership of the Committee**

**Ethnic Makeup**

When interviewees were asked to describe the membership of their parish advisory committees all six felt that the representation was reflective of the ethnic background of the parish. Both “weak” and “strong” parish committees had representation from ethnic groups in their parish. Some of the parishes selected for the interview were more ethnically diverse than others. To indicate the diversity of the groups’ interviewee number one responded when asked to address the ethnic diversity on the committee “we have people of Asian decent, we have black, we have Hispanic, and we have white.” In contrast, interviewee number six responded that they only have two ethnic groups in the parish. One of these ethnic groups made up a largest majority of the population. However, the respondent did indicate that both ethnic groups were represented on the advisory committee saying that “we do have a low percentage of blacks and majority white, but the committee was pretty much representative.”

**Youth Involvement**

When they were questioned as to whether youth were involved in the committee the responses varied. Interviewee number three responded that there were youth on the list as members but no youth had participated in recent meetings. Interviewee number three responded when asked about youth participating at the meeting
we usually have one or two 4-Hers members unfortunately to me our attendance has been down with the youth not attending … It is like everything else I guess everybody schedule is busy and you know they just don’t attend the meetings.

Interviewee number two responded that they remembered a young person being present but did not remember much more than their presence at the meeting. When asked about youth on the committee interviewee number two responded “we have had youth come and go … We have had a young red-headed boy come to our meetings.” According to these two parish respondents youth involvement on the committee was limited. These were two of the parishes identified as “weak” in the 4-H advisory process.

Conversely the “strong” parishes and one identified as “weak” commented extensively on the youth involvement in the process. When asked about youth involvement interviewee number five responded “very definitely so, youth were involved, members of 4-H groups as well a couple of young people that had moved on and maybe were in college or a little bit older.” Interviewee five also was impressed with the youth’s input and participation saying that “the youth have been active and had some good input in some of the meetings.” Interviewee number four was complimentary of the process allowing the youth to have equal voice and vote when compared to the adults on the advisory committee, saying “the youth are just as involved as the adults, and their vote counts just as much.” Additionally, interviewee four commented that youth not involved in the 4-H program were participants at the meeting. Although interviewee one’s parish process was one that was termed as “weak” the respondent was impressed with the youth involvement on the committee “we have some representatives from our
youth leadership program, we have a young lady from (school?), we have kids from (school), and we have some kids from the Asian group.”

**Rotational Terms**

The interviewees were asked whether their term on the parish 4-H advisory committee was rotational with members serving specific number of year terms. All of the parishes that were identified as “strong” indicated that there was some type of rotational term agreement included in their parish advisory committee process. When asked about rotation interviewee four responded “yes the term is two years, but it is staggered meaning some committee members would be new and some would have served a year or two.” Interviewee five indicated that initially a rotation was established, but it has been altered to fit the process and structure of the committee

when I was first contacted about serving on the board there was reference to a two-year span, but I think it has been longer than that but I have gotten somewhat a sense that there has been a natural rotation that has come about.

Two of the parishes identified as “weak” indicated that no type of official rotation was utilized. Interviewee three indicated that no rotation was in place, “no, basically what we do is just kind of because they kind of rotate themselves off, their interest change or their kids get out.” Interviewee two indicated that they were not aware of rotation on the committee when they were approached to serve, saying “I will be honest it may have been broached to me that way but all I heard was would you serve and I knew they needed someone and I said I was willing.”
Youth Agency Involvement

Respondents were then asked if the advisory committee consisted of members who represented other youth agencies (Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, other youth groups) in the area or parish. Interviewee five responded “yes I know there was a representative from scouts, a man from some other type of government youth program, and representatives from church groups.” This was the only respondent that indicated representatives from agencies working with youth other than 4-H were participants at the meeting. This parish was identified as a “strong” parish advisory program. Interviewee two responded when asked if other youth agencies were represented “there could be someone from future farmers possibly but outside of that I really do not know.” Interviewee three responded when ask about other youth group representatives “yes a lot of our 4-Hers are boy scouts or girl scouts.” Both of these parishes were identified as “weak” and had basically no other youth agency involvement. However, the other two identified as “strong” and all three of the parishes identified as “weak” indicated no real involvement from representatives from other youth serving agencies.

Preparation for the Meeting

Training

When members were asked questions concerning their preparation for the meeting the responses were varied. None of the respondents indicated that they had an opportunity to attend any formalized training to be a participant of the advisory process. One of the respondents did indicate they felt like they were adequately trained by being able to sit in on the meetings prior to becoming an actual participant. Interviewee one indicated this mentoring type of process helped adequately train them for the role as an
advisory committee member. However they responded that a formalized training would greatly improve their parish advisory committee,

maybe a half of a day of training somebody come down and just have us ahead time pre-write our questions, something we do not understand. I just think that would be really good thing if we could do that and have a lot of our questions answered.

Interviewee two indicated that although they did not receive any formalized training, they felt comfortable enough to contribute

myself I did not receive any training, but I do know I felt very comfortable, because our agent had prepared a detailed agenda. Everything on the agenda I was familiar with and I knew what was going on because of feedback and listening when people discussed at the meeting.

Job Description

Advisory committee members interviewed were asked whether they had received a job description detailing their expectations as a participant on the parish committee. Respondents for two “weak” advisory parishes indicated they were not aware of any job description or communication of their expectations as committee participants.

Interviewee three responded to this question “no we may have done it in the past and I guess as far as a routine deal I would say no.” “As far as I remember I do not remember any kind of a background of what I would be doing” was the response from interviewee two when asked the question concerning receiving a job description or explanation of expectations. Although interviewee one was from a parish identified as “weak” they
indicated that they had received a job description at the advisory meeting and it was reviewed extensively by the parish 4-H agent.

Interviewee four indicated that they had received a job description in the mail with an invitation to serve. The instructions asked interested persons to respond to the 4-H agent in the parish, stating “we got a letter that we were asked to serve (on 4-H advisory committee) and what it entailed and asked us to reply back if we wanted to serve.” They also were apprised of the job responsibilities with a review of these at the meeting by the 4-H youth development professional. Interviewee six responded that the job description and expectations were reviewed at the beginning of the first meeting they attended, stating “the first meeting that I went to in the beginning they did tell us our jobs …they (4-H agents) talked about our responsibilities.” “What I perceived to be the expectation (of 4-H advisory committee member) was to know the area, having lived in this city for a long time provide us (parish 4-H advisory committee) with whatever resources you have” was the response from interviewee five. All three of these responded positively toward the question of job descriptions or expectations and they were established initially as “strong” parish advisory committees.

**Preparation for Youth Issues**

The next question detailed whether committee members were asked to be prepared to discuss youth issues in the parish by whatever methods they deemed appropriate. The methods could be by communication with other advisory members, communication with parish 4-H staff, research on their own or just past personal experience with youth. All of the respondents felt their prior experience in dealing with youth prepared them adequately to discuss these areas at the advisory committee meeting.
One respondent indicated that written correspondence prior to the meeting helped prepare them for the upcoming meeting. Interviewee two responded in preparation for discussion of youth issues at the meeting, “really it is just a matter or re-reading your minutes of the last meeting and then you would know what actually transpired and just go from there.” Communication with other committee members was crucial to the success of preparation and organization according to one of the respondents. Interviewee one commented in regards to communication with other committee members,

Of course other that the meetings … yes we do … there are two ladies and a gentleman and we talk a lot and they are all members of the committee, as a matter of fact they were on the committee before I was. Once they found out who I was and that I take the minutes … when they call we have our conversation, we talk about the issues and how we can better serve them (4-H youth) … And we all talk about the same thing, let the kids have their input … As adults we cannot always make the decisions the kids go to be there to help us out.

Regardless of whether a committee was determined to be “weak” or “strong” all respondents agreed that they felt they were prepared to discuss youth issues in their parish relative to 4-H.

**Process Utilized at the Meeting(s)**

**Meeting Leader**

When members were questioned about the process utilized at the advisory committee meeting in their parish the responses varied, but all indicated they felt their process was inclusive of the participants in attendance. However the process of the actual meeting did vary between participants. Interviewee one of which was identified as
a “weak” committee indicated that a chairman that was a member of the committee did not run the meeting. They indicated that no formalized structure seemed to be in place, but felt the informal atmosphere was conducive to open conversation. “We come in and do what we have to do. We do not have a chairman the 4-H agent kind of is in charge because he knows more than we do about 4-H.”

Interviewee two also indicated that the local 4-H agent facilitated and conducted the meeting as opposed to a specific chairman.

The agent just guides us through the agenda, but more or less he makes sure we are not talking about everything else in the world you know all the sports events … He makes sure to be like a time-keeper and keeps us on track and introduces the topic.

One of the interviewees responded to the question concerning utilization of a chairman in a different framework. They indicated that normally a chairman who was not formally designated by the committee, but was a member of the committee conducted the meeting. However, it could be some one different at each meeting. Interviewee three specified that they normally opened the meetings as a chairman or another individual who was a committee member, but the most recent meeting held was opened by the 4-H agent. “Normally I come in or (advisory committee member) usually comes in opens the meetings but this last time we were doing some cooking and the 4-H agent did the opening.”

Interviewee four responded that they had a chairman who was a committee member that constructed the agenda, but also they had an outside facilitator who was not a member of the committee participate as part of the advisory committee process. They
said “the facilitator kind of ran the meeting, but it went along with the agenda that was made by the chairman.” When asked about the role of the 4-H agent at the meeting interviewee four responded

we were allowed to ask the 4-H agent questions about different parish statistics, but I do no think they pushed us any one way or the other. I think they made sure not to because they did not want it to be their ideas.

When questioned about the 4-H agent(s) role at the advisory committee meetings and the utilization of a chairman who was a member of the committee interviewee five responded

There was always a chair at the meeting who was not a 4-H agent, but when it came time for the 4-H agent to participate … they would take the ball and decide how the team was going to play … so it was more like they guided.

Interviewee six specified that a chairman who was a member of the committee conducted their parish advisory committee and they utilized an outside facilitator to guide the discussion. When asked about the role of the parish 4-H agent(s) interviewee six responded “just a mediator, they were there if we needed anything … they provided refreshments, they introduced the speakers, and they gave a presentation on past, present, and future of the parish … they were more of a supportive role.”

**Meeting Process**

When the people interviewed were asked if the process utilized at the meeting was open and included all of the membership all responded that felt like overall the meetings did allow for openness. However, interviewee two, a member of a committee
identified as “weak,” did indicate that some of the meetings would feature circumstances where a member or a faction attempted to dominate. They said

I do feel like we have some that are very opinionated and they are going with experiences and sometimes try to dominate a conversation… but in general we come back into where it was really looking at the issues and not bring this old garbage… let’s just address the issue with the facts that we have on the table.

Whereas, interviewee five a member of a committee identified as “strong,” commented when asked about members being inclusive and open, “yes there was a very free sense of exchange honoring each others opinions.”

Interviewee three indicated that in certain instances differences of opinions were aired at the meetings, but they thought it was healthy. They commented

we kind of had myself and another gentleman had a difference of opinion … but like we both said that is one thing that I have noticed in our parish we have a difference of opinion, but we walk out of there still on the same wave length as far as the goals.

This parish was identified as a “weak” advisory committee parish. In contrast a “strong” advisory parish, interviewee four, responded “everybody had their own vote and everybody had their chance to agree or give a rebuttal on why a program should or would work …. everybody listened and realized what needed to be done for the reasons the member gave.” Interviewee four felt the process was open and at no meetings did the group lose focus due to members who were dominant or disruptive.

Although the parish that interviewee one represents was identified as “weak,” their comments concerning inclusiveness and involving the membership were positive.
They responded to the question concerning inclusiveness and getting everyone’s opinion by stating,

sometimes (4-H agent) has a good feel for things …he can look on the expression on somebody’s face to know they really want to say something, but they are shy…so he will say did you have something to say or have a question you want to ask…some people are shy no matter what, but the environment of the committee is wonderful…anybody can come and just sit in and feel welcome…feel like they can contribute…the agents always ask if you have anything you would like to add, or do you have any questions or do you have anything you want to say

Interviewee six commented that they thought the advisory meetings were very inclusive and the facilitator made sure they included everyone in the discussions. When asked, “do you feel like everyone was given a chance to participate”? Interviewee six responded “I think the facilitator said we needed to allow each person an opportunity to talk and to share, to be mindful of each other and respect each other…. each person was able to contribute in their own way.”

Advisory Meeting Focus

Interviewees were asked what was the main focus of the advisory committee meetings. Answers to these questions varied from interviewee to interviewee and parish to parish. A theme materialized among those parish committees identified as “weak” which indicated that these committees focused mainly on past events and activities and planning future events and activities. In contrast the committees which were identified as “strong,” commented that the meetings focused on current youth issues in the parish and evaluated past parish programs which targeted youth needs.
When asked what the advisory committee meeting focused on, interviewee 1 responded, “one of the things we are focusing on right now is fundraising.” In response to the planning of events and activities the interviewee recalled, “we spend time on the programs we already have in place and if there is anything coming up we spend a little extra time planning that.” Interviewee one could not give any specific youth issues that were discussed or programs planned to address the issue. They did comment that one youth problem did come up, “I think one of the things kind of lacking with our young people is self-esteem and that kind of comes up for whatever reason.” However when asked about particular plans that the committee made to address the issue, the interviewee could only reflect back to a program currently in place, “character counts.”

Interviewee two, a member of a committee identified as “weak,” could not actually identify with any youth issues. When asked about youth issues identified the respondent indicated, “okay like youth planting a garden.” They specified that meetings focused mainly on events and activities,

I would say we focus on events that are going to take place, but then throwing in sometimes maybe talking about kids and how this would be good for them…. I would say the main focus is the events that the club is actually participating in.

The interviewee responded that one of the main focuses of the advisory committee was money raising, “how to raise money, money is a big issue.” The interviewee identified increased volunteer development as an important issue which would increase the effectiveness of the 4-H program. However, these types of issues were not a part of advisory committee meetings, saying “I sent the 4-H agent an e-mail
and offered to go to some schools on this end of the parish and handpick parents to be potential volunteers so they could work with the current leader.”

When questioned about discussions at parish 4-H advisory committee meetings, interviewee three summarized proceeding of the meetings that reflected on parish 4-H events and activities. Interviewee three responded when asked concerning advisory committee discussions, “we always talk about our project day, our livestock program, junior leaders, and the foundation.” When specifically asked by the interviewer “do you feel like you focus mostly on events and activities like the project day or the livestock show?” The respondent said, “I surely think so.” When questioned about whether at any past advisory meetings were any youth issues identified, interviewee three responded, “we felt like there was not a lot of extracurricular activities for the youth, so we thought maybe some focus on doing some tutoring after school and stress character counts.”

However, when the interviewee was asked “Did the committee develop a plan and an implementation strategy”? The interviewee three responded, “To be honest with you we kind of neglected this ….we have depended more on them (4-H agents), we kind of told them you kind of tell us what you want us to do and we will help you.”

In contrast interviewee four described the focus of the 4-H advisory meetings as one of identification of youth issues in the parish and subsequently establishing sub-committees to construct an implementation plan to address these issues. When questioned about what types of issues were identified and addressed interviewee four responded,

We went on a youth crime tour to Angola prison and listened to prisoners that were on death row and saw the lethal injection table and heard different prisoners
talk about different experiences. They warned us to stay out of trouble now while you can and it is a lot easier. We had a program on alcohol where we heard from people from MADD and Red Cross first responders, cops that issue the tickets, and how much it will cost you monetarily to be caught driving under the influence. We heard from people that had family killed by drunk drivers...we had programs on teen pregnancy, statistics on STD’s (sexually transmitted disease).

Interviewee four also commented concerning the structure of sub-committees utilized to plan the identified issues at the advisory committee,

sub-committees were formed for any events we were planning to do that year...everybody needed to be on at least two or three sub-committees...you got to pick the sub-committee on what your strengths were or what you would be interesting in helping with.

Interviewee four was a participant on a committee that was identified as “strong.”

By the comments the protocol of advisory meetings focusing on the identification and planning of 4-H program based on youth issues was followed. As opposed to other interviewee’s of “weak” committees focusing on planning fund-raisers, livestock shows, project days, this parish’s committee focused on program planning.

When asked to describe the focus of an advisory committee meeting, interviewee five responded,

There was a huge brainstorming looking at trying to help students do better in school, how we could help them in leadership activities, and how we could help them better prepare for college and the world...then over time the general concepts identified were defined into specific programs and events, then after
these events came to be then we would critique the actual event and brainstorm on how this event could be expanded to touch some areas that were related, but maybe had not been identified earlier…it was a combination of program development which included events to accomplish the programs and it was an evolution of all of that.

The interviewer asked interviewee five to comment on specific programs or youth issues identified recently by the advisory committee. The response was:

There was a big issue about youth understanding economics and not knowing how to spend money properly…and I guess last year I went to a (4-H) program at LSU where students were brought in and they had to work within a budget and they were taught how it cost this much for a car, this much for a house, and this much for utilities. I think this was a very valuable lesson for many of the students; it was a real wake-up call. I was also very impressed that there had been some implementation of educational programs dealing with LEAP testing and also have been incredibly impressed with the web site that 4-H has in the parish. It has been a resource for teachers and trying to help students learn about math and science. A hands-on approach is a whole lot better for some students to learn and these types of lessons are offered on the web site. Another program or issue that came up and I really do not remember where it started but it was the firearms (shooting sports) program. It teaches students how to use weapons properly and I think this is a very important program because of the perception that so many children have of watching television where they see guns all the time. They do not realize what
happens when you shoot a gun so I feel this program evolved out of a perceived need.

The parish interviewee five represented was identified as “strong” relative to the 4-H advisory process. Their description of the advisory meeting focus established that the committee identified youth needs after sessions where members brainstormed and programs were planned to meet these needs. When asked to comment on the 4-H program and how they believe it is meeting the needs of youth, interviewee five responded

it is the most wonderfully kept secret in the world…moving beyond homemaking and farm work and I have been astonished that it has moved to the urban setting and has acclimated and changed to take youth development in the urban environment.

Interviewee six’s description of the advisory meeting was similar to that of interviewee five, when asked about the meeting make-up and focus the response was, “it was a brainstorming session, where we broke into groups and discussed the major problems and things to do to improve them, and then each group reported back to the entire committee.” When asked about specific youth issues identified in the brainstorming session, interviewee six responded, “it was drugs, pollution was one of the issues that came out, growth of the parish, losing 4-Hers to outside things, and peer pressure.” The interviewer questioned the approach used to address the identified issues. The respondents stated,

we developed some things to help improve the problems for youth…they were some sub-committees set up for each area and the committees were formed by a
show of hands from the committee to see who was interested in helping in each area.

The interviewer asked if specific events were discussed at the meeting for example “fund raising, achievement day, or cookery contest” or were the meetings focused on “youth issues and trying to make a plan.” The interviewee responded, “the main point of the meeting was where we needed to go in the future….it was basically what we need to do to help the youth and improve our youth program….it was issues we focused on.” The respondent commented that the parish 4-H agents spent a short period of time recapping the previous programs which may have included some activities, but this was not the main focus of the meeting.

The three parish 4-H advisory committees that were identified as “weak” (interviewee 1, interviewee 2, and interviewee 3) main focus at the meeting was the discussion of events and activities. Several of the interviewees had trouble discerning if any youth issues had been discussed. If they had they were not planned or acted upon by the 4-H parish program according to their recanting of the process. All three of these parish advisory committee spent time on financial matters such as fund raising and the 4-H foundation, which is the financial arm of the local 4-H program. They also mentioned spending time on livestock shows, achievement days, project days, and similar events.

The three parish they were identified as “strong” spent the majority of their time identifying youth issues through various methods like brainstorming. They then utilized sub-committees to take responsibility and plan programs to be implemented to address the issue. Even when specifically asked if the meeting included discussion of events and activities the three interviewees responded that these discussions were minimal at best.
Seventh Objective

The seventh objective of the study was to compare the perceptions of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals with the perceptions of parish 4-H advisory committee members in Louisiana. The first comparison was the perceptual rating of “Meeting Logistics” by the 4-H youth development professionals and parish advisory committee members. To determine if there was a significant difference in the perceptual measures of “Meeting Logistics” an independent t-test was conducted. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the 4-H youth development professionals (Mean = 5.09, SD= .67) and parish 4-H advisory committee members (Mean = 5.29, SD= .64), (t244 = -2.29, p= .023) (See Table 57). The parish 4-H advisory committee members’ level of agreement with the items in the sub-scale “Meeting Logistics” was higher than the level of agreement of the 4-H youth development professionals.

The second measure compared was the ratings concerning the two “Planning and Preparation” sub-scales. An independent t-test was conducted to determine if there was a difference between the ratings of the 4-H youth development professionals and parish 4-H advisory committee members in the “Organization for the meeting” factor within the sub-scale “Planning and Preparation”. The results of the test indicated that there was a significant difference between the two groups (t244 = -3.86, p < .001). The 4-H youth development professionals had a lower mean rating (mean = 4.86, SD= .72), than the parish 4-H advisory committee members (mean = 5.18, SD= .59) (See Table 57). Additionally, an independent t-test was conducted to determine if there was a difference between the ratings of the 4-H youth development professionals and parish advisory
committee members regarding the “Involvement of membership” factor within the sub-scale “Planning and Preparation.” The 4-H youth development professionals once again had a lower mean rating (mean = 3.88, SD = 1.09), than the parish 4-H advisory committee members (mean = 4.17, SD = 1.08). The difference in the ratings was significant ($t_{243} = -2.08$, $p = .039$) (See Table 57).

The sub-scale “Meeting Process” was analyzed by conducting an independent t-test to determine if the ratings from the 4-H youth development professionals differed from the ratings of the parish advisory committee members. This sub-scale had only one factor and the 4-H youth development professionals’ mean rating (mean = 4.90, SD = .75) was lower than the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ mean rating (mean = 5.27, SD = .67). The difference in the two mean ratings was statistically significantly ($t_{240} = -4.10$, $p < .001$) (See Table 57). The “Meeting Process” was perceived as more successful by the parish 4-H advisory committee members than the 4-H youth development professionals.

The sub-scale “Parish 4-H Program Development” was comprised of three factors (“Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input Parish 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agents”). To determine if there was a difference in perceptual ratings between 4-H youth development professionals and parish 4-H advisory committee members an independent t-test was conducted for each factor. All of perceptual ratings for the three Parish 4-H Program Development factors were significantly different. The mean ratings (mean = 3.70, SD = .96) for the factor “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff” for the 4-H youth development professionals, was lower than the mean ratings for the parish 4-H advisory committee members (mean = 4.60, SD = 1.11). The difference in the
ratings for this factor was also significant ($t_{238} = -6.581, p < .001$). The parish 4-H advisory committee members’ perception of the program development process was that the input from all levels (regional, state, parish 4-H advisory, and parish 4-H agents) had greater influence on Parish 4-H Program Development. A complete list with all three factors for the sub-scale “Parish 4-H Program Development” is found in Table 57.

**Table 57: Ratings of sub-scales Meeting Logistics, Planning and Preparation, Meeting Process, and Parish 4-H Program Development as perceived by 4-H youth development professionals and parish 4-H advisory committee members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n²</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Logistics</td>
<td>4-H youth development professionals</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>-2.29</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parish 4-H advisory committee members</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization for the meeting</td>
<td>4-H youth development professionals</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>-3.86</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parish 4-H advisory committee members</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement of membership</td>
<td>4-H youth development professionals</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>-2.08</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parish 4-H advisory committee members</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Process</td>
<td>4-H youth development professionals</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>-4.10</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parish 4-H advisory</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Regional and State staff</td>
<td>4-H youth development professionals</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>-6.58</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parish 4-H advisory committee members</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H advisory committee</td>
<td>4-H youth development professionals</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>-3.10</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish 4-H advisory committee members</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Parish 4-H Agents</td>
<td>4-H youth development professionals</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>-4.14</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>&lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish 4-H advisory committee members</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number of the 104 study participants (4-H youth development professionals) who responded to that item, number of the 142 study participants (Parish 4-H advisory committee who responded to that item).
Chapter Five

Summary

Summary of Purpose and Objectives

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the 4-H Advisory Process as perceived by 4-H professionals in Louisiana and primary stakeholder groups of the LSU Agricultural Center’s 4-H Program.

Specific objectives formulated to guide the researcher included:

1. To describe LSU AgCenter parish 4-H youth development professionals in Louisiana on the following selected demographic characteristics and perceptual measures:
   a. Ethnic background;
   b. Gender;
   c. Age;
   d. Highest level of education completed;
   e. Years served as a 4-H youth development professional;
   f. Number of trainings attended relative to advisory committee responsibilities;
   g. Whether or not they were aware of specific job responsibilities regarding advisory committees;
   h. The number of advisory committee meetings planned and conducted by the professional.

2. To determine the perception of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process:
   a. Meeting logistics;
   b. Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
   c. Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
d. Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

3. To determine if the perceptions of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program are influenced by each of the following perceptual measures and demographic characteristics:
   a. Meeting logistics;
   b. Planning and preparation;
   c. Process and procedures;
   d. Highest level of education completed;
   e. Years served as 4-H youth development professional;
   f. Number of training sessions attended relative to advisory committee responsibilities;
   g. Whether or not they were aware of specific job responsibilities regarding advisory committees;
   h. The number of advisory committee meetings planned and conducted by the professional.

4. To describe members of 4-H parish advisory committees in Louisiana on the following demographics characteristics and perceptual measures:
   a. Ethnic background;
   b. Gender;
   c. Age;
   d. Highest level of education completed;
   e. Involvement in the 4-H organization as:
      1. A student member,
      2. An adult volunteer,
      3. A club or organizational leader,
   f. Length of service on the 4-H advisory committee;
   g. Number of meetings attended in the past two years;
   h. Whether or not selected contact methods were used to solicit their participation in the advisory committee process;
   i. Whether or not selected individuals influenced their decision to participate in the 4-H advisory committee process;
   j. The factor they perceived to have had the greatest influence on their decision to participate in the 4-H advisory committee process;
k. Their self-assessed knowledge of the 4-H youth development process;
l. Whether or not they received training for participating in the 4-H advisory committee process; and
m. Whether or not they received a job description regarding their participation in the 4-H advisory process.

5. To determine the perceptions of members of parish 4-H advisory committees in Louisiana on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process:
   a. Meeting logistics;
   b. Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
   c. Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
   d. Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

6. To determine if the perceptions of the members of parish 4-H advisory committees in Louisiana regarding the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program are influenced by each of the following perceptual measures and demographic characteristics:
   a. The member’s primary motivation to participate in the advisory committee process;
   b. Member’s perceptions regarding meeting logistics;
   c. Member’s perceptions regarding effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
   d. Member’s perceptions regarding effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
   e. Whether or not the members received training on the advisory process prior to the meeting;
   f. Whether or not the members received a detailed advisory committee job description prior to the meeting;
   g. Years served on the advisory committee;
   h. Number of advisory committee meetings attended in the last two years;
   i. Ethnic background;
   j. Highest level of education completed.
7. To compare the perceptions of parish 4-H advisory committee members in Louisiana with the perceptions of LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals on the following aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process:
   a. Meeting logistics;
   b. Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting;
   c. Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting;
   d. Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

Summary of Methodology

Two different and separate populations were targeted in the study. One of the populations was the LSU AgCenter professionals in parish offices with assigned 4-H responsibility. The frame of this population was the Extension Personnel List. A 100% sample (census) was utilized with 104 of the 117 possible participants responding to the survey. The second population was 4-H advisory committee members in the 64 parishes who had attended at least one meeting in 2002, 2003, or 2004. A systematic random sample was used to select four names from each of the 64 parishes in the state. This yielded a sample of 256. The minimum sample size was determined to be 132 utilizing the Cochran’s Sample Size determination formula.

The frame to select the four names in each parish was determined from records supplied by each parish office. A letter was sent by the Vice Chancellor and Director of the Extension Service by e-mail to request that each parish submit the 4-H advisory list to the researcher. All of the 64 parishes responded to the request, and the researcher utilized
the submitted lists and conducted a systematic random sample to obtain the four names per parish.

Two separate but similar researcher designed instruments were utilized for the two populations. Several sources of information were reviewed to assist in instrument design. Information from Adelaine and Foster (1990), Prepared and Engaged Youth National 4-H Impact Assessment Project 2001 (2001), and Cole and Cole (1983) was reviewed prior to the construction of the instrument. A panel comprised of 11 individuals with expertise in 4-H, advisory committees, and instrument design reviewed the instrument. Minor modifications were made based on their recommendations.

The data was collected in two phases. The first phase involved the collection of data from the Extension professionals responsible for 4-H at the LSU AgCenter Annual Conference. Time was allotted on the program when all of the 4-H professionals were assembled for a meeting. At the meeting 106 participants turned in the survey instrument. Of the 106, useable data was collected on 104 of the instruments. Two of the participants were newly employed and had never conducted a parish 4-H advisory committee meeting. The respondents completed the instrument during the session and turned the instrument into their respective Regional 4-H Coordinator in a sealed unmarked envelope that ensured confidentiality. A total of 106 (90.5%) returned the instrument at the session. No follow-up survey had to be mailed due to the target of 90% response rate being achieved.

The survey of the four randomly selected advisory members in every parish was mailed to the study participants. A cover letter explaining the study and requesting their participation was included. The survey was numbered to track non-respondents. Five of
the instruments were returned due to incorrect addresses. After contacting the parish of the participants with incorrect addresses it was determined that no additional mailing would be possible due to the parish only having one address on the participant. After two weeks a postcard was mailed to all non-respondents. One week following the mailing of the postcard the remaining non-respondents were mailed a second copy of the survey. A third mailing to non-respondents followed two weeks after the second mailing. This mailing included a cover letter, postcard, and a copy of the survey. One hundred forty-two (55.5%) parish advisory members responded with data from the survey. An additional 18 (7.0%) responded by returning the blank survey indicating that they had not been a participant on the parish 4-H advisory committee in 2002, 2003, or 2004. Due to a respondent rate below 80% a random sample of 15 non-respondents was contacted by phone to answer 10 randomly selected questions.

A qualitative component of the study was accomplished through an interview process. A purposeful sample to qualify the quantitative findings of the survey was conducted with six people. The possible interview candidates were selected through a reputational selection procedure (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The selections of the potential candidates to be interviewed were based on the recommendation of experts in the parish 4-H advisory process. The experts selected were the five regional 4-H coordinators who work with parishes throughout the state of Louisiana. The five coordinators identified two “weak” parish advisory committees and two “strong” parish advisory committees. From the 10 “weak” and 10 “strong” parishes identified the researcher then selected six parishes (three “weak” and three “strong”) from the list based on population differences and differences in location throughout the state.
These interviews were conducted with members of advisory committees from six different parishes. With the assistance of the 4-H youth development professionals the researcher arranged the six interviews which were conducted by the researcher at locations convenient to the interviewees participating in the study. The interviews were tape recorded for accuracy with the permission of the interviewee.

**Summary of Major Findings**

The first objective of the study was to describe LSU AgCenter 4-H youth development professionals in Louisiana on selected demographic characteristics. The majority of the respondents were classified as white ($n = 86, 90.5\%$). The majority of the respondents were female ($n = 54, 57.4\%$). In regards to age, the mean age reported was $37.42$ ($SD = 9.45$). The most frequently selected category when asked about highest education level completed was “more than a college masters degree” ($n = 38, 39.6\%$).

The 4-H youth development professionals reported the average number of years serving as 4-H youth development professional as $10.23$ ($SD = 7.10$). The largest group of respondents ($n = 22, 23.2\%$) indicated years of experience in the “3 or less” category. The number of trainings that 4-H youth development professionals attended on the advisory process in the past three years was reported by respondents. Responses provided by the study participants ranged from 0 to 12 with a mean number of training sessions attended of $2.19$ ($SD = 1.88$). The number of training sessions reported by the largest group of respondents was one ($n = 37, 37.4\%$).

The 4-H youth development professionals were asked to indicate whether or not their responsibilities relative to advisory committees were included in their most recent job description. Of the 97 participants who responded to this item, $79$ ($81.4\%$) indicated
that their advisory committee responsibilities were included in their job description. They were also asked to report the number of advisory committee meetings they had conducted in the past three years. The average number of advisory committee meetings conducted was 4.69 (SD = 3.18). When the number of meetings conducted was examined in categories, the largest group of respondents (n = 49, 48.0%) provided responses in the “4-6” category.

The second objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of 4-H youth development professionals on the function of the advisory committee process: (a) Meeting logistics; (b) Effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the meeting; (c) Effectiveness of the process and procedures utilized during the meeting; and (d) Identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program.

Regarding “Meeting Logistics” respondents were asked to respond to five items. Mean responses to all of the items were classified in the “Agree” response category, according to the researcher-established interpretive scale, with values ranging from 4.54 to 5.42. The item with which the respondents had the highest level of agreement was “The meeting was held at an accessible location” (mean = 5.42, SD = .76). To further examine the information regarding responses to the “Meeting Logistics” sub-scale, a factor analysis was conducted with the five items to determine if underlying constructs existed in the sub-scale. When the items in this sub-scale were analyzed, one factor was extracted with an eigenvalue of 2.50. This factor accounted for 50% of the variance in the sub-scale. Based on the results of the factor analysis, the items in the “Meeting Logistics” sub-scale were combined into a single score defined as the mean of the five
scale items. The “Meeting Logistics” scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 3.00 to a high of 6.00 with a mean of 5.09 (SD = .67).

The 4-H youth development professionals responded to items on the instrument designed to determine their perception as it relates to the planning and preparation aspects of the 4-H advisory committee meeting. Of the 14 items included in the planning and preparation sub-scale, the item which had the highest mean rating by the responding 4-H youth development professionals was “A copy of the agenda was provided to participants when they arrived for the meeting(s)” (mean = 5.55, SD = .67). A mean score of 3.44 (SD = 1.58) was the lowest score recorded on the item “The membership of the committee has representatives from other youth groups. (Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother, Big Sister, etc…).” To further examine the information derived from the responses to “Meeting Planning and Preparation” sub-scale, a factor analysis was conducted with the scale items to determine if underlying constructs existed in the sub-scale. The optimum number of factors was determined to be two. The factors were labeled “Organization for the meeting” and “Involvement of the membership.” Items included in the first factor (“Organization for the meeting”) related to membership makeup, preparation for the meeting by the 4-H youth development professional, and establishment of clearly defined goals of the advisory committee. Scores were computed for each of the two identified factors in the sub-scale. These scores were identified as the mean of the items included in each of the factors. For the first factor “Organization for the meeting” the individual subject mean scores ranged from a low of 2.67 to a high of 6.00 with the overall mean score of 4.86 (SD = .72). The second factor labeled “Involvement of membership” had a range of individual mean scores from a low of 1.00
to a high of 6.00. The overall mean for the study participants for this factor was 3.88 (SD = 1.09).

Measuring 4-H youth development professionals’ perception of the effectiveness of the process utilized at parish 4-H advisory meetings was determined within the second objective. The item, “The group listened to each member when they spoke” (mean = 5.21, SD = .89) had the highest level of agreement perceptional score according to data from the 4-H youth development professionals. A factor analysis was conducted to further examine the information derived from the “Meeting Process” sub-scale. The most appropriate number of factors was determined to be one. The one-factor solution explained 45.8% of the variance in the sub-scale. The eigenvalue of the one-factor solution was 7.78. The one-factor “Meeting Process” mean scores were computed for each study participant in this factor sub-scale. The subject mean scores included in the factor ranged from a low of 2.57 to a high of 6.00. An overall mean score for study participants of the factor was computed at 4.90 (SD = .75).

Determining the 4-H youth development professionals’ perception on the sources of input on the identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program (Parish 4-H Program Development) was contained within the second objective. The item with which the agents had the highest level of agreement (mean = 5.00, SD = 1.15) was “4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by the parish 4-H agents.” The item with the lowest level of agreement (mean = 3.28, SD = 1.42) was “4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by 4-H state staff.” A factor analysis was conducted with the scale items to determine if underlying constructs existed in the sub-scale “Parish 4-H
Programming.” The most appropriate number of factors was determined to be three. The three factors extracted from the sub-scale were labeled by the researcher as, “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agents.”

Factor mean scores were computed for study participants in the three-factor sub-scales. An overall mean score for study participants of 3.70 (SD = .96) was computed for the first factor “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff.” The range of means for this factor was a low of 1.50 and a high of 5.67. “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” factor had study participants means ranging from a low of 1.50 to a high of 6.00 with the overall mean equaling 4.70 (SD = .92). The third factor “Input Parish 4-H Agents” had a mean of 4.65 (SD = .81) for the study participants. The range of the subject means was a low of 1.50 and high of 6.00. Factor one contributed 34.3% to the variance of the sub-scale, whereas, factor two contributed 13.6% and factor three explained 9.9%.

Objective three was to determine if the perceptions of 4-H youth development professionals regarding Parish 4-H Program Development (identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program) were influenced by selected perceptual and demographic characteristics. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were conducted to determine if a relationship existed between Parish 4-H Program Development that included three factors (“Input Regional and State 4-H staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agent”) and meeting logistics. The highest correlation coefficient was recorded with factor “Input from 4-H advisory committee” and “Meeting Logistics” (r = .602, p < .001).
To determine if a relationship existed between the two factors for planning and preparation and the three factors of the Parish 4-H Program Development sub-scale, Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were conducted and significant relationships were found with all of the factors with the exception of, “Input Parish 4-H Agent,” and “Involvement of membership” \( (r = .111, p = .260) \). The highest correlation, which was substantial, occurred between the program development factor, “Input from 4-H Advisory Committee” and the planning and preparation factor “Organization for meeting” \( (r = .614, p < .001) \).

Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were run and all factors were significantly correlated with the one factor in the Meeting Process sub-scale and the three factors of the Parish 4-H Program Development sub-scale. A substantial correlation when using Davis’ (1971) descriptors was recorded between the Parish 4-H Program Development factor “Input from 4-H Advisory Committee,” and the Meeting Process factor \( (r = .605, p = < .001) \).

To determine if there was a relationship between education level of 4-H youth development professionals and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factors, Kendall’s tau correlation coefficients were computed. The results of this analysis indicated that there was no significant relationship between education level of 4-H youth development professionals and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factors. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated to determine if there was a relationship between years served as a 4-H youth development professional and the three factors Parish 4-H Program Development factors. There was no significant relationship found between years served and these three factors.
A significant relationship was computed between the number of training sessions attended related to advisory committees by the 4-H youth development professionals, and two of the three Parish 4-H Program Development factors. The correlation coefficients conducted were the Pearson Product Moment correlation. The factor “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” and the number of training sessions attended related to advisory committees had a significant relationship \((p = .045)\), and low correlation value (.202), according to the Davis’ (1971) descriptors. A significant relationship \((p = .05)\) and low correlation value according to Davis’ (1971) descriptors (.197), was also determined for the factor “Input Parish 4-H Agent,” and number of training sessions attended related to advisory committees.

An independent sample t-test was performed to determine if there was any difference between whether the responsibilities of 4-H Youth Development professionals relative to advisory committees were included in their most recent job description and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factors. There was a significant difference \((t_{95} = 3.84, p < .001)\) identified with the factor “Input Advisory Committee.” Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated to determine if a relationship existed between the number of advisory committee meetings planned and conducted by the 4-H youth development professional, and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factors. The results indicated that there was no significant relationship identified.

The fourth objective of the study was to describe members of parish 4-H advisory committees in Louisiana on selected demographic characteristics. On the demographic characteristic ethnic background, the ethnicity that was selected by the largest number of respondents was “White” \((n = 105, 76.1\%)\). The next most frequently selected ethnicity
was “Black” \( (n = 29, 21.0\%) \). On the characteristic of gender, 34 (24.6\%) indicated they were male and 104 (75.4\%) responded that they were female. When asked to report age, the majority of respondents \( (n = 77, 55.8\%) \) reported that they were between the ages of 36 and 55. The age category that was reported by the smallest number of respondents \( (n = 2, 1.4\%) \) was “19-25.”

The most frequently selected highest educational level attainment was “High School Diploma” \( (n = 30, 21.6\%) \). Additionally, 23 (16.5\%) indicated that their highest level of education was “Less Than High School.” More than three-fourths \( (n = 107, 75.9\%) \) indicated that they were/had been members of the 4-H organization. Of the 107 participants that responded, 103 reported useable information, with a range of years as a member from 1 to 13, and mean value of 6.02 \( (SD = 2.74) \). A majority of the respondents \( (n = 99, 83.9\%) \) indicated that they had volunteered for 4-H activities in the past. The mean number of times volunteered was 6.96 \( (SD = 7.09) \). The range of number of times volunteered was 1 to 45.

The number of parish 4-H advisory committee members that indicated they had served as a 4-H club or organizational leader was 72 (51.1\%). The mean number of years served as 4-H club or organizational leader reported by respondents was 7.36 \( (SD = 7.36) \). The number of years served as advisory committee member that parish 4-H advisory committee members reported, ranged from 1 year to 17 years. The mean number of years served as an advisory committee member was reported as 3.17 \( (SD = 3.17) \).

The 4-H advisory committee members were asked how they were contacted to participate in the parish advisory process. The contact method identified by the largest
number of participants was “Letter,” \((n = 122, 87.8\%)\). The choice “e-mail” as a contact method was reported by only 21 (15.1%) of the study participants and was the lowest with the exception of the choice “Other,” which was selected by only 6 (4.3%). The individuals who had an influence on their decision to participate as an advisory committee member selected by the largest number of respondents \((n = 122, 87.8\%)\), was “4-H Extension Youth Development Agent.”

When asked to rate their current knowledge of the 4-H youth development program study participants range of ranking was 2 to 5. A total of 138 study participants responded with a mean score of 3.65 \((SD = .84)\). Participants were asked to rank the factor they perceived as having the greatest influence on their decision to participate on the committee. The factor that received the lowest mean score 1.58 \((SD = 1.22)\), “interested in helping youth,” was the factor 4-H advisory committee members reported influenced their decision to participate on the parish 4-H advisory committee the most. The factor that influenced their decision the least, with the exception of “Other,” was “desire to collaborate with other organizations” \((mean = 3.37, SD = .98)\).

The majority of the respondents \((n = 108, 79.4\%)\) indicated they did not receive training to participate in the advisory committee process. Only 28 (20.6%) of the study participants indicated they had received training. However, a larger number did indicate that they did receive some type of job description prior to participating \((n = 78, 57.4\%)\).

The fifth objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of parish 4-H advisory committee members on the selected aspects of the operation and function of the advisory committee process. The mean range of the item means in the “Meeting Logistics” sub-scale was a low of 5.08 to a high of 5.49. All items were within “Agree”
A factor analysis was conducted with the five items in the “Meeting Logistics” sub-scale, which were determined to be one factor in 4-H Youth Development professionals’ data. The eigenvalue of the one factor was 3.13. This factor accounted for 62.6% of the variance in the sub-scale. The “Meeting Logistics” mean scores of the five scale items for the study participants ranged from a low of 2.20 to a high of 6.00, with a mean of 5.29 (SD = .64).

The highest average score in the planning and preparation portion of the advisory committee, 5.47 (SD = .73) was recorded with the item that addressed whether an agenda was provided to the participants upon arrival at the meeting. The lowest mean score recorded, 3.84 (SD = 1.42) was indicated on the item “I collected information concerning youth issues in our parish prior to the meeting and made this available for discussion during the meeting.” The number of factors and the items that were included in the factors were determined using the data from the 4-H youth development professionals. The 4-H youth development professionals’ data yielded two factors “Organization for meeting” and “Involvement of membership.” When the nine items were entered into to the one factor solution, which corresponded to the “Organization for the meeting” factor the eigenvalue was 3.71 and explained 41.2% of the variance. The four items entered as a one-factor solution corresponding to the “Involvement of membership” factor explained 57.8% of the variance and had an eigenvalue of 2.31. For the first factor “Organization for meeting” a mean of the nine scale items was computed. The “Organization for meeting” scale item scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 3.44 to a high of 6.00 with a mean of 5.18 (SD = .59). The study participants scale item scores for the factor “Involvement of membership” ranged from 1.75 to 6.00 (mean = 4.17, SD = 1.08).
The item, “The group listened when I spoke” (mean = 5.50, SD = .65), received the highest level of agreement score from the parish 4-H advisory committee members in the meeting process portion of the advisory process. The number of factors and the items that were included in the factors were determined using the data from the 4-H youth development professionals’ factor analysis. The 4-H youth development professionals’ data yielded one factor “Meeting Process.” As with the data from the 4-H Youth Development professionals three of the 17 items were eliminated from the one factor solution. When the 14 items were entered into to the one-factor solution the eigenvalue was 8.66 and explained 61.8% of the variance. The “Meeting Process” mean scale item scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 2.07 to a high of 6.00 with a mean of 5.27 (SD = .67).

The item with the highest score (mean = 5.21, SD = .88) in the program development section was the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ perception regarding “Input from parish 4-H agents was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.” Using the researcher established interpretive scale this item value was “Agree.” The item with the lowest score (mean = 4.46, SD = 1.25) asked the perception as it related to the implementation of 4-H programs with the help of community volunteers recommended by 4-H regional staff. The number of factors and the items, which were included in the factors, were determined using the data from the 4-H youth development professionals. The factor structure of the advisory committee members confirmed the data used in the 4-H youth development professionals’ factor structure. The 4-H youth development professionals’ data yielded three factors which were: “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input
When the 12 items from the parish 4-H advisory committee data were entered into one-factor solution that corresponded with the factor from the 4-H youth development professionals’ data “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” the factor explained 76.0% of the variance and had an eigenvalue of 9.12. The six items entered as a one-factor solution corresponding to the “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” factor explained 71.1% of the variance and had an eigenvalue of 4.27. When the six items were entered into the one-factor solution that corresponded to the “Input Parish 4-H Agents” factor, the eigenvalue was 4.00 and explained 66.8% of the variance. The “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff” scale item scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 1.00 to a high of 6.00 with a mean of 4.60 (SD = 1.11). The study participants’ scale item scores for the second factor “Input Parish 4-H Advisory Committee” ranged from 1.00 to 6.00 (mean = 5.05, SD = .83). A mean for the six scale items for the third factor “Input Parish 4-H Agents” was calculated for the study participants (mean = 5.09, SD = .83). The range of scores for this factor was 1.00 to 6.00.

Objective six was to determine if the perceptions of members of parish 4-H advisory committees regarding Parish 4-H Program Development (identification, prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the overall parish 4-H program) were influenced by selected perceptual and demographic characteristics. Parish 4-H advisory committee members ranked items regarding the degree of influence it had on their decision to participate as a member of their parish 4-H advisory committee. Pearson Moment Correlation coefficients were calculated to determine if a relationship existed between the Parish 4-H Program Development factors and the items that influenced parish 4-H advisory committee members’ decision to participate. The item
“desire to collaborate with other organizations” had a significant relationship with “Input Parish 4-H Agents” ($r = .302$, $p = .001$).

Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated and a significant relationship existed between all three-program Parish 4-H Program Development factors and the meeting logistic factor. The highest correlation coefficient was recorded with factor “Input from 4-H advisory committee” and “Meeting logistics” ($r = .613$, $p = < .001$). To determine if a relationship existed between the Parish 4-H Program Development three factors and the two planning and preparation factors, Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated and a significant relationship was determined between all of the factors. The highest correlation, which was substantial, occurred between the Parish 4-H Program Development factor “Input 4-H Advisory Committee” and the planning, and preparation factor “Organization for meeting” ($r = .567$, $p = < .001$). To determine if a relationship existed between the meeting process one factor and the three factors of the Parish 4-H Program Development scale, Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficients were calculated and all factors were significantly correlated. A very high correlation was recorded between the program development factor “Input from 4-H Advisory Committee” and the “Meeting Process” factor ($r = .722$, $p = < .001$).

An independent t-test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between those parish 4-H advisory committee members who received training and those who had not received training. The results of the test indicated that there was no significant different between the members who received training and those who had not received any training. An independent t-test was conducted to determine if there was
a significant difference between those parish 4-H advisory committee members who received a job description and those who did not, when compared with the three factor scores related to program development. These results indicated a significant difference between those receiving a job description and those who did not with the factor scores “Input 4-H Advisory Committee,” ($t_{79} = 2.825, p = .006$). Additionally, a significant difference was found with the factor score “Input Parish 4-H Agent,” ($t_{85} = 2.124, p = .037$).

It was determined that no significant relationship existed between number of years served on the advisory committee and the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores. This was determined through the utilization of Pearson Products Moment correlation coefficients. There was no significant relationship between the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores and the number of 4-H advisory committee meetings attended in the past two years using the Pearson Products Moment correlation coefficients.

The results of the independent t-test indicated that there was no significant difference between the established categories “White” and “Non White” when compared on the three Parish 4-H Program Development factor scores. The results of Kendall’s tau correlation coefficients indicated that there was significant relationship between education levels of parish 4-H advisory committee members and the two factors “Input 4-H advisory committee” ($r = .169, p = .008$) and “Input Parish 4-H Agent ($r = .138, p = .032$).

To provide additional information concerning the workings of Parish 4-H advisory committees six interviews of parish advisory committee members were
conducted by the researcher. The people interviewed represented a variety of backgrounds and connections to the 4-H program and community. Interviewees were asked to describe the membership of their parish advisory committees. All six felt that the representation was reflective of the ethnic background of the parish. Both “weak” and “strong” parish committees had representation from ethnic groups in their parish. Some of the parishes selected for the interview were more ethnically diverse than others. To indicate the diversity of the groups’ interviewee number one responded when asked to address the ethnic diversity on the committee “we have people of Asian decent, we have black, we have Hispanic, and we have white.” In contrast, interviewee number six responded that they only have two ethnic groups in the parish.

Interviewees from the “strong” parishes and one identified as “weak” commented extensively on the youth involvement in the process. When asked about youth involvement interviewee number five responded “very definitely so, youth were involved, members of 4-H groups as well a couple of young people that had moved on and maybe were in college or a little bit older.” Interviewee five also was impressed with the youth’s input and participation saying that “the youth have been active and had some good input in some of the meetings.” Interviewee number four was complimentary of the process allowing the youth to have equal voice and vote when compared to the adults on the advisory committee, saying “the youth are just as involved as the adults, and their vote counts just as much.” Additionally, interviewee four commented that youth not involved in the 4-H program were participants at the meeting.

Respondents were then asked if the advisory committee consisted of members who represented other youth agencies (Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, other
youth groups) in the area or parish. Only one of the parishes identified as “strong” indicated that their parish advisory committee consisted of members from other youth agencies.

None of the respondents indicated that they had an opportunity to attend any formalized training to be a participant of the advisory process. Respondents for two “weak” advisory parishes indicated they were not aware of any job description or communication of their expectations as committee participants. The respondent from the other “weak” advisory committee parish indicated that they had received a job description as well as the interviewees from all three of the “strong” advisory committee parishes.

The three parish 4-H advisory committees that were identified as “weak” (interviewee 1, interviewee 2, and interviewee 3) main focus at the meeting was the discussion of events and activities. Several of the interviewees had trouble discerning if any youth issues had been discussed. If they had they were not planned or acted upon by the 4-H parish program according to their recanting of the process. All three of these parish advisory committee spent time on financial matters such as fund raising and the 4-H foundation, which is the financial arm of the local 4-H program. They also mentioned spending time on livestock shows, achievement days, project days, and similar events.

The three parish they were identified as “strong,” interviewee four, five, and six spent the majority of their time identifying youth issues through various methods like brainstorming. They then utilized sub-committees to take responsibility and plan programs to be implemented to address the issue. Even when specifically asked if the
meeting included discussion of events and activities the three interviewees responded that these discussions were minimal at best.

The seventh objective of the study was to compare the perceptions of 4-H youth development professionals with the perceptions of parish 4-H advisory committee members in Louisiana. An independent t-test was conducted and a significant difference between the perceptual measures of “Meeting Logistics” was determined. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the 4-H youth development professionals (Mean = 5.09, SD = .67) and parish 4-H advisory committee members (Mean = 5.29, SD = .64), (t_{244} = -2.29, p = .023). An independent t-test was conducted and determined a significant difference between the ratings of the 4-H youth development professionals and parish 4-H advisory committee members regarding the “Organization for the meeting” factor within the sub-scale “Planning and Preparation”. The results of the test indicated that the 4-H youth development professionals’ score was significantly lower than the parish 4-H advisory members’ score (t_{244} = -3.864, p < .001).

Additionally, an independent t-test was conducted, and it was determined that a significantly lower score was recorded by the 4-H youth development professionals than the parish advisory committee members, regarding the “Involvement of membership” factor within the sub-scale “Planning and Preparation.” The difference in the ratings was significant (t_{243} = -2.08, p = .039).

The sub-scale “Meeting Process” was analyzed by conducting an independent t-test to determine if the ratings from the 4-H youth development professionals differed from the ratings of the parish advisory committee members. This sub-scale had only one factor and the 4-H youth development professionals’ mean rating (mean = 4.90, SD =
.75) was lower than the parish 4-H advisory committee members’ mean rating (mean = 5.27, SD = .67). The difference in the two mean ratings was statistically significant (t240 = -4.10, p < .001).

The sub-scale “Program Development” was comprised of three factors (“Input Regional and State 4-H Staff,” “Input Parish 4-H Advisory Committee,” and “Input Parish 4-H Agents”). To determine if there was a difference in perceptional ratings between 4-H youth development professionals and parish 4-H advisory committee members an independent t-test was conducted for each factor. The mean ratings (mean = 3.70, SD = .96) for the factor “Input Regional and State 4-H Staff” for the 4-H youth development professionals was lower than the mean ratings (mean = 4.60, SD = 1.11) for parish 4-H advisory committee members. The difference in the ratings for this factor was also significant (t238 = -6.581, p < .001).

**Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations**

The following conclusions and recommendations were formed based on the results of the study.

1. Parishes throughout the state are conducting 4-H advisory committee meetings.

   This conclusion is based on the findings that parish 4-H advisory members indicated they attended an average of 2.85 (SD = 2.21) parish 4-H advisory meetings in the past two years. This equates to approximately 1.43 meetings per year. The information reported by the 4-H youth development professionals indicated that the average number of advisory committee meetings conducted in the past three years was 4.69 (SD = 3.18). This was equivalent to an average of 1.56 meetings per year. Additionally, advisory committee respondents in the study level of agreement on
“The number of meetings held during the year were adequate” received the lowest score (mean = 5.08, SD = .99) of the five meeting logistics items in the scale.

Findings from Ebling (1985) suggested successful advisory committees should meet four times per year. Hammatt et al. (n.d.) suggested that 4-H advisory committees meet at least three times a year.

The researcher recommends that parish 4-H advisory committees meet a minimum of twice yearly. Parish 4-H advisory committees, along with parish 4-H staff, should assess their local needs and programming, to determine the appropriate number of meetings for their local situation above two meetings per year.

2. Some of the advisory committee membership lists maintained by the parish 4-H offices are not kept up-to-date and accurate.

This conclusion is based on the findings that 32 participants responded that they were not active advisory member or had never attended a 4-H advisory committee meeting. Additionally, five of the addresses supplied were not correct.

The accuracy of the parish advisory committees membership lists was questioned in early findings. The legislative audit conducted by the State of Louisiana (2004) identified these problems with advisory committee lists supplied to them by the LSU AgCenter Cooperative Extension Service. The Louisiana State Audit team concluded that several members of parish advisory committees according to parish records were not aware that they were members. Also, some of the contact information for advisory members provide by the parish staff was incorrect.
It is recommended that the LSU AgCenter Extension Service adopt a procedure to ensure that every parish office is keeping an accurate and updated list of 4-H advisory committee members. This can be accomplished by including attendance information (name and address of attendees and name and address of those members not in attendance) in the minutes of the meeting. Advisory committee minutes should be included in information sent to each regional 4-H coordinator on an annual basis. Additionally, it is recommended that if members on the advisory list have not attended a meeting in two years that the parish office remove them from the list and replace them with a person willing to attend the meetings. It is recommended that mailing addresses of the membership be verified and updated at each meeting.

3. The membership of the parish 4-H advisory committee is not adequately diverse in their representation.

This conclusion is based on the findings that more than 75% of the parish advisory committee members indicated they were white. Respondents in the study that indicated white as their ethnic background were 105 (76.1%). While only 29 (21%) indicated they were black. These percentages do not mirror the population in Louisiana, especially in the urban areas where in some public school systems the student population is greater than 50% black. Additionally, respondents indicated at a rate of greater than 75% \((n = 107, 75.9\%)\) that they had been former members of 4-H. Study participants responding also indicated at a high rate \((n = 99, 83.9\%)\) that they had volunteered for 4-H activities in the past. Seventy-two (51.1%), also reported that they had served as an organizational or club 4-H leader in the past. These three sources of information indicate that a large portion of the parish advisory committee
members have a strong association with 4-H and are from the “4-H family.” When
the interviewees in the qualitative study were asked if they had representation from
other youth groups they responded that there was minimal if any representation.
Interviewee two responded “there could be someone from future farmers possibly but
outside of that I really do not know.” Interviewee three responded when asked about
other youth group representatives, “yes a lot of our 4-Hers are boy scouts or girl
scouts.” This answer reinforces the utilization of members who are from the “4-H
family.” To further reinforce that absence of community youth group representation
is an issue the data from the study of 4-H youth development professionals indicated
their perception on this statement “The membership of the committee has
representatives for other youth groups, (Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother,
Big Sister, etc…”) as a mean score of 3.44 (SD = 1.58). This was the lowest score in
the planning and preparation sub-scale and was interpreted as Mildly Disagree. The
parish 4-H advisory committee members also had a low level of agreement with this
same item. The mean score was 4.08 (SD = 1.45) which was interpreted as Mildly
Agree and was the second lowest in the planning and preparation sub-scale for this
group.

Earlier findings by Black et al. (1992) stated that to keep up with changing
times, clientele base and programming, that county-level advisory boards must
expand beyond the immediate family or client’s professionals work with on an
intimate basis. Hammatt et al. (n.d.) emphasized that 4-H advisory committees should
be 1/3 youth, 1/3 member of the immediate 4-H family, and 1/3 community at large
(business leaders, civic leaders, youth groups, elected officials and other fraternal
Buck (1997) reported that a program called “Valuing Differences” conducted in Oklahoma increased the diversity of membership on program advisory committees. This in turn increased the number of collaborative efforts and allowed staff to reach new audiences according to the Oklahoma Extension Staff. Black et al. (1992) emphasized that advisory councils must represent all the clientele to be effective. Rennekamp and Gerhard (1992) found the composition of advisory groups made it difficult to engage in meaningful assessments of community needs and priorities. Advisory group members tended to be involved in core Extension programs, which allowed programming to be very narrow in scope.

The researcher recommends that the LSU AgCenter increase the diversity of participation in the 4-H advisory committee meeting process. Through the utilization of trainings, 4-H youth development professionals should be taught identification and recruitment techniques to increase the diversity of representation on local advisory committees. Additionally, the 4-H youth development professionals should be trained to deliver training to prospective advisory committee members not familiar with 4-H.

4. The main focus of some parish 4-H advisory committee meetings was on the planning and evaluation of 4-H events and activities.

This conclusion is based on the findings from the parish 4-H advisory committee members. The item “The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities)” had a mean score of 2.54 (SD = 1.40) and was interpreted as “Mildly Agree.” The data from the 4-H youth development professionals also indicated level of agreement as “Mildly Agree”
(mean = 3.30, SD = 1.41). When interviewees from the qualitative study were asked questions concerning the focus of the advisory committee meeting the representatives from the “weak” committees considered the focus to be the planning and evaluating of events and activities. When asked what the advisory committee meeting focused on, interviewee one responded, “one of the things we are focusing on right now is fundraising.” In response to the planning of events and activities the interviewee recalled, “we spend time on the programs we already have in place and if there is anything coming up we spend a little extra time planning that.” Interviewee two specified that meetings focused mainly on events and activities, stating “I would say we focus on events that are going to take place, … I would say the main focus is the events that the club is actually participating in.” Interviewee two responded that one of the main focuses of the advisory committee was money raising, “how to raise money, money is a big issue.”

These findings concur with early findings from Rennekamp and Gerhard (1992). They found that although many advisory groups recognize youth problems, very little was accomplished toward resolution of these due to the committees’ reluctance to de-emphasize on-going or current events and activities. In Cole’s (1980) advisory council model she found that if the programming skill component, which included need assessments, goals, objectives, planning, evaluating, and disseminating of information was diminished the entire advisory process would weakened substantially.

Hammatt et al. (n.d.) outlined several functions of the parish 4-H advisory committee. They indicated that committees should be responsible for the
determination of youth needs, interests and priorities and members should be involved in the planning and implementation of new programs. They should also be involved in expanding volunteer involvement and increasing the roles volunteers play in the program. The committee should be involved in representing the parish program to elected officials according to Hammatt et al. Ludwig (2000) reported that through the Extension advisory process global and international issues were identified and tied to local agricultural concerns in Ohio. These concerns and programming efforts were communicated by the committee to state and local officials. Also in Ohio, Owen, Ludwig, and Thorne (1988) identified the Extension advisory committee and its process as an important tool in securing additional local funding from the government agency. The committee outlined the financial impact and savings of the local extension staff to the county government. The results of the committees work was increased local funding for Extension rather than a reduction in funding.

The researcher recommends that the focus of the meeting be shifted from the planning and evaluation of events and activities to the identification, planning, implementation and evaluation of youth issues in the parish. To accomplish this, required training should be developed to allow 4-H youth development professionals an opportunity to learn new methods and procedures to shift the focus of the advisory process from events and activities to more of a total programmatic focus. Also, it is recommended that a sub-committee structure be developed in association with the overall parish 4-H advisory process to address the need to evaluate and plan parish events and activities. An increased emphasis should be placed on proper functioning
of parish 4-H advisory committees when 4-H youth development professionals are evaluated by regional 4-H coordinators, parish chairman, and regional directors.

5. Several parish 4-H advisory committees are functioning by current guidelines established by the state 4-H department which included focusing on identification, planning and implementation of youth issues based on parish needs.

This conclusion is based on the findings that the parishes that were identified as “strong” in the qualitative portion of the study indicated that the major focus of the advisory committee meetings was identification, planning and implementation of youth issues. When questioned about what types of issues were identified and addressed, interviewee four responded,

We went on a youth crime tour to Angola prison and listened to prisoners that were on death row and saw the lethal injection table and heard different prisoners talk about different experiences. They warned us to stay out of trouble now while you can and it is a lot easier. We had a program on alcohol where we heard from people from MADD and Red Cross first responders, cops that issue the tickets, and how much it will cost you monetarily to be caught driving under the influence. We heard from people that had family killed by drunk drivers….we had programs on teen pregnancy, statistics on STD’s (sexually transmitted disease).

When asked to explain the focus of the parish 4-H advisory committee interviewee five commented,

There was a huge brainstorming looking at trying to help students do better in school, how we could help them in leadership activities, and how
we could help them better prepare for college and the world…then over time the general concepts identified were defined into specific programs and events, then after these events came to be then we would critique the actual event and brainstorm on how this event could be expanded to touch some areas that were related, but maybe had not been identified earlier….it was a combination of program development which included events to accomplish the programs and it was an evolution of all of that.

These findings are consistent with the guidelines established by Hammatt et al. (n.d.). They outlined several functions of the parish 4-H advisory committee. They indicated that committees should be responsible for the determination of youth needs, interests and priorities and members should be involved in the planning and implementation of new programs. They should also be involved in expanding volunteer involvement and increasing the roles volunteers play in the program. The committee should also be involved in representing the parish program to elected officials according to Hammatt et al.

The researcher recommends that these parish 4-H advisory committees continue to focus on the identification, planning, implementation and evaluation based on the needs and issues of youth. Additionally, it is recommended committee members from these types of 4-H advisory committees be utilized as trainers to help other 4-H advisory committees alter their focus from events and activities to youth issues. Parish 4-H advisory committees that focus on youth issues should present their programmatic approach at local, regional, state, and national volunteer events. It is also recommended that 4-H youth development professionals not familiar with this
programmatic approach attend (as observers) parish 4-H advisory committee meetings that are implementing this technique.

6. Most parish 4-H advisory members were not formally prepared to participate in the advisory process.

This conclusion is based on the findings that only 28 (20.6%) of the study participants indicated they had received training to participate as an advisory committee member. The number of respondents who indicated they did not receive training was 108 (79.4%). Just over half (n = 78, 57.4%) indicated that they had received some type of job description or explanation of expectations prior to serving as an advisory committee member. In the qualitative portion of the study interviewee two who represented a parish advisory committee identified as “weak” responded when asked about formalized training “myself I did not receive any training, but I do know I felt very comfortable.” Advisory committee members interviewed were asked whether they had received a job description detailing their expectations as a participant on the parish committee. Respondents for two “weak” advisory parishes indicated they were not aware of any job description or communication of their expectations as committee participants. Interviewee three responded to this question “no we may have done it in the past and I guess as far as a routine deal I would say no.” “As far as I remember I do not remember any kind of a background of what I would be doing” was the response from interviewee two when asked the question concerning receiving a job description or explanation of expectations.
Earlier findings by Rebori (2001) suggested many board members accepted positions with the expectation of receiving training in areas such as capacity building skills. Members were trained in time management, conflict management, problem-solving, goal-setting, action planning, and decision-making. Rebori (2001) found the training sessions re-focused efforts on improving the operating process of the advisory boards and built stronger relationships between the county officials and the board themselves. This program grew to more than just a training session. It evolved into a community development process that modeled community capacity, improved government participation in the process, and engaged civic dialogue. Hammatt et al. (n.d.) noted that the first step to developing a successful advisory committee is to clearly define the roles and expectations of the membership. They recommended using a 4-H Program Advisory Committee Job Description. Using a job description is basic step in the volunteer management process.

The researcher recommends that Parish 4-H youth development professionals should be trained in the appropriate areas of advisory committee development and management. Once trained, Parish 4-H youth development professionals should initiate a training session on the local level to increase the competency of advisory committee members and improve the function of the overall parish 4-H advisory committee. Training sessions on advisory committee competencies should be developed and offered at the Area and State volunteer leaders sessions.

7. Parish 4-H advisory committee members felt that parish 4-H agents have the greatest influence on Parish 4-H Program Development.
This conclusion is based on the findings from the parish 4-H advisory committee members that the item, “Input from parish 4-H agents was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program,” had a mean of 5.21 (SD = .88) and was interpreted as “Agree.” Additionally, the item, “Input from parish 4-H agents was used to implement the parish 4-H program,” had a mean of 5.19 (SD = .77) and was interpreted as “Agree.” The item, “4-H programs previously conducted were reviewed by parish 4-H agents,” had a mean of 5.15 (SD = 1.00) and was classified as “Agree.” Also the item, “Input from parish 4-H agents was used to plan the parish 4-H program,” had a mean of 5.13 (SD = 1.02) and was also classified as “Agree.” These four items received the highest level of agreement rating in the Parish 4-H Program Development sub-scale by the parish 4-H advisory committee members.

Information from the interviews supported the findings that the parish 4-H agent plays a major role in Parish 4-H Program Development. Interviewee one responded when asked about the function of the parish 4-H agent in the advisory committee process, “We come in and do what we have to do. We do not have a chairman the 4-H agent kind of is in charge because he knows more than we do about 4-H.”

Interviewee two also indicated that the local 4-H agent facilitated and conducted the meeting as opposed to a specific chairman.

The agent just guides us through the agenda, but more or less he makes sure we are not talking about everything else in the world you know all the sports events … He makes sure to be like a time-keeper and keeps us on track and introduces the topic.
These findings are consistent with results reported by Adelaine and Foster (1990). A completed survey of 2,903 users of Extension rated the group that had the most influence on program direction in the Extension Service, and they found the general public had the least influence. The most influence on program direction was attributed to the Extension faculty. The client group served stated they believed they had only a slight influence on program direction; whereas, the Extension agents surveyed stated they had “considerable influence” on program direction. Boyle (1981) developed a conceptual model which depicted the relationship between procedures and program development. In the model adapted from Boyle’s (1981) theoretical model of program development the educator (4-H agent) is involved in need or problem identification, the assessment phase, and the actual delivery of the program.

The researcher recommends that the parish 4-H advisory committee members increase their role in Parish 4-H Program Development. This can be accomplished by developing training sessions for advisory committee members which emphasizes the importance of involvement of the committee in all phases of the 4-H program development process.

8. The parish 4-H advisory meeting process is open and inclusive.

This conclusion is based on the findings from the “Meeting Process” factor. For the factor “Meeting Process” a mean of the 14 scale items was computed. The “Meeting Process” mean scale item scores for the study participants ranged from a low of 2.07 to a high of 6.00 with a mean of 5.27 (SD = .67). According to the interpretative scale established by the researcher, this overall “Meeting Process” score
was classified in the “Agree” category. Additionally, the item in the “Meeting Process” sub-scale, “The group listened when I spoke,” had a mean of 5.50 (SD = .65) and was interpreted as “Agree.” The item, “I felt as if my opinion was taken seriously,” had a mean of 5.49 (SD = .76) and was interpreted as “Agree.” The item, “I felt the group was trusting,” had a mean of 5.44 (SD = .74) and was classified as “Agree.” These items were included in the “Meeting Process” sub-scale and the level of agreement scores were reported by parish 4-H advisory committee members.

Information from the interviews supported the findings that the process at the parish 4-H advisory committee meetings was open and inclusive. Interviewee six commented that they thought the advisory meetings were very inclusive and the facilitator made sure they included everyone in the discussions. When asked, “do you feel like everyone was given a chance to participate”? Interviewee six responded “I think the facilitator said we needed to allow each person an opportunity to talk and to share, to be mindful of each other and respect each other…. each person was able to contribute in their own way.” Interviewee five, a member of a committee identified as “strong,” commented when asked about members being inclusive and open, “yes there was a very free sense of exchange honoring each others’ opinions.”

The importance of the meeting process concurs with information from Cole (1980). The group process portion addressed the group dynamics such as: listening, trust, openness, understanding roles, problem solving, and productivity. Cole’s (1980) design of the advisory committee structure included three equal portions, group process skill, structural, and programming skills. She stressed that all three portions need to function for the advisory committee to be effective.
The researcher recommends that parish advisory committees continue to be open and inclusive of all participants. The use of a facilitator is recommended for parish committees who are experiencing difficulty in obtaining input from all committee members.
References


Hammatt, D., McCrory, J., & Mullen, S. *Guidelines for Developing Effective Advisory Committees*, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center (unnumbered publication).


Montana 4-H research summary publication 6000. www.montana.edu/www4h/4hsurvey.pdf


210


Appendix A
Letter to Parish Chairman and 4-H Agents

December 17, 2004

MEMORANDUM VIA E-MAIL

TO: Parish Chairman and 4-H Agents

RE: Parish 4-H Advisory Process Survey

The 4-H advisory process is an integral part to program development in 4-H. In order to adequately assess its relevance and effectiveness a survey has been designed. It is crucial to obtain information pertaining to the parish advisory process from local advisory committee members. To accomplish this goal a random sample of parish advisory committee members will be asked to complete the survey.

We are requesting that you e-mail a list of overall 4-H advisory members that includes mailing addresses of those who have attended a minimum of one advisory meeting in 2002, 2003, or 2004. From this list a random sample of four names from each parish will be selected to participate in the survey. These names will be kept confidential. Please e-mail the requested list to Mark Tassin at mgtassin@lsuagcenter.lsu.edu.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to compile and send this list. This is a critical piece in determining the effectiveness of the parish 4-H advisory process. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact Mark Tassin at 225-578-7415 or the e-mail address provided above.

Sincerely,

Paul D. Coreil
Vice Chancellor and Director

PDC/twb
Appendix B
Questionnaire 4-H Agents

4-H PARISH ADVISORY PROCESS
Have you had any experience within the organization conducting an advisory committee meeting?
___ yes
___ no (if no please stop here and place survey in envelope provide and seal)

As a 4-H Youth Development Agent with the Cooperative Extension Service please complete the survey to help determine the effectiveness of the 4-H advisory process in your parish. Your opinion is valuable. Please respond to the following items to the best of your ability.

1. Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following as it applies to meeting logistics of the advisory committee. (Circle appropriate number)
SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, MA=Mildly Agree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The meeting was scheduled at a convenient time for the committee.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The meeting was held at an accessible location.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The day of week the meeting(s) were held fit my schedule.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The refreshments provided at the meeting(s) were adequate.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The number of meetings held during the year were adequate.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following as it applies to the planning and preparation of the advisory meetings in your parish. (Circle the appropriate number)
SD = Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, MD=Mildly Disagree, MA=Mildly Agree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The goals of the advisory committee were clearly defined.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The membership of the committee represents all segments of the parish population. (ethnic background, parts of parish, age, gender, etc…)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The membership of the committee has youth involvement.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The membership of the committee has representatives from other youth groups. (Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother, Big Sister, etc….)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. The membership is rotational (members serve specific terms and are replaced when their term expires).  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

6. The agenda for the meeting was provided before the meeting (mail, e-mail or other form of communication).  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

7. A copy of the agenda was provided to participants when they arrived for the meeting(s).  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

8. The leadership in conducting the meeting was provided by 4-H agent(s).  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

9. The leadership in conducting the meeting was provided by an advisory committee member identified as the chairman of the committee.  
   1 2 3 4 5 6

10. Members were prepared to contribute through their prior knowledge of 4-H.  
    1 2 3 4 5 6

11. Members were prepared to contribute through communication with other 4-H advisory committee members.  
    1 2 3 4 5 6

12. Members were prepared to contribute through communication with 4-H agents.  
    1 2 3 4 5 6

13. Members were encouraged to be aware of current youth issues in their parish prior to the meeting.  
    1 2 3 4 5 6

14. Members were encouraged to collect information concerning youth issues in their parish prior to the meeting to prepare for discussion during the meeting.  
    1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following as it applies to the process used at advisory committee meetings. (Circle the appropriate number)  
SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, MD=Mildly Disagree, MA=Mildly Agree A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The agenda was followed closely.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Input of membership was sought to develop the agenda.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. During the meeting every member was made to feel part of the group.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Every member’s opinion was taken seriously and meant something.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The group listened to each member when they spoke.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. When decisions were made the entire group participated.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Each member’s talents were utilized in the group.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The group was open.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The group was trusting.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. All members felt like a part of the group.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. **Each** member was not given a chance to participate.  
12. One member of the group dominated the discussion.  
13. The leader of the group was effective in conducting the meeting.  
14. The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities).  
15. The meeting(s) focused on identifying youth needs in the parish.  
16. The goals that were established in the meeting were attainable.  
17. The overall meeting was effective.  

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Each member was not given a chance to participate.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. One member of the group dominated the discussion.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The leader of the group was effective in conducting the meeting.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The meeting(s) focused mainly on 4-H events (such as achievement day, cooking contest, and other activities).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The meeting(s) focused on identifying youth needs in the parish.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The goals that were established in the meeting were attainable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The overall meeting was effective.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4. Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following as it applies to the 4-H programs conducted in your parish. (Circle the appropriate number)**  
SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, MD=Mildly Disagree, MA=Mildly Agree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Input from the advisory committee was used to <strong>identify</strong> youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Input from parish 4-H agents was used to <strong>identify</strong> youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Input from 4-H regional staff was used to <strong>identify</strong> youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Input from 4-H state staff was used to <strong>identify</strong> youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Input from the advisory committee was used to <strong>plan</strong> the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Input from parish 4-H agents was used to <strong>plan</strong> the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Input from 4-H regional staff was used to <strong>plan</strong> the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Input from 4-H state staff was used to <strong>plan</strong> the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Input from the advisory committee was used to <strong>prioritize</strong> the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Input from parish 4-H agents was used to <strong>prioritize</strong> the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Input from 4-H regional staff was used to <strong>prioritize</strong> the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Input from 4-H state staff was used to <strong>prioritize</strong> the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Input from the advisory committee members was used to **implement** the parish 4-H program.

14. Input from parish 4-H agents was used to **implement** the parish 4-H program.

15. Input from 4-H regional staff was used to **implement** the parish 4-H program.

16. Input from 4-H state staff was used to **implement** the parish 4-H program.

17. 4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers **recommended** by the advisory committee.

18. 4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers **recommended** by the parish 4-H agents.

19. 4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers **recommended** by 4-H regional staff.

20. 4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers **recommended** by 4-H state staff.

21. 4-H programs previously conducted were **reviewed** by the advisory committee.

22. 4-H programs previously conducted were **reviewed** by the parish 4-H agents.

23. 4-H programs previously conducted were **reviewed** by 4-H regional staff.

24. 4-H program previously conducted were **reviewed** by 4-H state staff.

5. How many years have you been a 4-H youth development professional? _______

6. How were members contacted to participate in the advisory process? (check all that apply)
   
   ______ Phone  
   ______ Letter  
   ______ e-mail  
   ______ Personal visit  
   ______ Other (please specify ______________________)
7. Please rank each of the following items regarding your opinion of the degree of influence it had on the decision of members of your parish 4-H advisory committee to join the advisory committee. (Use “1” to indicate the item that you feel had the highest amount of influence, “2” to indicate the item that you felt had the next highest influence, etc…. If you identify an “Other” factor, please specify and rank also.

_______ interested in helping the youth

_______ interested in serving the community

_______ desire to collaborate with other organizations

_______ other (please specify ______________________)

8. How many trainings on the advisory process have you attended in the last 3 years? ____

9. Which of the following was your primary source of information utilized in conducting your advisory committee meeting? (please check only one)

___ Advisory Committee Trainings
___ Parish Chairman
___ Co-worker(s)
___ Regional 4-H Coordinator
___ State 4-H Staff
___ Books
___ Research

10. Were your responsibilities relative to advisory committees included in your most recent job description?

____ yes
____ no

11. How many 4-H advisory committee meetings have you conducted in your parish in the past 3 years?

____

12. Check the following as it applies to you:

___ White
___ Black
___ Hispanic
___ Am. Indian
___ Asian
___ Other (please specify _____________________)
13. What is your gender?
   ___ Male
   ___ Female

14. What is your age as of your last birthday? _____

15. Check the highest educational level you have attained:
   ___ college bachelor’s degree
   ___ more than college bachelor’s degree
   ___ college master’s degree
   ___ more than college master’s degree
   ___ doctorate degree
Appendix C
Questionnaire 4-H Advisory Members

4-H PARISH ADVISORY PROCESS

As a member of the parish 4-H advisory committee your input is being sought to help determine the effectiveness of the process. Your opinion is valued. Please respond to all of the following items to the best of your ability. If you are not a current member of the advisory committee in your parish and you received this survey in error please place blank survey in the addressed envelope provided and return.

1. Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following as it applies to meeting logistics of the advisory committee. (Circle appropriate number)
   SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, MD=Mildly Disagree, MA=Mildly Agree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The meeting was scheduled at a convenient time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The meeting was held at an accessible location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The day of week the meeting(s) were held fit my schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The refreshments provided at the meeting(s) were adequate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The number of meetings held during the year were adequate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following as it applies to the planning and preparation of the advisory meetings in your parish. (Circle appropriate number)
   SD = Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, MD=Mildly Disagree, MA=Mildly Agree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The goals of the advisory committee were clearly defined.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The membership of the committee represents all segments of the parish population. (parts of the parish, ethnic background, age, gender, etc…)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The membership of the committee has youth involvement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The membership of the committee has representatives from other youth groups. (Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brother, Big Sister, etc…)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The membership is rotational (members serve specific terms and are replaced when their term expires).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The agenda for the meeting was provided before the meeting (by mail, e-mail, or other form of communication).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. A copy of the agenda was provided when I arrived for the meeting(s).

8. The leadership in conducting the meeting was provided by the 4-H agent.

9. The leadership in conducting the meeting was provided by an advisory committee member who was the chairman of the committee.

10. I was prepared to contribute through my prior knowledge of 4-H.

11. I was prepared to contribute through communication with other 4-H advisory committee members.

12. I was prepared to contribute through communication with 4-H agents.

13. I studied current youth issues in our parish prior to the meeting.

14. I collected information concerning youth issues in our parish prior to the meeting and made this available for discussion during the meeting.

---

3. Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following as it applies to the process used at advisory committee meetings. (circle the appropriate number)

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, MD=Mildly Disagree, MA=Mildly Agree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>MA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Indicate your level of agreement with each of the following as it applies to the 4-H programs conducted in your parish. (Circle the appropriate number) SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, MD=Mildly Disagree, MA=Mildly Agree, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Input from the advisory committee was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Input from parish 4-H agents was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Input from 4-H regional staff was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Input from 4-H state staff was used to identify youth issues related to the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Input from the advisory committee was used to plan the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Input from parish 4-H agents was used to plan the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Input from 4-H regional staff was used to plan the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Input from 4-H state staff was used to plan the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Input from the advisory committee was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Input from parish 4-H agents was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Input from 4-H regional staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Input from 4-H state staff was used to prioritize the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Input from the advisory committee members was used to implement the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Input from parish 4-H agents was used to implement the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Input from 4-H regional staff was used to implement the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Input from 4-H state staff was used to implement the parish 4-H program.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. 4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers recommended by the advisory committee.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. 4-H programs were implemented with assistance of other community volunteers recommended by the parish 4-H agents.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19. 4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers **recommended** by 4-H regional staff.

20. 4-H programs were implemented with the assistance of other community volunteers **recommended** by 4-H state staff.

21. 4-H programs previously conducted were **reviewed** by the advisory committee.

22. 4-H programs previously conducted were **reviewed** by the parish 4-H agents.

23. 4-H programs previously conducted were **reviewed** by 4-H regional staff.

24. 4-H program previously conducted were **reviewed** by 4-H state staff.

5. Were you a member of the 4-H organization?
   _____ Yes  If yes, how many years?_______
   _____ No

6. a. Have you served as a volunteer for 4-H activities in the past? (ie: judge, guest speaker, cook, committee member, driver for events, etc….)
   _____ Yes  If yes, how many times in the past three years? ____
   _____ No

   b. Have you served as 4-H club or organizational leader?
   _____ Yes  If yes, how many years? ______
   _____ No

7. How many years have you served on the 4-H advisory committee? ____

8. How many parish 4-H advisory meetings have you attended in the past two years? ____

9. How were you contacted to participate in the advisory process? *(check all that apply)*
   _____ Phone
   _____ Letter
   _____ e-mail
   _____ Personal visit
   _____ Other (please specify ______________________)  

10. Which of the following individuals had an influence on your decision to participate as an advisory committee member? *(check all that apply)*
11. Please rank each of the following items regarding the degree of influence it had on your decision to participate as a member of your parish 4-H advisory committee (Use “1” to indicate the item that had the highest amount of influence, “2” to indicate the item that had the next highest level of influence, etc… If you identify another factor please specify and rank also)

- interested in helping the youth
- interested in serving the community
- desire to collaborate with other organizations
- other (please specify ______________________)

12. Rate your current knowledge of the 4-H youth development program. (circle one)

No knowledge      Some Knowledge    Moderate      Much      Very High
Knowledge
1  2  3       4  5

13. Did you receive any training prior to the meeting for this position as a 4-H advisory committee member?

- yes
- no

14. Did you receive a job description which detailed your responsibilities as an advisory committee member?

- yes  If yes when?  ____ prior to meeting  ____ at the meeting
- no

15. Check one of the following as it applies to your ethnic background?

- White
- Black
- Hispanic
- Asian
- American Indian
- Other (please specify ______________________)
16. What is your gender?
   ____ Male
   ____ Female

17. Check the age category that applies to you:
   ____ Under 19
   ____ 19-25
   ____ 26-35
   ____ 36-45
   ____ 46-55
   ____ over 56

18. Check the highest educational level you have attained:
   ____ less than high school
   ____ high school diploma
   ____ associate degree
   ____ college bachelor’s degree
   ____ more than college bachelor’s degree
   ____ college master’s degree
   ____ more than college master’s degree
   ____ doctorate degree
Appendix D
Letter 4-H Youth Development Professionals

December 14, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: 4-H Youth Development Professionals

RE: Parish 4-H Advisory Process Survey

Developing 4-H programs that meet the needs of local youth is vital to the organization’s long-term success. An integral component of being able to develop these relevant programs is the Parish 4-H Advisory Committee Process. This process enables 4-H professionals to involve stakeholder groups in the program development process. The involvement of these groups is critical to keeping programs updated and relevant so that they remain viable.

You are a vital part of the 4-H program development process. Since the parish 4-H agents are charged with the duty of initiating the advisory committee process and then have the responsibility of using the information resulting from the process to keep programs current and up-to-date, your views of the advisory committee process are extremely important. Additionally, since much of the 4-H program development is based in the local community, it is critical that we have input from all of the parish programs in the state.

All of the information that you provide will be held in the strictest of confidence. At no time will any of your responses be directly associated with your name or parish. There is NO identification number located on the questionnaire. We ask that you complete the survey and submit it to your regional 4-H coordinator in a sealed envelope. Your name will be marked off of the respondent list and the survey will be submitted to Mark Tassin with no individual identifiers. Therefore, your individual responses will be anonymous.

I would like to thank you for your time and effort in completing this survey to help us in our ongoing attempts to improve the Louisiana 4-H program. I sincerely appreciate your commitment and dedication to the 4-H program and its long term viability. Upon completion of the survey, please return it to your appropriate Regional 4-H Coordinator in the envelope provided. If you have any questions concerning the survey, please contact Mark Tassin, 4-H Coordinator, by phone 225-579-2196, or via email, mgattassin@agctr.lsu.edu.

Sincerely,

Paul D. Coreil
Vice Chancellor and Director

PDC/twb

c: Mark Tassin
Appendix E
Letter 4-H Advisory Members

Dear Parish 4-H Advisory Committee Member,

The 4-H program in Louisiana and in your parish is critical to the development of youth. The development of programs and activities which not only interest the young people, but also help them in life skill development is essential to the success of the program. In 2003 the 4-H program reached over 175,000 youth statewide. To keep abreast of changing times and emerging issues parishes utilize 4-H advisory committees. These committees play an integral role in the development of parish 4-H programs that are enticing to the youth and crucial to their development. This questionnaire has been designed to gather information that can be used to assess and improve the effectiveness of these 4-H Advisory Committees.

Your input through your parish 4-H advisory committee is a key component to our success in developing a program that is not only pertinent, but is interesting to the youth in your parish. Your knowledge of local issues and youth needs is an invaluable resource to the 4-H program in Louisiana. You have been selected to participate in this study as a member of a small group of Advisory Committee members statewide. In order that the views of people throughout the state of Louisiana be represented it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned. Your response will assure that your parish has input into the study.

All of the information you provide will be held in strictest confidence. At no time will any of your responses be directly associated with your name or parish. Only summary information will be reported in the study results. The number at the top of the survey allows us a method of determining when we receive your completed survey. Additionally this will allow us to be sure that you will not receive subsequent surveys or follow-up phone calls.

When you have completed the survey, please place it in the postage paid envelope and place in the mail as soon as possible.

We would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this survey. If you have any questions concerning the survey, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,
Mark G. Tassin
4-H Youth Development
LSU AgCenter
225-578-7415
mgfassin@agefrl LSU.edu
Dear 4-H Parish Advisory Committee Member,

Recently you received a questionnaire seeking your input on your parish 4-H advisory committee. Your name was selected as part of a small sample of advisory committee members statewide.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire please accept my sincere appreciation. If not, please complete it today and return in the original addressed and stamped envelope. Due to the fact that only a small randomly selected sample was utilized in this survey your response is vital to your parish having input in the study.

If for some reason you did not receive a copy of the questionnaire or it got misplaced, please call me at 225-578-7415 and I will send you another one in the mail today.

Sincerely,
Mark G. Tassin
4-H Youth Development
LSU AgCenter
mgtassin@agctr.lsu.edu
Appendix G
Reminder Postcard 2

Dear 4-H Parish Advisory Committee Member,

I am enclosing another copy of the 4-H advisory committee questionnaire seeking your input on your parish 4-H advisory committee. Your name was selected as part of a small sample of advisory committee members statewide.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire please accept my sincere appreciation. If not, please complete it today and return in the addressed stamped envelope. Due to the fact that only a small randomly selected sample was utilized in this survey your response is vital to your parish having input in the study.

I would like to thank you in advance for your reply.

Sincerely,
Mark G. Tassin
4-H Youth Development
LSU AgCenter
mgtassin@agctr.lsu.edu
APPENDIX H

Qualitative Questions

1. What was the membership of your parish 4-H advisory committee in respect to:
   a. Age of the participants
   b. Ethnic background of participants
   c. Work or professional background of participants
   d. Socio-economic background of participants
   e. Rotation of service on the parish 4-H advisory committee
   f. Other youth development agency representatives

2. Do you feel like the composition of your parish 4-H advisory committee was representative of the parish population?

3. How were you prepared to serve as a parish 4-H advisory committee member?
   a. Did you receive any formalized training?
   b. Did you receive a job description or description of your expectations as a parish 4-H advisory committee member?
   c. How were you prepared to discuss the youth issues of the parish?

4. What was the process utilized at the parish 4-H advisory committee meeting(s)?
   a. Who led the meeting(s)?
   b. Was one of the parish advisory committee members the chairman of the committee?
   c. Did the parish 4-H agent serve as the chairman of the committee?
   d. What type of process was utilized at the meeting(s) to conduct the business?

5. What was the main focus of the parish 4-H advisory committee meeting(s)?
   a. Did the meeting(s) focus on planning and evaluating 4-H events and activities?
   b. Did the meeting(s) focus on identifying youth issues and planning a program to address these issues?
Vita

The author was born December 8, 1959, to the parents of Rene Jr. and Estelle Tassin, in Plaquemine, Louisiana, Iberville Parish. He attended elementary school at Holy Family Catholic in Port Allen. He attended high school at Brusly High, Brusly, and graduated in May 1977.

Upon graduation he entered Louisiana State University in August 1977. He graduated from Louisiana State University in May of 1981 with a Bachelor of Science degree in animal science. In 1982 he began work on his Master of Science degree in extension education at Louisiana State University. He completed this degree in December of 1988.

In July 1981 he was appointed as an Assistant County Agent for 4-H work in Plaquemine, Louisiana, Iberville Parish. On July 1, 1985, he was promoted to Associate County Agent. On July 1, 1990, he was promoted to County Agent in Iberville Parish. In September of 2001 he accepted a position as Regional 4-H Coordinator working with 14 parishes in the Southeast portion of Louisiana. This is the position that he currently holds.

On December 21, 1985 he married Janet Marie Gauthier. They became proud parents of a daughter, Lindsey Renee, on November 20, 1989. Their second daughter, Emily Claire, was born on August 16, 1993.

During 2002 he began his doctoral program in the School of Human Resource Education and Workforce Development and is now a candidate for a doctorate.