



Attitudinal differences--a study comparing 4-H members and dropouts, ages 13 to 15, in 16 Montana counties

by Arthur Reeves Petroff

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Agricultural Education

Montana State University

© Copyright by Arthur Reeves Petroff (1984)

Abstract:

The problem associated with this study was to determine what differences existed between the attitudes of active 4-H members and dropouts in this study toward the 4-H program in Montana. The researcher also wished to determine if there was a correlation between the age a person started 4-H and their length of membership. In addition, the researcher wanted to ascertain the reasons for dropping out of 4-H.

The instrument was developed by the researcher and was sent to 491 present and 410 past 4-H members who were 13 to 15 years of age when enrolled in 4-H. This study included 16 counties in Montana. The data in this study were tested using the Pearson r correlation coefficient and the Chi-squared test of independence.

Approximately 66 percent of the sample responded with about 60 percent actually being used. Approximately 52 percent of the respondents were from farms and ranches while 48 percent were from urban domiciles.

Thirty-three hypotheses were tested in this study. The results of this testing indicated that an urban or rural domicile made no difference in the respondent's attitude that 4-H was mainly for people from farms and ranches. In addition, age was found to be negatively correlated to length of 4-H membership. The data also indicated that attitudinal differences existed between active 4-H members and dropouts in the areas of: (1) responsibility-building in 4-H, (2) 4-H and 4-H projects being fun and interesting, (3) recommending 4-H to others, (4) parental attitude toward 4-H, (5) 4-H being time consuming, (6) 4-H record books, (7) peer attitude toward 4-H, (8) parental pressure to stay in 4-H, (9) membership in school organizations, (10) 4-H program repetition, (11) help received in 4-H, (12) interest in school and 4-H, (13) member voice in 4-H planning, (14) peer influence to quit 4-H. The two main reasons given for dropping out of 4-H were: (1) I had too many other things to do and, (2) the club was not very organized.

The major conclusions drawn from this study are that: (1) 4-H may not be for every youth but the 4-H program should explore ways to broaden its appeal while retaining its 4-H image, (2) 4-H and School will vie for young people's time and (3) family participation in 4-H is important to 4-H member retention.

ATTITUDINAL DIFFERENCES: A STUDY COMPARING
4-H MEMBERS AND DROPOUTS, AGES 13
TO 15, IN 16 MONTANA COUNTIES

by

Arthur Reeves Petroff

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Science

in

Agricultural Education

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

March 1984

N378
P4574
cop.2

APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Arthur Reeves Petroff

This paper has been read by each member of the thesis committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

3/14/84
Date

Douglas Bishop
Chairperson, Graduate Committee

Approved for the Major Department

3/15/84
Date

Mal F. Amberson
Head, Major Department

Approved for the College of Graduate Studies

3/21/84
Date

Henry L. Parsons
Graduate Dean

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master's degree at Montana State University, I agree that the Library shall make it available to borrowers under rules of the Library. Brief quotations from this thesis are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgement of source is made.

Permission for extensive quotation from or reproduction of this thesis may be granted by my major professor, or in his/her absence, by the Dean of Libraries when, in the opinion of either, the proposed use of the material is for scholarly purposes. Any copying or use of the material in this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature

Arthur Reeves Pehoff

Date

14 MARCH 1984

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher wishes to express his sincere appreciation to all those individuals who helped make possible the undertaking and completion of this study:

To Dr. Douglas Bishop, Dr. Max Amberson, Van Shelhamer for their counsel, assistance and interest in this study.

To James F. Sargent and the staff of the Montana 4-H office for their guidance, assistance and patience.

To Terry Wolfe, Gallatin County Extension Agent, for his continued support and interest in this study.

To Elaine Schlenker for her help during the pre-testing of the instrument.

To Dr. Eric Strohmeier for his help with the research and statistical design of this study.

To the staff of the Agricultural and Industrial Education Department at Montana State University for their help during this study.

To the county agents and extension staff of the following counties for their assistance in providing the necessary list of 4-H members.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|----------|----------|
| Lewis and Clark | Judith Basin | Lincoln | Fergus |
| Yellowstone | Granite | Wibaux | Powell |
| Toole | Custer | Glacier | Park |
| Big Horn | Lake | Flathead | Garfield |

Special thanks is extended to the Montana 4-H Council for their financial help concerning this study.

Finally, my extreme gratitude and love is expressed to my wife, Janet, who has given me her support and assistance through the entire graduate program.

TABLES OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
ABSTRACT.....	x
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	5
Importance of 4-H to Youth.....	5
Needs of Today's Youth.....	6
Characteristics of Youths Ages 13 to 15.....	8
Personal Characteristics.....	9
4-H Participation.....	14
Outside Activities.....	15
Club Organization.....	16
Parental Data.....	19
Peer Group Attitude.....	21
Summary of Review.....	21
3. PROCEDURES.....	24
Population Description and Sampling Procedures..	24
The Instrument.....	26
Data Collection Procedure.....	28
Analysis of Data.....	28
Statistical Hypotheses.....	31
Precautions Taken for Accuracy.....	36
Summary.....	36
4. PRESENTATION OF DATA.....	37
Introduction.....	37
Statistical Analysis.....	37
The Data.....	38
Other Reasons Given by the Dropouts for Leaving 4-H.....	68
Summary.....	75
5. CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS...	77
Conclusions.....	77
Implications.....	78
Recommendations.....	79

	Page
REFERENCES CITED.....	81
APPENDICES.....	86
Appendix A -- The Instrument.....	87
Appendix B -- Assignment of Test Statements.....	89
Appendix C -- Letters Sent to County Extension Offices Requesting Information for This Study.....	92
Appendix D -- Cover Letter Sent to Active 4-H Members and Dropouts.....	96
Appendix E -- First Follow-up Postcard.....	98
Appendix F -- Second Follow-up Letter.....	100
Appendix G -- Letter Sent to Participating County Agents Explaining the Purpose of the Study.....	102

LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Page
1. Cooperating Counties and Number of Questionnaires Sent and Returned.....	39
2. Age of Active 4-H Members and Dropouts.....	40
3. Residence of Active 4-H Members and Dropouts...	40
4. Summary of Responses: "4-H is Mainly for People From Farms and Ranches.".....	41
5. Correlation Between the Age When a Person Starts 4-H and the Number or Years of Active Membership.....	42
6. Summary of Responses: "Are You Involved in School Sports?".....	43
7. Summary of Responses: "Are Most of Your Friends in 4-H?".....	44
8. Summary of Responses: "Being in 4-H Helps to Develop Responsibility.".....	44
9. Summary of Responses: "4-H is Fun and Interesting.".....	45
10. Summary of Responses: "Doing a 4-H Project is Fun and Interesting.".....	46
11. Summary of Responses: "4-H Projects are too Confusing.".....	47
12. Summary of Responses: "There is Too Much Competition in 4-H.".....	48
13. Summary of Responses: "I Would Recommend 4-H to Others My Own Age.".....	48
14. Summary of Responses: "My Parents Feel 4-H is a Good Experience.".....	49
15. Summary of Responses: "My Mother Thinks That 4-H is a Good Idea.".....	50
16. Summary of Responses: "My Father Thinks That 4-H is a Good Idea.".....	51
17. Summary of Responses: "Getting Compliments on a 4-H Project Would be Important to Me."..	52
18. Summary of Responses: "Getting a Medal or Ribbon in 4-H is Important.".....	52
19. Summary of Responses: "4-H Takes Up Too Much Time.".....	54
20. Summary of Responses: "4-H Record Books are Important.".....	54
21. Summary of Responses: "4-H Record Books are Easy to Read.".....	55

Tables	Page
22. Summary of Responses: "My Friends Think 4-H is Silly.".....	56
23. Summary of Responses: "I Like Being With Others My Own Age.".....	56
24. Summary of Responses: "I Joined 4-H Because My Parents Were in 4-H.".....	57
25. Summary of Responses: "I Would Stay in 4-H as Long as My Parents Wanted Me To.".....	58
26. Summary of Responses: "I Joined 4-H Because My Brother or Sister Did.".....	59
27. Summary of Responses: "I Belong to 2 or More School Organizations.".....	60
28. Summary of Responses: "I Plan to go to College or Vo-Tech School.".....	60
29. Summary of Responses: "Too Many 4-H Programs are Repeated.".....	61
30. Summary of Responses: "Having a County Agent or Leader Visit My Home Would Make Me Stay in 4-H Longer.".....	62
31. Summary of Responses: "Other 4-H Members Help(ed) Me to Learn.".....	63
32. Summary of Responses: "School is More Interesting Than 4-H.".....	63
33. Summary of Responses: "I Watch Television a Lot.".....	64
34. Summary of Responses: "4-H Members Have a Lot to Say About Planning 4-H Programs and Projects.".....	64
35. Summary of Responses: "I Would Quit 4-H if My Friends Did.".....	65
36. Summary of Responses: "There Should Be More Time for 4-H Meetings and Projects.".....	66
37. Rank, Frequency and Percentage of Respondents Who Marked Each Reason for Dropping Out of 4-H.....	67

ABSTRACT

The problem associated with this study was to determine what differences existed between the attitudes of active 4-H members and dropouts in this study toward the 4-H program in Montana. The researcher also wished to determine if there was a correlation between the age a person started 4-H and their length of membership. In addition, the researcher wanted to ascertain the reasons for dropping out of 4-H.

The instrument was developed by the researcher and was sent to 491 present and 410 past 4-H members who were 13 to 15 years of age when enrolled in 4-H. This study included 16 counties in Montana. The data in this study were tested using the Pearson r correlation coefficient and the Chi-squared test of independence.

Approximately 66 percent of the sample responded with about 60 percent actually being used. Approximately 52 percent of the respondents were from farms and ranches while 48 percent were from urban domiciles.

Thirty-three hypotheses were tested in this study. The results of this testing indicated that an urban or rural domicile made no difference in the respondent's attitude that 4-H was mainly for people from farms and ranches. In addition, age was found to be negatively correlated to length of 4-H membership. The data also indicated that attitudinal differences existed between active 4-H members and dropouts in the areas of: (1) responsibility-building in 4-H, (2) 4-H and 4-H projects being fun and interesting, (3) recommending 4-H to others, (4) parental attitude toward 4-H, (5) 4-H being time consuming, (6) 4-H record books, (7) peer attitude toward 4-H, (8) parental pressure to stay in 4-H, (9) membership in school organizations, (10) 4-H program repetition, (11) help received in 4-H, (12) interest in school and 4-H, (13) member voice in 4-H planning, (14) peer influence to quit 4-H. The two main reasons given for dropping out of 4-H were: (1) I had too many other things to do and, (2) the club was not very organized.

The major conclusions drawn from this study are that: (1) 4-H may not be for every youth but the 4-H program should explore ways to broaden its appeal while retaining its 4-H image, (2) 4-H and School will vie for young people's time and (3) family participation in 4-H is important to 4-H member retention.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Its Setting

The 4-H program of the Cooperative Extension Service had its beginnings in the early twentieth century. Its inception was brought about by a need to improve life in rural areas, most notably in farming and homemaking. The "learn by doing" concept that arose from that era is still an integral part of today's 4-H program. It has been suggested by a national task force on out-of-classroom education that 4-H consists of certain educational concepts that make it worthy of expansion to more youths. These include: (Brown, 1977:4)

1. 4-H provides co-educational learning experiences which contribute to personal and social development.
2. 4-H encourages individual initiative and provides opportunities for young people to succeed, which raises their aspirations and contributes to a feeling of worth to themselves and their communities.
3. 4-H incorporates the methodology of "learning by doing" directed toward personal development.
4. 4-H provides effective youth-adult relationships that help integrate young people with society and keep adults attuned to the needs and interests of young people.

Statement of the Problem

The problem associated with this study was to determine whether certain attitudes of active Montana 4-H members and 4-H dropouts, ages 13 to 15, are different and to identify reasons associated with dropping out of the 4-H program.

Need for the Study

The loss of members when they reach the ages of 13 to 15 is common to most youth organizations. The number of members in the Montana 4-H program has been declining since the early 1970s with occasional increases. The relationship of certain factors pertaining to 4-H drop out and 4-H member retention would help 4-H agents and leaders keep those members who would otherwise withdraw from 4-H.

In addition, there is considerable competition for a county agent's time. The researcher determined, from studying position announcements for Montana county agents, that from 10 to 30 percent of an agent's time is spent on 4-H related activities with the exception of 4-H agents whose main occupation is 4-H related. The understanding of the differences between the attitudes of active 4-H members and dropouts would in turn help the agent's 4-H time become more cost effective.

Since the goal of the 4-H program is to help young people become self-directing, productive and contributing members of society, realization of how those factors relate to drop out and retention would help the 4-H organization

meet that goal. Program goals and objectives can't be met if 4-H members drop out.

Objectives

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Determine if differences exist between the attitudes of active 4-H members and 4-H dropouts, ages 13 to 15, in 16 Montana counties with regard to certain aspects of the 4-H program.
2. Determine those reasons associated with dropping out of 4-H in Montana.

Limitations

This study is limited to 4-H members and dropouts, ages 13 to 15, in 16 counties in Montana.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were established for this study:

1. Some factors given for dropping out of 4-H are not related to 4-H organization and activities, e.g. Moving away, getting a job, club failure, etc.
2. It is assumed that some dissatisfaction exists and will continue to exist among 4-H dropouts regarding the 4-H program in Montana.

Definitions

Achievement-oriented need: A desire to excel, to be successful and win.

Affiliative need: A desire to have close, warm relationships with other people, to be part of a group, to belong, to help others and to be helped by others.

Century III: A national report compiled by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy to recommend directions and thrust to keep 4-H strong and growing as it enters the first decade of our country's third century.

Extrinsic: Those factors within an individual which make him or her behave in a certain way. These factors are more concrete, more mechanical and more conscious. An example might be a ribbon award.

Intrinsic: Those factors within an individual which make him or her behave in a certain way. These factors are more abstract, less mechanical and less conscious. For example, if 4-H members decide to enroll in a photography project because they want to learn to take good pictures, their motivation is intrinsic.

Need: Intrinsic factor which is present when something is desired or something that is aspired to is lacking.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Importance of 4-H to Youth

The major goal of the 4-H youth program is to develop responsible citizens. Hill (1981:49) described responsible people as being:

"...self-confident, self-respecting, and self-directing. They participate in their social settings in individual and unique ways with caring concern for the well-being of themselves and their fellow citizens. The social setting may be the family, the organization, the job, the community, the state, the school, the nation or even world level interactions."

Rewards associated with certain responsible jobs undertaken by young people help develop feelings of regard for the needs of others (Hill, 1981). The 4-H program is just one organization that fosters certain kinds of responsibility-developing experiences. Isaacs (1978) indicated that 97 percent of his respondents were responsible enough to participate in their projects without having their parents take over.

Today's youth culture can be considered as the "synthesis" generation. They are constantly being bombarded with value-forming information and influences due to today's highly advanced mass media. They are constantly piecing together this information to decipher needs and concerns.

Today's young people are worried about their future, afraid that they have missed the easy and peaceful life of past years (Massey, 1981). The 4-H program can help youth solve their problems and to accept those problems that cannot be solved.

Needs of Today's Youth

All young people are facing the vast changes that characterize today's world situation. Extension must help our young people adjust and adapt to these changes as they come along. The challenge to The Cooperative Extension Service is to help young people develop reliable and responsible experiences from which to draw as they face a world heavily laden with decisions and alternatives.

Family settings that provide these kinds of interactions and activities aren't as prevalent now as in previous generations. An appropriate environment for the development of responsible behavior would provide young people with a chance to feel that others depend on them and that their contributions are needed (Hill, 1981).

Youths also need to have a voice in decisions that affect them (Travis, 1980). A national report entitled 4-H in Century III indicates that concentrated efforts are being devoted to the needs and interests of teenagers by involving them in significant leadership positions and in shaping the 4-H program at local, county, state and national levels (Brown, 1977). The 4-H program must help young people

develop skills to deal with today's and tomorrow's decisions.

Concerns of today's youth are changing. Gross and Weedon (1974) discovered that young people were most concerned with alcohol and drug abuse. In 1982, the Billings Gazette reported that a survey conducted by Read magazine indicated that the young people of 1982 were more concerned with nuclear war and the loss of their parents.

Cervantes (1965) suggested that the youth culture elements of independence and rejection of parental control exist, but are less dominant than are accepted family and authority guidance patterns. The Ontario 4-H Agricultural Task Force (1981:31) identified other concerns and needs of youth as being:

1. Personal needs - self confidence, pride, sense of decision, belonging, initiative.
2. Leadership skills - organizational ability and decision making.
3. Ability to express one's ideas and feelings.
4. Agricultural experiences and skills.
5. Group interaction experiences - including cooperation, respect, acceptance, sensitivity and exposure to the ideas of others.
6. Citizenship, including awareness of the community.
7. Goals and challenges - identification and accomplishment.

Characteristics of Youths Ages 13 to 15

Research has shown that two distinct groups exist among teenagers. These are the ages 13 to 15 and ages 16 to 19 (Ontario 4-H Agricultural Task Force, 1981). The task force goes on to identify some characteristics of young people ages 13 to 15 (p. 23).

1. They are concerned about physical development, being liked by friends, social graces and good grooming.
2. They desire a sense of independence, yet they want and need their parents' help.
3. They are self-conscious, with many needing help to get over inferiority complexes.
4. They like fan clubs, with many having adult idols.
5. They want to get outside of their own community to explore.
6. They are getting over the age of fantasy and are beginning to think of what they will do when they grow up, but are often unclear as to needs and values.
7. They are interested in activities involving boys and girls.
8. They are interested in sports and active games.
9. They are ready for in-depth, longer learning experiences.

The older age group has higher social needs and desires. They want adult leadership roles and a stronger voice in planning their own programs. They are also developing community awareness and are beginning to think of marriage and leaving home.

When developing a 4-H program, it must be remembered that the varied personal development of teenagers makes it difficult to use the same program for all ages. The 4-H agent and leaders should learn to recognize youths' needs, concerns, and age group characteristics in order to develop programs that will help young people address today's situations (Ontario 4-H Agricultural Task Force, 1981).

Personal Characteristics

Some studies indicated that personal characteristics are related to 4-H participation and membership status. On the other hand, some studies show no relationship at all. Some of these personal characteristics are:

Age

It is assumed that all 4-H members will ultimately discontinue the program. The age limits - between 9 and 21 years of age - create a maximum of 12 years of involvement in the 4-H program. However, the average length of time in the Montana 4-H program is slightly more than three years.

A popular reason given for leaving 4-H is that members grow out of it. Youck (1982) indicated that all 16 to 18 year-olds saw themselves as a bit too old for 4-H. Stinson (1981) indicated that the 4-H program is designed to appeal to younger adolescents, the average age being 13.2 years old. In Montana, the average age of 4-H members is 12.9 years of age. Byerly (1972) and Nichols (1973) note in

their respective studies that active 4-H members joined at a younger age than did dropouts.

As 4-H members get older, they find other activities that are more attractive. Wu (1968) noted that as a young person matures, his interest level changes from extrinsic to intrinsic concerns: for example, from team sports to art, music and reading which are normally not considered part of 4-H programs. Wu (1968) also found that early dropouts from 4-H were more interested in art and music, while late dropouts were more interested in agriculture. Also, after 4-H members reached a certain level of achievement within the program, they may consider further participation in the program pointless. In addition, members may develop negative attitudes toward particular programs selected by adults who "know what young people need" (Nelson, 1963:105).

Age When First Enrolled

When an individual joins 4-H at an early age, he or she is more likely to remain in 4-H club work longer (Copp, 1956). Copp (1956) contended that it is possible that early joiners are more highly motivated to become 4-H members in the first place.

Farm/Ranch or Non-farm/ranch Residence

Historically, 4-H clubs have been more prevalent in rural areas, but in the last few decades there has been an

increase in 4-H clubs in urban areas as program content has become more diversified. A study entitled Voluntary Participation and Interest of Youth in the Mason City Extension Area by Cloyd, Johnson, Brandini and Alex (1978), suggested that rural youths of all ages are more likely to belong to 4-H clubs than urban residents. Robinson (1970) further suggested that rural young people are more likely to join 4-H since they have the common denominator of an agrarian lifestyle as compared with city dwellers who are of different races, religions and ethnic backgrounds.

Nichols (1973) found that non-farm/ranch individuals were more active than farm/ranch members. In her study, Jones (1969) indicated that twice as many non-farm/ranch, city respondents expressed dissatisfaction resulting from the 4-H program when compared with rural respondents. She also stated that only 26 percent of those farm/ranch residents responding found dissatisfaction with the 4-H program. This dissatisfaction was mainly in the areas of policy, supervision, facilities and relationships with peers. Blackburn and Pletsch (1979) further stated that 4-H members whose fathers were not farmers and lived in urban areas were more likely to drop out of 4-H.

Number of Years in 4-H

Byerly (1972) noted in her study that as the number of years of 4-H membership increased, so did the likelihood of that member staying in 4-H for another year. Jones (1969)

stated that 36 percent of those with one to three years of membership cited experiences of dissatisfaction in the 4-H program, as contrasted with 21 percent of those with four to nine years of membership.

Membership of a Brother and Sister in 4-H

Howes (1953) indicated that if a 4-H member's brother or sister had a good 4-H experience, then the member was more likely to participate and remain a member longer. On the other hand, Nichols (1973) reported that the level of 4-H participation is not significantly related to whether a member's brother or sister had been a 4-H member.

Grades Received in School

Jeter (1971) concluded that school grades received were not significantly related to 4-H membership status. However, Nichols (1973) noted in his study that more active members made better grades in school.

Plans for College

Those members who had high participation levels had definite plans to attend college or some other form of adult education (Nichols, 1973; Byerly, 1972; Wu, 1968).

Friends in 4-H

Fain (1980) noted that members seemed to stay in 4-H because their friends were in 4-H and they participated in many 4-H activities together. Fain (1980) also suggested

that 4-H agents and leaders should foster friendly relationships in 4-H activities. This would allow for the natural development of friends within the 4-H organization.

Recognition of 4-H Work

Recognition of 4-H club work seems to be more important to younger members in 4-H and is less important as the member gets older. Shank (1971) suggested that incentives in the 4-H program be changed to accommodate the age of the 4-H members involved. Ribbon awards should still play an important part in recognition for 4-H work, while other incentives can be used as a 4-H member gets older.

Quarrick and Rankin (1965) pointed out that rewards or recognition for 4-H work may be extrinsic or intrinsic, i.e., affiliative or achievement-oriented needs, respectively. Individuals who are strong in either need have to be treated differently to bring out the best in them. Members with strong achievement needs do better when they are in competition and when they are being challenged and evaluated. Those members with affiliative needs perform best in friendly, informal, helping situations. Quarrick and Rankin (1965) suggested that agents and leaders might emphasize intrinsic rewards to offset some of the limitations and drawbacks of extrinsic ones.

Competition

According to Stinson (1981), another reason related to members dropping out of 4-H is that it is too competitive. Older members seem to favor competition more than younger members (Shank, 1971), and girls are more competitive in 4-H than boys (Lifer, 1968). Shank (1971) concluded that competition in 4-H relies more heavily on external (extrinsic) motivating forces than internal (intrinsic) forces. Competition, according to Youck (1982), is considered the least important reason for leaving 4-H.

4-H Participation

The lack of sufficient participation in 4-H club work is an important factor concerning 4-H drop out. Generally, dropouts lose interest in club activities because they feel that they are left out of the workings of the club. Many dropouts think that discipline is too strict and therefore lose interest in participating (Fain, 1980).

Participation is an avenue to developing responsibility (Nelson, 1963). Hamer (1981) indicated that leadership and learning traits improve with 4-H participation. Active youth participation means involvement in responsible and challenging activities (Dollar, 1975). Havighurst (1974) noted that there is a powerful erosion of the processes by which young people are starving for lack of maturity-producing experiences. Active 4-H participation is one step toward developing mature and responsible adults.

When asked about the demands of the 4-H program, most 4-H members felt that others dropped out due to the time involved and responsibility placed on them as 4-H members (Stinson, 1981; Byerly, 1972). Heavy emphasis is still placed on having 4-H members do the best job possible. It may be assumed that most members want to develop leadership qualities.

Lack of an Opportunity to Re-enroll

Copp (1956) concluded that much of the dropping out observed in his study was unavoidable because it involved factors beyond the control of 4-H club workers. Approximately 35 percent of the dropouts occurred because of moving, club failure, work conflicts, departure for the armed services, marriage, or reaching the upper age limit for club membership.

Outside Activities

Both Byerly (1972) and Nichols (1973) found that participation in activities outside 4-H is related to higher participation levels of 4-H members. A high percentage of 4-H members felt that attending 4-H events and receiving help on 4-H projects and meetings were incentives for remaining in 4-H through their senior year, whereas activities outside 4-H showed no effect on member retention (Fain, 1980).

Overlap between 4-H and school programs is more prominent in elementary and junior high levels than in senior high (Stinson, 1981). Most young people at the senior high level are looking beyond 4-H for more stimulating and challenging programs.

While Stinson (1981) indicated in his study that a major reason for 4-H drop out was that there were too many other things to do, Byerly (1972) and Nichols (1973) found that 4-H members felt they had more free time and belonged to a larger number of school organizations than did 4-H dropouts. The 4-H members in Byerly's study (1972) were also more active in sports and attended church regularly. Rader (1965) interpreted that a large block of youth time was used for watching TV and other passive enterprises. He contended that time for 4-H was available, but personal preferences as well as situational and social obstacles contributed to the reason why more young people weren't in 4-H.

Club Organization

Agents' Visits

Warren (1972) suggested that participation in 4-H was related to agents' visits to the homes of 4-H members. However, the study did not indicate whether the agents' visits caused the participation or whether the participation caused the agents' visits.

Keeping 4-H Record Books

Readability of record books has been cited as yet another reason why young people drop out of 4-H. Fain (1980) found that dropouts felt that records were overemphasized. The 4-H project manual is to 4-H what a textbook is to school. Reyburn (1979) wrote that the production of 4-H material needs to be shifted from seventh- and eighth-grade reading levels to fifth and sixth. This is in light of the fact that 75 percent of basic unit I publications are above the reading level of 68 percent of the audience they are intended to serve. Reading levels should be changed, even if it means producing reading materials below the eighth-grade level (Reyburn, 1979). Obviously, the project manuals should not be in the style of a first-grade reading text, but even highly educated adults will generally enjoy reading material that is below their reading level if that material is well written. Reyburn (1979) suggested that teenaged 4-H members can use fifth- and sixth-grade-level project books together with adult publications. Most 4-H members place a high level of importance on 4-H record books with a slight downward trend in importance from 10 to 14 years of age (Shank, 1971).

Leader Membership, Tenure and Training

Farm residents and older members are more likely to leave 4-H because their leaders quit than because of leader effectiveness (Stinson, 1981). Sunderland (1980) found that

