

Does parental involvement impact retention of high school 4-H members?

Kimberly Cash, Amy Bax, John Tummons

Introduction/Review of Literature

- 4-H benefits youth of all ages
- Develop life and citizenship skills
- High school students leave 4-H

Purpose and objectives

- To what extent does gender, parent education, and parent involvement in 4-H explain differences in High School 4-H member retention?

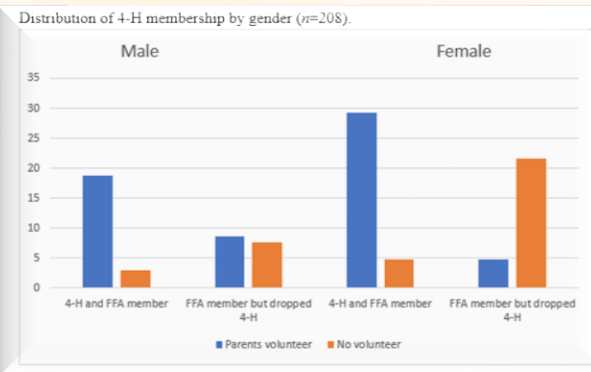
Methods/ Descriptive data

- Paper and pencil survey of FFA members at CDE
- Validity/reliability established
- 90.1% of 607 students responded
- 218 of 538 respondents current or former 4-H members
- 85% of 4-H parents at least 1 degree; 52% of non 4-H parents
- Log linear analysis calculated; revised model of parental involvement, gender, and 4-H retention met assumptions

Results

- Likelihood ratio of model was $\chi^2 (2) = 4.24, p=0.12$
- Nonsignificant three way association between member gender, parent involvement, and 4-H retention $\chi^2 (1) = 3.10, p=0.78$
- Significant two way interaction between 4-H retention and parental involvement $\chi^2 (1) = 64.58, p < 0.01$
- Main effects of gender $\chi^2 (1) = 12.14, p < 0.01$ and parental involvement $\chi^2 (1) = 14.18, p < 0.01$ were significant.

The odds of an FFA member staying in 4-H during high school were 2.17 higher for males and 4.69 higher for females when parents served as 4-H volunteers.



Conclusions/ Implications/ Recommendations

- Parental involvement important for 4-H retention, particularly females
- 4-H parents more highly educated
- In order to keep youth involved, program leaders should recruit, equip, and coach parents of teens for volunteer opportunities
- Male 4-H member retention less influenced by parents