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A Qualitative Descriptive Study Examining the Current State of the New York 4-H Program From a Leader's Perspective

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Abstract

Nonprofit organizations (NPOs) represent a fast-growing industry with significant value in today's society. NPOs are filling gaps in providing services the government can no longer deliver and are considered an economic industry worth billions of dollars. As evidenced in research, NPOs are facing a multitude of challenges. Still, most of these challenges are addressed as standalone issues. Research has provided tools and suggestions for how leadership can address singular challenges; however, few researchers have examined challenges broadly. It has been confirmed that organizational leadership needs to understand, from a leader's perspective, the challenges of the organization so that efforts can be developed to solve critical issues. For NPOs to be able to solve problems, they need to develop a deeper understanding of their challenges. In this qualitative descriptive study, the intention was to add to the body of knowledge on NPO and leadership challenges and organizational effectiveness by examining what leaders do to lead Programs well. The goal was to gain a deeper understanding from the perspective of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) 4-H Program Leaders of the current state of the New York 4-H Program, which broad collective challenges exist within that program, and how programs are led well. This topic was explored through open-ended inquiry utilizing a theoretical framework of Organizational Effectiveness (OE). Implications, recommendations, and suggestions for future research relate directly to CCE guiding documents and past organizational research.

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Dedication

Thank you to my committee chair, Dr. Theresa Pulos, and my committee member Dr. Linda Doty, for their support and guidance and for believing in me. These two women pushed me to be a better researcher and a better person through patience, expectations, humor, and tears. I could not have gotten through this journey without them. Thank very much to my extremely supportive advisor Dr. Linda Evans who helped me through some tough moments. Additionally, thank you to my executive mentor Jill Marie who worked with me tirelessly and with so much patience throughout many months of this Program. I am extremely thankful for the team I had the privilege of working closely with for 28 months—Lynn Kattato, Neal Capone, and Jody Manning. Thank you to the rest of my amazing cohort, including Winnie. You are an amazing group of people that I have learned so much from and enjoyed the ride with.

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Biographical Sketch

Ms. Tifft is currently the 4-H Youth, Family and Community Development Issue Leader for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Megan has worked for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County since 2004. Ms. Tifft has worked for the Cooperative Extension system for over seventeen years. Ms. Tifft attended the University of Vermont from 1993-1997 and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science. She also attended the University of Vermont from 1999-2001 and graduated with a Master's in Education with a focus on Educational Leadership. Ms. Tifft came to the St. John Fisher College in May 2014 and began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership. She pursued the following research: A Qualitative Descriptive Study Examining the Current State of the New York State 4-H Program From a Leader's Perspective under the direction of Dr. Theresa Pulos and Dr. Linda Doty and received her Ed.D. Degree in 2016.

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Abstract

Nonprofit organizations (NPOs) represent a fast-growing industry with significant value in today's society. NPOs are filling gaps in providing services the government can no longer deliver and are considered an economic industry worth billions of dollars. As evidenced in research, NPOs are facing a multitude of challenges. Still, most of these challenges are addressed as standalone issues. Research has provided tools and suggestions for how leadership can address singular challenges; however, few researchers have examined challenges broadly. It has been confirmed that organizational leadership needs to understand, from a leader's perspective, the challenges of the organization so that efforts can be developed to solve critical issues. For NPOs to be able to solve problems, they need to develop a deeper understanding of their challenges. In this qualitative descriptive study, the intention was to add to the body of knowledge on NPO and leadership challenges and organizational effectiveness by examining what leaders do to lead Programs well. The goal was to gain a deeper understanding from the perspective of Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) 4-H Program Leaders of the current state of the New York 4-H Program, which broad collective challenges exist within that program, and how programs are led well. This topic was explored through open-ended inquiry utilizing a theoretical framework of Organizational Effectiveness (OE). Implications, recommendations, and suggestions for future research relate directly to CCE guiding documents and past organizational research.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Over the last 15 years, nonprofit organizations (NPOs) have experienced growing pressures to provide new services, increase accountability, and compete for funding (Hodge & Piccolo, 2011). NPOs face the challenges of better understanding their potential audiences, evaluating their own effectiveness, and enduring during changing times (Hu, Kapucu, & O'Bryne, 2014). In addition, NPOs often struggle to maintain adequate resources and systems to meet changing populations and address these additional pressures. Evidence has shown that NPOs are facing issues involving loss of donors and federal funding, generational differences in the workplace, the need to show impact, and new ways to develop funds while meeting social needs (Barton et al., 2009). Kapucu and Demiroz (2015) reported that NPOs are faced with increasing financial challenges and must have the ability to address a multitude of challenges effectively. In addition, they reported "the recent economic crises created additional challenges for nonprofits to already existing ones. As funding opportunities shrink and the demand for nonprofit services increases, they have to be more effective and possess the capacity to operate under changing conditions" (p. 88).

In addition, Wirtenberg et al. (2007) confirmed that NPO leaders are experiencing a multitude of challenges such as diversification, accountability, technology, funding, measuring effectiveness, collaborations, and mission drift. Understanding the challenges leaders of NPOs are experiencing is a topic of great practical value (Gentry, Eckert, Stawiski, & Zhao, 2014). Furthermore, Gentry et al. noted the importance of NPO leadership receiving useful assistance and support to address these challenges. Even though Wirtenberg et al. (2007) substantiated many challenges, many studies have addressed these challenges in a standalone manner and recommended prescriptive methods NPO leaders can take to resolve them.

The literature on this topic presents a discussion of several barriers and challenges faced by NPOs and their leaders. In reviewing the literature, few studies were found that have examined the challenges NPOs are currently facing collectively. The majority of the studies have addressed standalone issues such as: (a) evaluation, outcomes, and performance measurement; (b) organizational development; (c) marketing; (d) collaborations; (e) funding; (f) diversity and inclusion; and (g) change management. While many of the participants in these studies were NPO leaders, the focus of these studies was primarily on how to solve one particular organizational challenge as opposed to examining them collectively, however some researchers have begun to address the topic more broadly. Those studies are presented in Chapter 2. Additionally, most of the research provided prescriptive tactics that NPO leaders can use to solve these organizational challenges with little follow-up on whether these strategies worked. Lastly, few researchers have asked NPO leaders to describe the current state of their organization, the challenges they face, and what is needed to lead well through the theoretical framework of NPO effectiveness which will be explained below.

Problem Statement

In the 21st century in particular, NPOs are struggling to maintain adequate resources and practices to meet changing populations and additional pressures. Specifically, they are facing significant challenges associated with funding, staffing, effectiveness, and volunteers (Mosley, Maronik, & Katz, 2012). Research by the organization Mission Capital (2015) confirmed how economically powerful NPOs are; however, many are faced with barriers that impact long-term sustainability. Gentry et al. (2014) confirmed that organizational leadership needs to understand, from a leader's perspective, the challenges of the organization so that efforts are developed to resolve the issues.

The studies most relevant to this issue have primarily posed/proposed prescriptive practices NPO leaders can follow to lead effective organizations and manage change positively. However, a gap in the literature is that most studies have primarily focused on standalone challenges. Some researchers have begun to examine the topic on a broader scale; for example, Buteau, Brock, and Chaffin (2013), Crutchfield and McLeod Grant (2012), Gentry et al. (2014), and Mission Capital have approached this topic more collectively. However, Mission Capital suggested the need for further research on the topic of organizational effectiveness through additional testing of its effectiveness framework. The full scope of this research and Mission Capital's (2015) Effectiveness Framework are presented in Chapter 2.

Furthermore, few qualitative studies have examined the current state of NPOs through descriptive responses, from a leader's perspective, on what it takes to lead a Program well. Much of the literature on this topic substantiates the multitude of challenges NPO leaders and their organizations face, yet little research has described how efforts were developed to resolve the issues within the context of particular organizations and if these solutions have worked.

Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development Program (CCE4-H), is a federally recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit. According to Cornell law school's (2015) definition of NPOs as organizations that exist for reasons that do not include producing a profit, CCE4-H is considered an NPO. Founded in 1865, Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) is an extension of New York's land grant university, Cornell. "CCE puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability, and social well-being." They bring local experience and research based solutions together helping NY families and communities to thrive in our rapidly changing world. (CCE, 2012). CCE serves 57 counties and five boroughs in New York State. Advisory boards (or Program committees) and a board of directors govern and direct each local CCE office in cooperation with staff (Cornell University, 2014). The work of CCE is guided by the statewide 2013-2017 strategic plan, Program plans of work, Staff Skills for Success, and CCE Program Definitions and Standards.

CCE refers to local offices as associations and the goal of local associations are to address individual county needs. Associations vary in size of staff, demographics, funding sources, and priority areas. "CCE associations are not part of county government and are not part of Cornell University; they are independent employers, but subject to standards set by Cornell University as agent for the State of NY." (CCE new staff orientation, 2015). This model is unique to the State of NY as most Cooperative Extension employees across the United States are employees of that land grant university.

In addition, eight Shared Business Networks (SBN) exist around NYS, which counties are a part of (technical assistance for human resources, finance, and technology). Lastly, State CCE (housed in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences) offers guidance and training to staff around the state through a variety of mechanisms.

The CCE4-H Program is the youth component of CCE which, in 2015, served 188,560 young people with the assistance and guidance of 13,409 volunteer 4-H leaders, and 197 4-H educators (Cornell Cooperative Extension, 2016). The NYS 4-H Program utilizes a district system (seven districts) by clustering counties for the purposes of cross-county events and for the professional 4-H Educator Association (NYSACCE4-HE). CCE4-H has Program leadership (official title 4-H Youth Development Program Leaders) in all counties across the state of New York. Guidance, training, and support is provided from the State 4-H office which is housed in Cornell University's College of Human Ecology. The mission of the NYS 4-H Youth Development Program is: "4-H connects youth to hands on learning opportunities that help them grow into competent, caring, contributing members of society" (CCE4-H, Guiding Principles, 2016). The vision is "a world in which youth and adults learn, grow, and work together as catalysts for positive change" (CCE4-H, Guiding Principles, 2016). Furthermore, the three mission mandates from the national level include Citizenship, Healthy Living, and Science (National Institute for Food and Agriculture, 2011). 4-H Programs often utilize the NYS 4-H Youth Development Guiding Principles and youth development plans of work to help guide their Programs. Lastly, the 4-Hs stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health, the "4-H Symbol" is a green and white four leaf clover with 4-Hs, and the current national 4-H marketing campaign logo is "4-H Grows Here."

Within this setting, no researchers have yet explored the current state of the CCE4-H Program and what collective challenges it may face. In addition, no evidence exists on what approaches CCE4-H Program Leaders use to address their organizational challenges. Furthermore, no research, especially as a descriptive qualitative analysis, exists on the leadership's perspectives of practices for leading a Program effectively. Chapter 5 provides details as to what currently exists within CCE for training and support, what initiatives are under way, and how the results from this study could inform these processes.

From a national perspective, in 2005 Ingram conducted interviews with Cooperative Extension (CE) administrators from across the United States who shared their challenges, including staff who accepted the status quo of their work and organization, organizational resistance to change, and lack of organizational capacity to bring in racially diverse staff was unattractive to individuals entering the organization. Despite the extensive interviewing and findings, Ingram did not provide a follow-up on whether the aforementioned issues were practically addressed.

Additionally, the Association of Public Land-Grant Universities (APLU) created the *2010 Strategic Opportunities for Cooperative Extension* (CES) report based on data collected from administrators and directors across the United States. The report detailed opportunities for the CES while noting challenges that needed to be addressed. These challenges included sustainability, addressing a breadth of community needs, funding, flexibility, personnel development, and Program expansion and transformation (APLU, 2010). No recent updates have been collected examining whether these challenges still exist and or how the CES leadership has addressed these challenges.

In sum, no empirical evidence exists on the current state of the CCE4-H Program and its collective challenges. In addition, no research has explored the approaches

CCE4-H Program Leaders use to address organizational challenges. To address these lacks and add to the body of knowledge on this topic, this study sought to gain a deeper understanding of the current state of the 4-H Program from the perspective of the CCE4-H Program Leaders. In addition, the topic was explored from this perspective, the broad collective challenges that may exist and how Programs are led effectively. The theoretical framework with which these issues were examined was Organizational Effectiveness.

Theoretical Rationale

This study was guided by general organizational theory, of which Organizational Effectiveness is one component. Barzilai (2011) defined Organizational Theory (OT) as "the study of organizations for the benefit of identifying common themes for the purpose of solving problems, maximizing efficiency and productivity, and meeting the needs of stakeholders" (p. 1). NPOs are set up to accomplish social objectives; their mission statements center on goals toward the common good (Helmig, Ingerfurth, & Pinz, 2014). Moreover, in functioning effectively, they hold ethical values like accountability and financial competence that will attract confidence and trust from the public (Strickland & Vaughan, 2008).

Organizational effectiveness (OE) has become increasingly important to NPOs because of pressure to show results and responsibility (Lecy, Schmitz, & Swedlund, 2012). Herman and Renz (2008) confirmed the elusiveness of the topic of OE in that the NPO community has no common agreement on a definition and effectiveness measurements. Furthermore, they noted that effectiveness has become a common theme in the NPO community, one on which stakeholders base their decisions. Finally, Lecy et al. noted the importance of measuring organizational effectiveness in a systematic way and suggested additional research is needed on this theory. The operationalizing of elements of OE can be valuable in sustaining organizations by providing a common language and criteria; however, the community has yet to agree on these (Herman & Renz, 2008).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore and understand the current state of the CCE4-H Program. 4-H Program Leaders were asked to describe challenges CCE4-H is currently facing, how they lead a Program well, and what is the current state of the NYS 4-H Program. The topic was examined through a practitioner's lens of open-ended inquiry specifically utilizing a theoretical rationale of Organizational Effectiveness. Mission Capital's Nonprofit Effectiveness Framework was utilized as an emerging organizational effectiveness framework that may provide leaders with focus and structure. The purpose of this study, then, was to provide CCE4-H administration, from a leader's perspective, with a deeper understanding of the challenges of the organization so that efforts can be developed to resolve those (Gentry et al., 2014).

An additional purpose of this study was to aid in addressing the following problems: (a) developing a deeper understanding of collective challenges faced by the CCE4-H Program, (b) understanding the current state of the CCE4-H Program, (c) describing what leaders need and do to lead well, and (d) utilizing the concept of OE as a frame for understanding the CCE4-H Program. The participants in the study received a description of Mission Capital's six elements of organizational effectiveness and were interviewed to discuss their role and challenges in the CCE4-H Program. These data provided an opportunity to reflect on how these leaders' experiences might further develop the understanding of OE and examining challenges and solutions on a broader scale.

Research Questions

Three broad research questions guided this qualitative descriptive study, particularly the semi structured interviews that were designed to obtain practical information from leaders within the CCE4-H Program. The research questions were:

1. How does leadership describe the current state of the 4-H Program?
2. What challenges do CCE4-H Program Leaders face?
3. What does it take to lead a 4-H Program well?

Potential Significance of the Study

The potential significance of this qualitative descriptive study was to contribute to the body of knowledge on (a) collective challenges faced by NPOs and NPO leaders, (b) common definitions of OE, and (c) strategies for leading Programs well. As noted earlier, Gentry et al. (2014) confirmed that NPOs need to understand, from a leader's perspective, the challenges they face so that efforts are developed to resolve the issues. Specifically, the study aimed to address this need and attempted to fill in the gaps in the research on OE, leadership strategies, and collective NPO challenges.

As evidenced in the existing research, NPOs are facing a multitude of challenges, although most of them have been addressed as standalone challenges. As Chait et al. (2005) noted, for NPOs to be able to solve their problems, they need to develop a deeper understanding of them. The significance of the study may inform the NPO community, CCE administration, and the national Cooperative Extension System about the challenges that professionals face, thus adding to the knowledge on NPO effectiveness and translating into practical actions for the CE System.

Chapter Summary

NPOs represent a large industry that fills service gaps while addressing a multitude of challenges. Most researchers have addressed these challenges as standalone issues and provided prescriptive practices leaders can follow to overcome them. In addition, researchers have confirmed the need to examine broadly from the leaders' perspectives the challenges they are experiencing so appropriate strategies can be developed.

This qualitative descriptive study occurred within the CCE4-H Program, which is representative of NPOs. Guided by three broad research questions, semi structured interviews were conducted with CCE4-H Program Leaders on the current state of the CCE4-H Program, challenges leaders face, and what is needed to lead a Program well. No studies have yet been conducted within this research setting to address these problems.

The theoretical rationale for this study is organizational effectiveness, which is a component of general organization theory. This theory has been an abstract concept for many years and researchers have confirmed the need to research it further. The data gathered in this study provided an opportunity to reflect on current research of OE, including looking for common definitions.

The potential significance of this study is its contribution to the body of knowledge on NPO challenges, leaders' needs and strategies, and definitions of effectiveness for this context. Furthermore, the study may provide useful information on organizational challenges to administrators so appropriate strategies can be developed. Chapter 2 next presents a literature review of empirical and recent studies on various aspects of NPOs. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology undertaken for this involved in this qualitative descriptive study. Chapter 4 provides a deep description of the results of the study, followed by Chapter 5 which shares implications and suggestions for future research and practice.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

NPOs are struggling to maintain adequate resources and practices to meet changing populations and additional pressures, including barriers to long-term sustainability (Mission Capital, 2015). NPOs today are facing significant challenges associated with funding, staffing, effectiveness, and volunteers (Mosley et al., 2012). This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature on this topic. NPO leaders' role in addressing these barriers and challenges, and studies that have begun to examine these topics on a broader scale. In addition, this chapter demonstrates the need for further research on these topics. Also included is a brief overview of the organization under examination and the gap in research related to the topics within the context of this organization. This study additionally fills a gap that very studies have explored the topic from a leader's descriptive perspective.

Throughout the review of literature, the common threads that are examined include: (a) the prescriptive practices/methods NPO leaders can follow and/or the skills they need to solve challenges, (b) the validation that NPOs are facing a multitude of challenges and, (c) the need to research these methods further across the NPO community.

Description of Research Topic

The main research topic of this study was the current state of the CCE4-H Program from the viewpoint of its leaders and the broad challenges they face, how they respond to these challenges, and what is required to lead a Program effectively. The study was guided by the theoretical framework of Organization Effectiveness.

Statement of Research Problem

The relevant literature has provided insight into the prescriptive practices/methods NPO leaders can follow and the skills they need to deal with their many challenges, manage change positively, and lead effective organizations. As noted in Chapter 1, the literature concludes that NPOs and NPO leadership continue to face many challenges that require additional research in order to validate strategies and/or frameworks that can be used across the NPO community. Lastly, this study examined the collected data through the lens of NPO effectiveness because organizational leaders need to understand, from a leader's perspective, the challenges of the organization so they can develop efforts to solve issues as they derive a deeper understanding of these issues (Chait et al., 2005; Gentry et al., 2014).

Review of the Literature

As Mosley et al. (2012) noted, many nonprofits today are facing significant challenges associated with funding, staffing, effectiveness, and volunteers. This chapter discusses studies that have examined barriers and challenges faced by NPOs, including: (a) evaluation, outcomes, and performance measurement; (b) organizational development; (c) marketing; (d) collaborations; (e) funding; (f) diversity and inclusion; (g) change management; and (h) broad perspectives on NPO effectiveness and challenges. The focus of this literature review is on the many challenges NPOs face today and how leaders can handle these challenges, thereby validating present gaps in the literature and the need for this study.

Evaluation, outcomes, and performance measurement. Because of increased demands to provide evidence and show results, evaluation capacity has become an important topic for researchers and practitioners. Carman and Fredericks (2010) focused on the capabilities and needs of NPOs by studying 189 human service organizations from two states. Their sampling methods included a disproportionate sample, assuming a response rate of 60%, and stratifying random sampling. In addition, the researchers conducted a purposeful sample of interviews with organizational leaders and surveys sent randomly to NPOs, with a response rate of 57%. Lastly, Carman and Fredericks conducted follow-up interviews with 26 leaders. They used several types of analysis, including simple frequencies, Chi-square tests, cross-tabs, and correlation. Through a cluster analysis, Carman and Fredericks compared three groups to find no significant demographic differences, except that the first cluster was the oldest. Findings across the clusters revealed significant differences and challenges associated with evaluation. Only one cluster responded as having few evaluation implementation challenges, while the other two reported having some and many challenges, respectively. The major difference in the first versus the two additional clusters was that the NPOs in cluster one were older.

The practical implications of this study were that organizational leaders received some possible approaches to addressing challenges associated with evaluation. Carman and Fredericks (2010) made the following suggestions to leadership: (a) develop networks of individuals who are experienced in evaluation to assist in these efforts, (b) understand and utilize what already exists and help staff develop plans and skills around evaluation, and (c) develop an understanding of the capabilities and capacities of their organization so they can better assist in coming up with solutions. The researchers noted that the limitations of their study could be addressed in future research by considering the broader organizational qualifications, structures, and funder requirements of NPO participants. In conclusion, Carman and Fredericks noted that leadership needs to understand and teach others that no one size fits all approach exists in the evaluation process. These research findings addressed one standalone issue facing NPOs and provided suggestions and methods for leaders to use to address the challenge.

In an effort to better understand performance measurement, Carnochan, Samples, Myers, and Austion (2014) studied the processes NPOs were using to measure performance and the value of these processes. The researchers confirmed that NPOs face the need to measure performance as a requirement to maintain and sustain themselves. They conducted a 2 year qualitative study of seven diverse NPOs. To increase validity, they collected data in a variety of ways, including in-depth interviews, focus groups, and outcomes-based organizational documents. A sample of 46 staff from the seven NPOs were interviewed about measurement processes, data collection mechanisms, and organizational systems. Lastly, IT staff was interviewed to determine if each organization had the technological systems needed to measure performance (Carnochan et al., 2014).

A thorough analysis included comparing data from each NPO, coding and sub coding the data, discussing the data with the participants, and sorting the data. Emerging themes were difficulties in determining Program outcomes, challenges within the data collection systems, and organizational systems in place to support performance measurement efforts. Carnochan et al. summarized their findings according to these themes. The majority of the NPOs felt the greatest challenge to measuring performance was the initial stage of determining outcomes because of the time commitment involved in working with clientele to understand their needs and develop measurements for a wide variety of clients. In addition, finding data management systems that worked well for their organizations was problematic, as was staff did not have the skills to utilize systems effectively. Lastly, the findings revealed the need for staff to be involved in designing systems both structurally and technologically to address the needs of the unique NPO. Carnochan et al. noted several practical implications including the importance of utilizing Program evaluation and performance measurement simultaneously, collaborating with organizational development professionals to guide performance measurement systems, and working with funders to develop streamlined measurements. The researchers' suggestions for future examination included: (a) study the breadth of effective practices and the use of systems organizations to develop and report on outcomes, (b) gain a deeper understanding of effective systems between NPOs and funding agencies to develop and report outcomes, and (c) continue research on the topic of performance management in general.

Furthermore, Lee and Nowell (2015) confirmed the importance of NPOs measuring performance because of the multitude of challenges they usually experience. Their goal was to develop an all-encompassing framework for NPOs to utilize when measuring performance. Although much research has been done on this topic only little research has examined the factors of performance measurement holistically. To address this gap and expand the theory Lee and Nowell focused on performance measurement of NPOs when reviewing the literature. The full reviews included literature which included measurement frameworks, resulting in 18 studies. When analyzing the literature, they used content analysis to determine if themes and patterns existed.

The main performance themes from the literature review were: (a) input, (b) capacity, (c) output, (d) outcome, (e) public value, and (f) institutional legitimacy (Lee & Nowell, 2015, p. 304). The researchers noted that these were not standalone indicators and must be considered holistically. They also acknowledged that there is no one best way of measuring performance and each NPO needs to decide what works for them. Lee and Nowell offered a cohesive framework that NPO leaders could utilize as they begin to measure performance or enhance an already existing process. Furthermore, they presented this research-based framework as a tool that may bring a similar set of performance measurements to the NPO community.

In addition, Lee and Nowell noted several areas for future research on the topic of NPO performance. They suggested the following: (a) examine the topic from the approach of how NPOs are utilizing performance frameworks, not just prescribing to NPOs what they need to do to succeed; (b) compare input on the utility of performance frameworks from the viewpoints of leaders and researchers; and (c) continue to develop knowledge on how performance measurements are developed and utilized. These future research conclusions align with the research that this present study sought to conduct by exploring the topic from a practitioner's lens and using an exploratory framework.

This section presented/discussed one set of challenges NPOs face and how leaders might address those challenges. It also suggested further research to test methods and frameworks, and conduct inquiry through a practitioner's lens. The next section specifically provides literature of the challenges associated with organizational development and offers a suggested method for dealing with those challenges.

Organizational development. Organizational leaders are under pressure to show outcomes, continue to grow and prosper, and address the needs of a variety of community members (Wirtenberg et al., 2007). To provide ways in which the profession of Organizational Development (OD) might solve some of these challenges, Wirtenberg et al. examined the challenges facing both private and public sectors. In a two-phase research study, they developed a survey based on a tested for-profit survey and altered the questions to meet NPO needs. The researchers conducted a beta test on the final survey and made any necessary changes. The online anonymous survey resulted in 115 responses drawn from a variety of NPOs, staff levels, gender, and age. The limitations included not knowing who completed the surveys, using a convenience sample, having only limited resources, and understanding the types of NPOs that participated.

Wirtenberg et al. discovered six key integrated themes (KITs) that summarized the findings on what obstacles and possibilities existed within the organizations; these included: (a) globalization and multicultural and whole system perspective; (b) building a great workplace, productivity, and performance culture; (c) leveraging technology and worldwide integration; (d) corporate social responsibility; (e) building leadership and organizational capabilities for the future; and (f) regulatory environment and new organizational forms. (p. 180)

In addition, OD practitioners identified 17 areas in which they could potentially support organizations in addressing challenges. These opportunities for support included: (a) building leader skill; (b) designing systematic approaches to solving problems; (c) developing system wide plans to address issues; (d) utilizing organizational change methods effectively; and (e) instilling a sense of trust, commitment, and collaboration in the organization. In these specific areas, OD practitioners felt they could be of most assistance (Wirtenberg et al., 2007).

In conclusion, OD practitioners need to work with NPO leaders to develop a better understanding of their current challenges and determine how they can work together systematically to address these issues. Wirtenberg et al. concluded that the results of their study validated the need for further research and suggested continued investigation into how OD practices may assist in supporting NPO effectiveness.

This study presented some of the strategies and approaches that leaders can utilize. Related to this is a set of challenges NPO and their leaders face in the area of marketing: approaches, strategies, and how marketing relates to organizational performance, value, skills, and purpose. The next section provides an overview of recent research on the challenges associated with marketing in NPOs.

Marketing. Padanyi and Gainer (2004) studied how marketing is related to organizational performance. They focused on examining the market orientations of NPOs and how those orientations affected or did not affect organizational performance across various types of NPOs. At the time of their research, Padanyi and Gainer concluded there was little empirical evidence of common indicators of organizational performance. The most common themes they found included "client satisfaction, resources acquisition, and reputation among sector peers." (p. 46) Their methodology included sending a survey to NPO leaders in Toronto and Montreal, Canada, resulting in 453 useable surveys. The surveys addressed the common organizational performance themes noted above. The researchers sought to gain a sample that could be representative of a wide variety of

NPOs in order to generalize the data. The participants represented a variety of NPOs with budgets of at least $50,000.

The results indicated that the majority of NPOs utilized different marketing strategies towards varying audiences. Padanyi and Gainer also concluded that if NPOs have a good reputation, they are more likely to receive higher levels of revenue resources. The results supported the importance of utilizing different marketing strategies as a method to maintain high levels of organizational performance. Moreover, NPO leaders must set aside the resources needed to allow for a variety of marketing strategies. In conclusion, Padanyi and Gainer suggested that further research should be done on this topic through longitudinal studies in a way which will add to the generalizability of the data. They also suggested it would be valuable to survey additional constituents, not only NPO leaders.

In another study that examined the barriers NPOs face, Dolnicar and Lazarevski (2009) confirmed many findings resulting from past research. They confirmed that NPOs approach marketing from an "organization-centered" viewpoint and do not take community needs into consideration. Furthermore, they confirmed that NPOs face the challenge of utilizing a business approach to marketing—referred to as a "customer-centered approach"—in which the chief concern is clientele. The researchers suggested this technique could aid organizations in better understanding the need for their services and assist in meeting their missions.

Dolnicar and Lazarevski wanted to gain evidence on how NPOs incorporated a "customer-centered" or "organization-centered" approach into their marketing and developed a better understanding of what types of marketing systems were being used.

The researchers invited 1,451 NPOs from Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States to participate in a survey developed by examining literature on NPO marketing. They collected data from 136 online survey respondents. The researchers hypothesized that most NPOs utilize a "customer-centered approach" and that organization staff leading marketing are experts or experienced in their field. The findings indicated that both hypotheses were rejected. The NPOs in the study took an "organization-centered approach" to marketing, and the staff who led the organization's marketing efforts had not been trained or lacked experience in the field (Dolnicar and Lazarevski, 2009). This evidence indicated that NPOs did not have a good understanding of current marketing techniques, were not focused on clientele needs, and lacked the expertise to execute proper marketing.

Although these findings indicated what was lacking, they can be a motivating factor for NPOs in considering the use of a "customer-centered approach" in marketing, allowing them to discover what they need from the people they want to serve. In addition, Dolnicar and Lazarevski noted two possible future studies to further their research they proposed a longitudinal study examining how NPO professionals may change their understanding and use marketing, and why leadership accepts or does not accept new marketing concepts.

Along these lines, Pope, Isely, and Asamoa-Tutu (2009) conducted an exploratory study on NPO marketing, seeking to understand the issue of NPO marketing and how it differs across the community from the NPO perspective. They wanted to fill a gap in the literature because they found very little research on the topic from the perspective of NPO leaders. Their method included an extensive literature review, dialogues with NPO leaders, an online marketing survey, and in-person interviews. The random samples were drawn from small NPOs in western Michigan, resulting 124 surveys and forty-three in-person interviews.

The results were compared to data found in their literature review, in which some outcomes aligned and some did not. The majority of participants indicated that: (a) marketing was valuable to their NPO; (b) they lacked clarity on meaning, implementation, and target marketing in their NPO; (c) much of their NPO marketing was carried out to raise funds; (d) their NPO did not have adequate resources for marketing; (e) they acknowledged brand recognition concerns; (f) they had not made marketing efforts directed towards volunteers; and (g) the internet as a marketing tool was underutilized.

Pope et al. concluded the need for different approaches to NPO marketing that will "focus on clients, volunteers, and donors or funders." (p. 195) Moreover, they noted that for NPO marketing to be successful, NPOs must learn more about marketing in general, recruit board members with marketing and other desirable skills, develop marketing plans, secure money for marketing, and utilize up-to-date resources. Furthermore, Pope et al. suggested future research to address the limitations of their study. Since the sample was from only one area of the country, they concluded the need to conduct similar studies in additional locations. By replicating this study, their desire for a broad strategy to carry out NPO marketing could be developed.

This section provided an overview of the challenges of NPO marketing and provided many suggestions for solving these challenges. Despite the coverage of this topic, the research has not tested these approaches to see if and how they have worked.

All of these researchers call for additional studies that mainly emphasize the need to replicate studies to develop broader strategies on this topic, particularly those involving marketing. The next section then examines another set of challenges faced by organizations—collaborations.

Collaborations. In 2009, Jessica E. Sowa conducted research to learn the rationale of why NPOs decide to collaborate to deliver services and what the motivations are behind entering those collaborations.

Sowa's findings indicated that the organizational participants felt that being engaged in collaborative efforts was far more positive than negative. The driving forces behind why these organizations entered into collaborations varied; however, three themes were common: (a) sustaining the organization, (b) keeping their organization relevant, and (c) being an active and important player in their professional field. Sowa provided suggestions and insights for organizational leaders to consider as they enter into collaborations. Organizational leaders must consider who they will collaborate with and what dimensions exist within that partnership. Additionally, leaders need to do their homework to understand their organization's challenges and pressures, determine if entering into a collaboration makes sense, consider the reasons for entering into a collaboration, and discover if the benefits outweigh the obstacles of the endeavor.

In her study on collaboration decisions in NPOs, Sowa concluded that collaborations have become commonplace among NPOs for a variety of reasons, including mandates and pressures, more effective service delivery, revenue development, sustainability, and maximizing expertise. Sowa sought to understand what NPOs thought would be gained by engaging in collaborations and what the benefits might be. The sample of 20 different collaborative partnerships (focused on early childhood education) was examined via qualitative and quantitative methods. Because random sampling was not possible, Sowa utilized theoretical and purposeful sampling to find the 20 urban and nonurban participants. The data were collected through surveys, interviews, observations, evaluations, and analysis of documents. Focus areas of the study included: (a) apparent benefits, (b) the effect of collaboration on services, (c) the ability to sustain staff, (d) meeting the needs of clientele, (e) resource needs and development, (f) organizational benefits, (g) sustainability of organizations, (h) pressures and mandates, and (i) strategic management of organizations. Sowa concluded that additional studies should research the possible value of collaborative efforts to service delivery across a broader spectrum of organizations. In addition, Sowa suggested future research on collaboration pressures that NPOs may experience as a result of government funding and encouraged an examination of whether collaborations add value or nurture competition.

In addition, Guo and Acar (2005) quantitatively examined the topic of NPO collaborations in order to address the lack of systematic studies on this topic. The researchers wanted to develop a deeper understanding for the reasoning behind why some NPOs enter into formal collaborations that could result in restructuring versus why some NPOs only enter into informal collaborations. They also sought to understand this topic from institutional, resource dependency, and network frames. Based in Los Angeles, they conducted a mail survey resulting in 95 responses from NPO leaders. The 376 NPOs invited to participate were randomly selected and represented a wide variety of services. There was one dependent variable (formal/informal collaborations) and nine independent variables, and their analysis included logistic regression and correlation analysis of the data. Guo and Acar concluded that:

> An organization is more likely to increase the degree of formality of its collaborative activities when it is older, has a larger budget size, receives government funding but relies on fewer government funding streams, has more board linkages with other nonprofits, and is not operating in the education and research or social services industry (p. 356).

Furthermore, this study added to developing a broader understanding of why NPOs enter or do not enter into formal collaborations. Guo and Acar concluded that while leaders play a critical role, theirs is not the only role in making these decisions. Moreover, it was important to understand the organizational and background information associated with decisions around formal and informal collaborations. To continue understanding this topic, future research should include larger samples over a longer period of time focused on collective data from the NPO community.

One of the most obvious themes surfacing in this section on collaboration challenges was the critical role of the NPO leader in addressing these issues. In addition, the researchers noted the need for future research that included broader samples from across the sector in order to generalize collective approaches and/or solutions. In addition to the many challenges noted in these sections thus far, another great challenge NPOs face today is fund development and understanding who to approach for help (Buteau et al., 2013). The next section thus presents literature on the topic of NPO funding challenges.

Funding. Buteau et al. sought to identify whether NPOs felt foundations understood their challenges and if foundations might assist them in addressing these challenges. The purpose of the study was to develop a deeper understanding of how foundations can play a role in addressing NPO challenges, while simultaneously identifying the critical issues. Buteau et al. surveyed 121 leaders representing a variety of NPOs from across the United States with both large and small budgets. The online survey of 25 questions focused on NPO challenges and how foundations might assist; it utilized a Likert-type scale and an open-ended response section. Findings suggested the most pressing issues facing NPOs where foundations could be of assistance included: (a) being an effective service provider to as many clienteles as possible, (b) improving the use of technology, (c) developing leader capacity, and (d) informing practice around earned revenue development. While NPO leaders do not necessarily look to foundations to solve everything, they usually would like to develop stronger relationships to address the four aforementioned issues together.

In addition to surveying issues where foundations could be of most assistance in addressing NPO challenges, Buteau et al. collected data on the degree of challenges NPOs were facing. They identified an extensive list of 25 challenges addressing such topics as funding, developing effective collaborations, demonstrating impact and outcomes, utilizing boards effectively, keeping up with best practices, planning organizational strategies, and retaining staff. The majority of respondents to these 25 challenges indicated that these issues were either somewhat or extremely challenging for their NPO.

Clearly, the study of Buteau et al. provided evidence of challenges facing NPOs with a focus on funding and noted several others; however, it did not provide evidence on practical strategies. In their attempt to address this gap, Gentry et al. (2014) noted the importance of understanding the challenges in order to develop solutions. However, this review indicated that while the majority of the relevant studies have provided validation of problems and some practical solutions, they provided little evidence that validated whether those solutions worked.

In their attempt to validate one possible solution Bell and Cornelius (2011) sought to discover what the dynamics of fundraising challenges were and to develop potential solutions to address those challenges. Their focus was on the role of staff, including development directors, and understanding some of the inherent challenges in this critical area. The survey of 2,700 NPO executive and development directors from across the United States provided several important findings. These individuals represented a wide variety of NPOs with varying sized budgets. Very few NPOs had plans for fundraising or systems to support fundraising in place. Moreover, NPO boards were not actively involved in fundraising, and executive directors did not have the skills or desire to develop funds. Finally, NPOs did not have a culture that supported fund development, and most fundraising efforts were unsuccessful. Bell and Cornelius concluded the need for stakeholders in the NPO world to work towards developing systems for success, which can be done by critically collaborating to address the aforementioned challenges.

These studies substantiated the gaps evident in much of the literature on the NPO challenges, specifically related to funding. The next section reviews literature on an additional challenge NPOs face in the area of diversity and inclusion.

Diversity and inclusion. In a national study produced in partnership with Commongood Careers and Level Playing Field Institute, Michael Watson, who is Senior Vice President of Human Resources for the Girl Scouts of the USA, stated the following: “The nonprofit sector has the potential to set the national standard in fostering diversity. I am confident that our sector can still claim a leadership role in creating diverse and inclusive environments. The time to act is now” (Schwartz, Weinberg, Hagenbuch, & Scott, 2012, p. 3). Schwartz et al., who interviewed Watson and others, confirmed the value NPOs can feel in having a racially diverse organization, yet little is often done to recruit and retain staff of color. Addressing this challenge, Schwartz et al. investigated the commitment levels of NPOs to become diverse and inclusive organizations and studied the role such diversity efforts play on people of color in making decisions about their careers.

A sample of 1,638 individuals representing NPOs from across the United States participated in the study through a four-month online survey. To understand diversity in these organizations, Schwartz et al. developed 28 questions to address this topic. Sample data included a large number of respondents who were White, women, ranging in age from 20-39, the majority of whom held a Master’s degree. Four themes emerged from the findings: (a) organizations valued diversity but did little to act upon those values; (b) staff understood whether their organization valued diversity and how important it was to that organization; (c) if an organization valued diversity and could act upon it, there was a positive effect on recruitment of staff of color; and (d) if organizations were to retain staff of color, the organization needed to value diversity and be inclusive (Schwartz et al., 2012).

Furthermore, Schwartz et al. interviewed several NPO leaders and staff in order to add to these findings, resulting in the development of key strategies to address these issues, namely: (a) opening dialogues within the organization on about diversity and making agreed-upon decisions, (b) developing an organizational definition of diversity and finding ways to stay committed to it, (c) finding partners who can assist in recruiting staff of color, (d) utilizing processes for hiring that do not exclude individuals, and (e) finding meaningful ways to retain staff.

Ospina, Hadidy, and Caicedo (2011) claimed that while people of color are dramatically underrepresented in NPO leadership roles, this reality presents an opportunity for taking action. Such efforts at diversification will add to organizational effectiveness and a greater representation of various populations in the workplace. In their study of literature on leadership, diversity, and inclusion, the researchers noted the many attempts taken to make organizations more diverse; however, those individuals holding leadership roles are rarely people of color. As part of the National Urban Fellows Program, Ospina et al. sought to understand the current research on diversity leadership. In addition to learning from this research, they wanted to provide advice to a broad range of organizations on how to develop diverse leadership. They conducted a literature review on the topic and found that: (a) further scientific research on individual responses to diversity was needed; (b) leaders played a vital role in determining the organizationally appropriate method for achieving this goal; (c) leaders needed to develop new tactics to solve this problem; (d) organizational adjustments should be made to prepare for more diverse staff; (e) developing a more representative organization is a crucial skill, particularly in the midst of demographic shifts; and (f) commitment must be made to future research on NPO leadership and diversity. Ospina et al. focused primarily on the role of leadership as being of utmost importance in the diversification of staff and boards, in the development of an inclusive organization, in aligning these goals with the mission, and in providing a clear definition of diversity. Lastly, they concluded the need for further research that will provide scientific evidence on this topic in order to validate these practices.

Generational differences in the workplace are an additional challenge faced by NPOs. Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, and Lance (2010) concluded that organizations are going to face the challenges of older staff retirements and recruiting and retaining younger generations of staff. They surveyed high school seniors from three generations, focusing on value of leisure time and the importance placed on jobs with extrinsic, intrinsic, altruistic, and social benefits. The researchers utilized a data set that had been collected on a national level since 1976 via a random sampling process. The sample size was 16,507 and methods involved the development of subgroups to whom the researchers asked particular questions. Surveys were measured using a Likert-type scale and included questions on work values through a rewards perspective, along with a section where additional items were collected.

Twenge et al. concluded the following: (a) Gen X and Y valued leisure time more than Baby Boomers did, (b) Gen X placed the highest value of all the generations on extrinsic benefits, (c) Gen Y placed a lower value than the others on intrinsic benefits, and (d) all generations surveyed placed the same value on altruistic benefits. In conclusion, the researchers found that it is useful for organizations to prepare intentionally for ways to attract and retain GenX and GenMe (Y) workers. They suggested conducting further research on this fairly new topic, especially to examine what the causes of their results may be and what implications those causes may have.

The studies discussed in this section confirmed additional challenges facing NPOs and how leaders can respond to them, yet it remains to be understood if and or how the suggested strategies have been tested. The next section provides an extensive review of an area where much research has been conducted—the organizational challenge of change management.

Change management. The studies in this section were instrumental in determining the complexity of change and the vital role that leaders play in change management processes, particularly when seen through personal perspectives. In addition, readiness for change and organizational success are correlated and has effects on job satisfaction. For example, Trzcinski and Sobeck (2008) confirmed that NPOs have a greater ability to build capacity if the rates of staff readiness for change and Program development capacity are high. They sought to determine if organizational success was affected by readiness for change, the structure of the organization, and the ability to develop capacity. The researchers hypothesized that readiness for change was positively affected by high levels of capacity for and involvement in Program development, and a belief that the organization has the resources needed to develop capacity.

Trzcinski and Sobeck focused on small urban NPOs with budgets under $150,000. Utilizing data from several sources, they invited 901 small nonprofits to participate in the study and used several methods to collect data, including paper surveys given out at local events as well as online surveys and follow-up surveys, for a total of

396 responses. They collected data on the organizations to determine if the sample was diverse and found this to be true.

Through their data collection of NPO staff perceptions, the researchers discovered several practical findings. Staff readiness for change and the capacity of an organization to develop were positively correlated. In addition, readiness for change was negatively influenced when staff members felt that the change may have taxed them and/or their organization and when organizational leadership changes occurred. Individuals responded positively to the capacity of their organization to develop and grow when there was a strong structure within their establishment.

Trzcinski and Sobeck's findings support similar research that suggests when leaders are gauging readiness for change, they should not let the results, if negative, impede progress in trying to implement a change. Furthermore, Trzcinski and Sobeck pointed out that new organizational leaders need to be aware it will take more time for them to implement change because employees seek permanence in leadership. Leaders have the opportunity to build capacity by learning what their staff needs and addressing those needs through training efforts. Lastly, leaders need to build their own capacities to manage change and develop capacity effectively. Trzcinski and Sobeck suggested that future researchers examine this topic utilizing a mixed-methods approach over a longer period of time. That approach may provide richer evidence from personal perspectives on change, outcomes, and sustainability.

Furthermore, NPOs face the challenge of better understanding their potential audiences, evaluating their effectiveness, and enduring during changing times. Hu et al.'s (2014) research provided insights into the barriers facing small NPOs and possible organizational change management strategies. Their study focused on strategic planning (SP) and how it affects organizational outcomes and the administration of small NPOs. In addition, Hu et al. examined challenges occurring within an organization when implementing an SP process. For this exploratory study, a mixed-methods approach was used to collect data on SP utilizing a survey and focus groups. The sample was 20 small NPOs from one state that had established good relationships with the university conducting the research. The NPOs focused on human services and had few resources.

Hu et al. (2014) reflected extensively on the research barriers NPOs face and how an SP process might assist in addressing the following challenges: (a) the need to serve new clientele, (b) increased pressure to raise money, (c) political burdens, (d) development of collaborations, (e) change in demographics, and (f) staff retention. The researchers concluded that an SP process is very valuable in addressing strengths, opportunities, challenges, mission and vision development, goal setting, and future planning. The respondents concluded that SP was valuable in understanding the mission, vision, and goals, and helped to improve the effectiveness of the organization and its systems. Furthermore, Hu et al. concluded that "strategic planning is also perceived as an effective tool to initiate organizational change and strengthen abilities to change" (p. 94) Overall, the respondents did not feel the SP process aided in the use of evaluation tools to gauge organizational effectiveness. The researchers acknowledged that the sample participants contributed to one limitation of the study and thought conducting future research on a broader scale on the topic of NPO SP would be beneficial.

In addition, Devos, Buelens, and Bouckenooghe (2007) "examined the contribution of the content, context, and process of organizational transformation to employees' openness to change." (p. 607) In an effort to bridge a gap in the research on organizational change, Devos et al. studied these three factors at the same time, specifically how the factors of content, context, and process affected individuals' reactions to change. Furthermore, the researchers studied the effect of individuals' trust in leadership and past organizational change processes. The researchers provided three hypotheses: (a) individuals will be more open to change within their organization if they trust leadership, (b) individuals will be more open to change within their organization if they are actively participating in the process, and (c) individuals will be more open to change within their organization if past organizational change efforts have been successful.

In an effort to obtain high internal validity, Devos et al. utilized a strategy called experimental simulation; 828 demographically diverse participants were randomly selected and assigned to respond to a scenario about change and leadership. Four independent variables and one dependent variable were tested. In their second test, Devos et al. implemented a web-based survey to 835 staff that focused on two independent variables and one dependent variable of change and leadership. In both tests, the researchers conducted manipulation checks and concluded that all three of their hypotheses were positive.

Adding to what has been noted in much of the research presented in this review, the researchers confirmed that change management is complex, leadership needs to understand the multiple dimensions of this challenge, and leadership must develop trust with individuals within their organization to lead and implement change efforts successfully. They also concluded that the three aforementioned factors needed to be considered independently when developing change implementation plans. Devos et al. (2007) concluded that future research should include a broad study of varying types of changes and change variables in an effort to deepen the understanding of willingness to change.

Rafferty and Griffin (2006) also sought to fill a research gap by studying what parts of the change process most affect staff and how that effect is reflected in their attitudes. The researchers designed this study to provide organizational leaders a better understanding how their staff might react to change and how those reactions could affect the successful implementation of a change process. They specifically studied the following: (a) how often change occur, (b) how change affects those involved, (c) if planning out change efforts positively affects the process, (d) how uncertainty can affect the process, (e) how staff well-being is maintained, and (f) if employees have resources to assist them in handling the change. These topics led to the development of eight hypotheses for their study.

Rafferty and Griffin (2006) worked with a large Australian for-profit organization for this recurrent cross-sectional quantitative study conducted over 2 years. The researchers developed and tested the Likert-type surveys before collecting their data; the surveys measured perceptions and attributes of change, how content staff were in their jobs, and if staff planned to stay in their current jobs. Close to 1,300 surveys were returned, resulting in a 77% response rate. In the second survey, which examined how staff coped with change, the researchers collected 375 surveys for a 29% response rate.

Overall, Rafferty and Griffin discovered that if change efforts were well planned out, staff were more likely to be content with their jobs and less likely to leave. However, if change occurred too often, staff were less likely to be satisfied with their jobs, while if substantial change occurred, staff were more likely to leave their jobs. Furthermore, leaders played an integral role in helping their staff through a well-planned-out change event. Rafferty and Griffin confirmed that change management is a challenge for organizations and leaders play an integral role the process. Moreover, they recommended future research to explore the effects of change efforts on groups rather than just on individuals. They expressed a need for a longitudinal study examining how staff level of satisfaction may influence perceptions of organizational change. Finally, it would be valuable to conduct similar research in an organization not in the public sector.

Lastly, Gilley, Gilley, and McMillan (2009) examined how leaders' behaviors and skills affected organizational change efforts. As pointed out in the studies by Foster (2010) and Armenakis and Harris (2002), ample research has been done to develop models, strategies, approaches, and theories on organizational change, yet many of these change efforts have failed. Gilley et al. conducted their research guided by the following two questions: (a) how effective were organizational leaders in executing change, and (b) what were the most valuable leader behaviors related to implementing organizational change successfully?

Based on reviews of the literature, Gilley et al. developed, tested, and implemented a 36-question survey to collect data on change in relation to an organization, leadership, and demographics. They conducted ample testing with the sample before implementing the survey by asking hundreds of experts in the field to review and revise it. University Master's students in three states comprised the sample of

552 participants. Gilley et al. utilized five-point scales to measure one independent variable and 6 independent variables.

The critical piece these researchers brought to light in their study was that if organizational success is to occur, organizations must focus on change to be successful. This emphasis is a direct link to the aforementioned literature on nonprofit barriers and challenges in how successful change management processes can address some of those obstacles. Furthermore, Gilley et al.'s goal was examining the leader's roles in implementing change effectively, with an emphasis on six research-based skills/behaviors/practices that are most effective for success, namely: (a) coached employees, (b) effectively rewarded/recognized employees, (c) employees who experienced appropriate communication, (d) motivated employees, (e) employees involved in decision making, and (f) employees who experienced encouragement of teamwork and collaboration. Findings determined that some leaders were unable to execute organizational change successfully and did not assist their employees through the change process in positive ways; moreover, the two most important behaviors a leader needs to exhibit are the ability to motivate staff and to communicate effectively with their followers. Furthermore, future research could study how a professional's position may provide insights into change. In addition, Gilley et al. suggested a more in-depth examination of leaders' change management expertise and how the knowledge derived from that examination may impact a change process.

In summary, the studies discussed in this section confirmed another area that provides critical challenges facing NPOs and provided practical strategies for leaders to use when addressing them. However, once again, these studies provided little descriptive evidence directly from the leaders and did not follow up on testing the practical strategies offered. The next section now looks at some research that has attempted to look at the topic of organizational effectiveness and challenges more broadly and tested the relevance and value of organizational effectiveness frameworks as a tool for leaders to use in sustaining and/or growing their organizations.

Broad perspectives on NPO effectiveness and challenges. Crutchfield and McLeod Grant (2007) concluded a four-year study that examined 12 highly successful modern-day NPOs over a 2-year period to understand what they did to become and remain such impactful organizations. As a result of their research, six practices emerged: (a) advocate and serve, (b) make markets work, (c) inspire evangelists, (d) nurture nonprofit networks, (e) master the art of adaptation, and (f) share leadership. The second part of Crutchfield and McLeod Grant's research occurred in 2012 where they examined the status of those 12 highly successful NPOs after the recession of 2008 and researched how smaller (as opposed to some of the larger NPOs in their original study) NPOs were using their framework.

Crutchfield and McLeod Grant (2012) concluded that all 12 organizations were still in existence, were meeting or exceeding outcomes, and were implementing the six practices into their organizations. In addition, smaller NPOs were using these six practices to make their organizations great and provide a practical tool for NPO use. The researchers noted the following parallels across the NPOs the conducted research with:

> They focused very clearly on the outside world, on engaging the sectors, and on influencing others to become advocates for their cause. As we expressed it then, they spent as much time focused externally on changing systems—by influencing

> government policies, shaping markets, building fields of practice, and nurturing social and organizational networks—as they did on their own operations. They cared less about management practices per se than they did about their ability to influence others to build entire movements to create more lasting change (p. 5).

In addition, Mission Capital (2015) developed its framework, the Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness Framework. Mission Capital's Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness Framework was developed in large part to fill gaps in the research on organizational effectiveness and address organizational challenges collectively. The six essential elements that are incorporated into the Framework are: (a) clarity of purpose, (b) sustainable business model, (c) the right leadership, (d) results-driven operations, (e) interactive learning, and (f) intentional partnerships. Mission Capital's (2015) research confirmed the importance of NPOs in today's society, the challenges facing NPOs, and the pressures leaders in particular experience, and developed this tool specifically for leaders to use. While this framework has been extensively used with NPOs in Austin, Texas, further testing for applicability is needed. The goal of the present is to add to the development of knowledge for researchers and practitioners in the area of NPO effectiveness by testing out Mission Capital's Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness Framework.

Additionally, Gentry, Eckert, Stawiski, and Zhao (2014) sought to understand the collective challenges that organizational leaders experience. To understand these challenges better and assist organizations in addressing these issues, Gentry et al. collected qualitative information from 763 for-profit organizational leaders from across the world who were attending and took part in a particular leadership development course. The researchers used assessments and open-ended questions in the data collection process. As a result of a two-part team-coding process, Gentry et al. discovered 6 common challenges among the majority: (a) developing managerial effectiveness, (b) inspiring others, (c) developing employees, (d) leading a team, (e) guiding change, and (f) managing internal stakeholders and politics. This research validated that leaders experience many challenges, but provided them with information on training and support needs and ways they can deal with each identified challenge. This research is adding to the research presented above by developing a broader understanding of leadership challenges holistically.

Furthermore, in 2010 The Bridgespan Group (authors-Kelly Campbell and Rohit Menezes) shared a white paper on their research titled *Four Pillars of Growth for Youth-Serving Nonprofits.* The aim of this research was to develop an understanding of the organizational elements in place within growing youth-serving NPOs. Campbell and Menezes set criteria for the types of NPOs they would invite to be involved in their study (age of youth served, populations served, in the United States, and are not considered formal educational Programs). To determine if these were fast-growing NPOs they studied tax information of almost 7,000 organizations and ended up with a list of one-hundred to invite to participate. The sample and methodology consisted of 26 interviews with NPO leaders and forty-seven surveys returned.

As a result of these interviews and surveys, four pillars of growth emerged. The "four pillars of growth are: (1) preparing systematically for growth; (2) demonstrating clear Programmatic results; (3) marketing purposefully to specific funding; and (4) actively engaging board members' time, talent, and financial resources. (p. 11). The essence of these pillars align with much of the research noted in the previous three studies. Chapter 5 will provide suggestions for how these findings may aid improving practices for CCE.

Conclusion

The overview of the studies discussed in this chapter suggests that while many researchers have broadly examined the barriers and challenges facing NPOs and, specifically, their impact on leaders, additional research is still needed to capture the leaders' perspective of these challenges and to continue developing practical strategies for managing organizational effectiveness. As was presented in Chapter 1, Gentry, Eckert, Stawiski, & Zhao, 2014 noted the practical value of understanding the challenges leaders of NPOs are experiencing and discussed the importance of NPO leadership receiving useful assistance and support to address these challenges.

The challenges and barriers facing NPOs, as identified in this literature review, included: (a) evaluation, outcomes, and performance measurement, (b) organizational development, (c) marketing, (d) collaborations, (e) funding, (f) diversity and inclusion, (g) change management, and (h) broad perspectives on NPO effectiveness and challenges. In addition, the literature makes clear that NPO leaders have many strategies they can utilize to address these organizational challenges, yet few studies have tested these strategies. The review also provided evidence that little qualitative research has examined the current state of NPOs from a leader's descriptive perspective and what it takes to lead a Program well.

Throughout Chapter 2, evidence, threads, and connections were followed and examined that clearly validated the need for conducting the present study. While some of the studies discussed here have begun to address these challenges and solutions on a broader scale, the researchers concluded the need for further research on the topic across the NPO community. The present study continues the effort to understand this topic more deeply. The next chapter discusses the methodology chosen to conduct this study, followed by Chapters 4 and 5 which provide results and recommendations.

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore, describe, and understand the broad collective challenges CCE4-H and its leadership may be facing currently, what the current state of the Program is, and what is needed to lead a Program effectively. This descriptive qualitative study examined the topic through a practitioner's lens of open-ended inquiry. Finally, the study examined how the data gathered reflected current research on Organizational Effectiveness, the theoretical framework used for this study.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do CCE4-H Program leaders describe the current state of the 4-H Program?
2. What challenges do CCE4-H Program leaders face?
3. What does it take to lead a 4-H Program well?

Research Context

This study occurred within the CCE4-H Program, which serves youth in all counties across NYS through a variety of Program models. These models include 4-H clubs, after school Programs, camps, school enrichment, and special interest Programs. CCE4-H has Program leadership (official title 4-H Youth Development Program

Leaders) in counties across NYS and they were the participants invited to take part in this study.

The CCE4-H Program is part of CCE and each county has its own Association which is governed by a board of directors with direct support from the Executive Director. CCE provides Programs in the following areas: “(a) Agriculture and Food Systems; (b) Environment and Natural Resources, Sustainable Energy, and Climate Change; (c) 4-H Youth Development/Children, Youth, and Families; (d) Nutrition, Food Safety and Security, and Obesity Prevention; and (e) Community and Economic Vitality.” (CCE 101: Understanding the CCE System Training, 2015). These Associations are federally recognized 501(c)3 organizations. CCE serves 57 counties and five boroughs in New York State.

The rationale for conducting a qualitative descriptive study was giving an opportunity for the CCE4-H Program Leaders to describe, in their own words, the current state of the Program, any challenges they may be experiencing, and what is required to lead a Program effectively. Lambert, V.A. and Lambert, C.E. (2012) stated the following about descriptive studies: “The goal of qualitative descriptive studies is a comprehensive summarization, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals.” (p. 255)

In person semi structured interviews were appropriate because they allowed accessibility to possible participants and a depth of knowledge that would emerge from the descriptive data gathered. To assure that the date collected was from a wide range of participants, demographic information was collected which included district name, county, and years of service.

Research Participants

A purposive sample of NYS CCE4-H Program Leaders throughout the 57 counties and boroughs were asked to take part in qualitative semi structured interviews. The sample was drawn from 4-H Program Leaders from a variety of counties and experience levels. A purposive sample allowed for a cross-section of representative participants by identifying the specific criteria. The criterion was that these individuals had to be identified as the staff person leading a 4-H Program in a county Association. The individual CCE job classification titles were not all 4-H Program Leaders, however, for the purpose of describing the interviewees, they are referred to as 4-H Program Leaders.

An email invitation was sent to County CCE4-H Program Leaders whose contact information was provided by the NYS 4-H office on a list of educators who were recognized as 4-H Program Leaders. 55 4-H Program Leaders were sent an email invitation to participate in this study.

To reduce the nonresponse rate, the email invitation provided details such as the purpose of the study, the valuable contribution they will make to the study, and how the information will be shared and utilized (Fowler, 2014). There is no real agreement on what represents an adequate sample size in qualitative research, but the aim was to interview between 12 and 15 CCE4-H Program Leaders across New York State. The final number of in-person semi structured interviews was 10, averaging from 30 to 90 minutes resulting in 125 pages of transcripts. The ten 4-H Program Leaders interviewed represented four of the seven NYS 4-H Youth Development Program Districts. Their experience in their jobs ranged from 6 years to over 30 years averaging 15 years in the profession. In addition, eight out of the ten participants grew up in a 4-H Program as a child. Participants in the study were identified by District (7 Districts in NYS), rather than by name to protect their anonymity.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

The goal of the semi structured interviews the researcher conducted with CCE County 4-H Program Leaders was to develop an in-depth understanding of their experiences, in their own words, and in relation to the research questions. Nine open-ended interview questions (Appendix A) aligned with the problem and research questions. In designing the interview questions, the goal was to explore and understand the current state of the NYS 4-H Program. In addition, these interview questions addressed the challenges CCE4-H Program Leaders may face and what is needed to lead a 4-H Program well.

The study was granted permission from the organization Mission Capital (2015) to further test their Organizational Effectiveness Framework through the use of interview questions, as applied to the context of a unique organization, CCE. Mission Capital has noted the need to continue research beyond its geographical region on this emerging conceptual framework for organizational effectiveness. Furthermore, as Baruch and Ramalho (2006) argued:

> Many researchers have failed to pay sufficient attention, in both the general literature on organizational effectiveness and that on nonprofit organization (NPO) effectiveness, to possibilities for developing cumulative knowledge, knowledge that will contribute to theory building and effective management practice (p. 41).

Information obtained from the interviews reflected as well on research evidence on organizational effectiveness. In addition, the study was granted permission from the organization Mission Capital (2015) to further test their Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness Framework. They granted access to utilize six survey questions which directly related to the 6 elements of their framework. The following types of interview questions were used: (a) opening, (b) follow-up, (c) probing, (d) specifying, (e) interpreting, and (f) closing (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Furthermore, before the first interview was held, one practice interview with a 4-H Educator was conducted and adjustments were made to the script.

The researcher conducted the interviews in person because, as Fowler (2014) concluded, "advantages of interviewer administration, such as answering respondent questions, probing for adequate answers, and accurately following complex instructions or sequences, are realized." (p. 71) Interviews were recorded with permission from each participant. Lastly, bracketing knowledge of the 4-H Program was practiced during this process which helped in listening and learning from the 4-H Program Leaders.

Procedures Used in Data Analysis

Analysis of qualitative interview data occurred as transcription was being completed. A professional transcription service was hired to produce verbatim transcripts and then reviewed for accuracy. In addition, notes were taken after the interview and compared with the transcribed text. Transcripts were then shared with two interview participants to determine their accuracy.

The qualitative research analytic strategy consisted of first-and second-cycle coding, in conjunction with analytic memo writing (Saldana, 2013). The first cycle of coding was in vivo which developed a deeper understanding of the description provided and began to pare down the initial data. The second cycle consisted of pattern coding which allowed for the categorization of the data. Second cycle coding was utilized to develop themes and understand the essences of the descriptions provided by the 4-H Program Leaders.

In addition, analytic memos were referenced as an additional source in the coding process. Writing analytic memos assisted in keeping track of coding choices, and possible categories, themes, and essences. Writing these memos also captured the researcher's feelings, as a staff member within the 4-H Program, as they came up during and after the interviews. Additionally, member checking of coding occurred with two cohort members. The end result was forty-one initial codes were broken down to 3 categories, six themes, and 14 essences which are shared in depth in Chapter 4.

Summary

Application and interview questions were submitted to St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Boards (IRB) for approval and approval received (Appendix B). Cornell University IRB did not require a review, but did require a letter of support from the NYS 4-H Program Leader (Appendix C). Once the letter was obtained, it was submitted to Cornell University IRB with a letter of support from the NYS 4-H Program Leader (per their request). Interviews were conducted in for 2 months, taking into account travel time around New York State. All recordings were transcribed and data were analyzed. The findings are presented in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 provides a general overview of the findings, possible implications, and will suggest future research.

In summary, the goal of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore and understand the current state of the NYS4-H Program through the perspective of individuals in leadership positions. In addition, the study addressed the challenges CCE4-H Program Leaders may face and what it is needed to lead a 4-H Program well. Information obtained from semi structured interviews with CCE4-H Program Leaders from New York State were compared to evidence from research on NPO effectiveness. Proper protocols and actions were used to ensure trustworthiness and credibility.

This chapter identified the purpose and problem of the study, its theoretical rationale and choice of methodology, the study sample and setting, instruments, participant data, and procedures for data collection and analysis. Also discussed was the role of the researcher within the 4-H Program and procedures used to help negate bias. The next chapter presents the findings.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore and understand the current state of the NYS 4-H Program. 4-H Program Leaders were asked to describe challenges CCE4-H is currently facing, how they lead a Program well, and what is the current state of the NYS 4-H Program. The topic was specifically examined through a practitioner's lens of open-ended inquiry utilizing a theoretical rationale of organizational effectiveness through a cross case analysis. Semi structured interviews occurred with ten CCE4-H Program Leaders from across NYS, resulting in a 100% response rate of the individuals who agreed to participate. The total number of 4-H Program Leaders invited to participate was 57.

Chapter 4 is presented by categories, themes, and essences which emerged from the results. Generally, describing essences is a technique used in phenomenological studies. It was used in this descriptive study in an effort to provide a true essence of the descriptive responses shared by 4-H Program Leaders. The three categories include: Cultivating Leadership and Resources, Dynamic Tensions, and 4-H Grows Here. Six themes surfaced from the data which include: (a) leading well takes survival strategies, (b) accepting the need to and challenges associated with change, (c) pulls and pressures leaders experience, (d) facing funding realities, (e) staffing truths, and (f) adapting to and accepting what communities need (Table 4.1). The categories and themes provide a framework for what emerged from the results: The current state, the dynamic tensions, and presents details related to growth in the 4-H Program. Throughout Chapter 4, there are direct linkages and overlaps between the categories and themes presented.

Table 4.1

Summary of Categories and Themes of the Current State of the 4-H Program

Category	Theme	Essence
Cultivating Leadership and Resources	Leading well takes survival strategies	Multitude of skills, behaviors, and actions needed
	Accepting the need to and challenges associated with change	Recognizing the need to change
		Structural barriers to change
Dynamic Tensions	Pulls and pressures leaders experience	Complexities of the job
	Facing funding realities	Diversifying funding and sustainability efforts
	Organizational changes and challenges	Budget realities
		Funder driven direction
		Dichotomies of decision makers, stakeholders, and staff
		Staffing truths
4-H Grows Here	Adapting to and accepting what communities need	Societal changes and trends
		Cultivating leadership and resources to meet needs
		Training and support needed
		“The best known secret”
		Access

Research Questions

The three broad research questions guided this qualitative descriptive study. The research questions were:

1. How does leadership describe the current state of the 4-H Program?
2. What challenges do CCE4-H Program Leaders face?
3. What does it take to lead a 4-H program well?

In addition, the research questions guided the development of categories and themes.

Data Analysis and Findings

Category 1: The Importance of Cultivating Leadership and Resources in the 4-H Program. This category emerged through asking 4-H Program Leaders what it takes to lead a program well. As noted in Chapter 2, the relevant literature provided insight into the prescriptive practices/methods NPO leaders can follow and the skills they need to deal with their many challenges, manage change positively, and lead effective organizations. This lead to the discovery of two themes which are *leading well takes survival strategies* and *accepting the need to change and challenges associated with change.* I also uncovered several essences during the analysis that further describe what 4-H Program Leaders are experiencing. Berg (2007) stated “quality refers to a thing’s essence and ambience-the what, how, when, and where of it.” (p. 1)

Leading well takes survival strategies. All 4-H Program Leaders noted many skills that are needed to lead well. When asked “what does it take to lead a 4-H Program well” Participant 4 (p. 8) described:

> You have to be able to develop thick skin. . .be able to multitask well. . .be able to go with the flow. . .be open to trying new things and just jumping in wherever it's seen that the help is needed. . .you have to be willing to give of your time. . .there are limitations to that. 4-H Educators have to be empowered to speak up for themselves. . .be encouraged. . .it's okay to say no.

In addition, participant 6 (p. 6) concluded that *to lead well:*

> You have to be open minded. . .flexible and you really have to understand what leadership is. . .it's not your 4-H Program. It belongs to the 4-Hers, parents, volunteers and all of your staff. It's up to all of you to come together on those working agreements that make a 4-H plan of work come to life.

Participants 4 and 6 provided an *overview of what some of the skills are* that are needed to lead a Program well.

Several 4-H Program Leaders described the importance of leveraging, supporting, engaging, and managing resources. Those resources include staff, volunteers, partners, Cornell, funding, and time. Participant 6 (p. 7) shared this about *leveraging volunteer resources*:

> Yeah, I love to take kids out on a pseudo pasturing walk and explain why the cows eat the grass and why it's important and rotational grazing. But I still think there is that room for knowing who your volunteer is and who your person is that can really give them that full experience.

Participant 10 (pp. 6 & 7) discussed *positioning your Program for success:*

> Is really about networking, marketing, and engagement of others in the community. . .once you are working with people. . .building that report. .

> .showing them that you have a quality Program. . .that puts you in a light that makes you more approachable and desired as a Program. . .that makes you successful when you are asking people for help. It leads towards. . .collaborations that you need to have a strong basis for grant writing. . .for engaging Cornell faculty on projects you're doing. . .for continued local support, and county funding.

In reference to *staff as resources*, participant 9 (p. 5) provided this response:

> In my own little corner I have a very competent administrative assistant and I actually ask her. This is the outcome that needs to be done, how do you suggest it would be done. What's the best way to do it. . .give her the authority? You've got to give subordinates authority and really define where the authority is.

Participant 3 (p. 6) shared this about *supporting staff:*

> I've been fortunate to have my staff for. . .years. You learn to work with each other. . .you learn their strengths and weaknesses so when you're managing your staff. . .you're managing their time which is a dollar value and. . .you're managing what feeds them. . .if it's a person whose passion is gardening and they're. . .responsible for club management. You have to make sure that they're teaching their gardening Programs to feed that side. . .so they can sit down and do the boring paperwork.

Furthermore, participant 5 (p. 10) described how her Association is *leveraging and managing resources:*

> There is a lot of communication among management of here's who we're working with on these projects. . .the grants we're working on. . .who we're going after for

> funding, support or community grants. Here is the big picture and the plan and how we're attacking. . .that has definitely helped us to help build more resources.

Participant 4 (p. 12) discussed her approaches to *working with volunteers:*

> It's fostering relationships with the volunteers. . .encouraging them with our notification (e-blast). When I do leader trainings, giving them the resources to help manage. . .making sure our resource library is up to date. . .make sure I have budget line that is for purchasing those new curriculums.

Each 4-H Program Leader interviewed provided descriptions of different skills they need to lead well resulting in an extensive list. The skills most often described included: (a) people skills, (b) flexibility, (c) communication skills, (d) planning and evaluation, (e) lifelong learning, (f) 4-H experience (Appendix D). The following set of quotes illustrates these skills.

Participant 2 (p. 2): *people and communication skills:*

> One of the biggest skills that's needed. . .people skills. 4-H is all about people, volunteers and you have to influence them enough to want to volunteer to do things for the Program. Working with people, talking to them, giving them information, communicating opportunities, skills, and expectations. . .it's taken me a long time to learn that communication. . .effective communication. . .take the time. . .people before paperwork. Because people are going to get things done. . .make people a priority. . .the better skills you have with people and communicating the better your Program is.

Participant 4 (p. 2) discussed the *difficulties around people skills:*

> The part that's more difficult is the people aspect. . .dealing with emotions. . .all that comes with that. . .I haven't figured out a good strategy for that. That's really where my stress level comes from is the personal connections you have with people. . .somebody is. . .very emotionally involved. . .and you're the one that has to say no. . .or I can't deal with it right now.

Participant 1 (p. 3). *Flexibility:*

> I think it takes positivity and creativity. I think. . .your job is not the same any two days. Flexibility also goes with that and you can come into the office and have everything planned out one day and within one phone call or two emails it has changed by a long shot.

Participant 2 (p.9) discussed *flexibility* in dealing with difficult issues:

> To be in a position as far as a team leader in 4-H. . .you have to be very flexible. You have to be confident in your abilities especially with those difficult things you have to handle. Critical conversations. . .there's a fine line of being stern but being very respectful. . .but not engaging in emotion. That's tough. . .goes back to it's all about people skills.

Participant 5 (p. 6). *Planning and evaluation:*

> You need to have a good understanding of what the purpose of your organization is. . .take the time to continually reflect back. . .is it still meeting the mission or that vision? Does the mission or vision need to change because environment and the world is changing. . .are you still pertinent? You definitely need to do some type of evaluation. There's lots of different ways to get some kind of evaluation. . .it's got to have purpose. . .the results you're looking for.

Participant 4 (p. 16) discussed *evaluation* in this way:

> I'm always looking for feedback from our participants. . .the adults and the youth. Good, bad or ugly. . .it doesn't matter because I take it very seriously. It's an important part of getting a Program to thrive and grow. . .what's good and what needs improvement.

Participant 5 (pp. 5 & 6). *Lifelong learner:*

> My definition of a lifelong learner is. . .take the time to reflect back and think how you handled something or did something . . .could it have been better? Take ownership. . .see what you can do different next time. . .taking training classes. . .doing webinars. . .going to conferences. . .making time to belong to professional development organizations. . .talk to other educators from across your district and state, the U.S. . .be willing to take those opportunities.

Participant 3 shared what it takes to lead a 4-H Program well, including *learning:* "it takes dedication, commitment, enthusiasm, creativity, patience, patience, enthusiasm to learn, problem solving skills, imagination, and patience." (p. 4)

Participant 2 (p. 3). *4-H experience:*

> To lead a 4-H Program well. . .it absolutely helps, not required but is to have 4-H experience. Whether you come in with a formal position that you worked in 4-H previously or you were a volunteer or you were in 4-H. . .coming into this position, not going through the ranks, so to speak will be very difficult to lead. If you don't know what needs to be done or how things have been done you can't lead properly.

Participant 4 (p. 2) was asked "since you *grew up in the Program*, do you feel that you were at an advantage coming in? Or better prepared?

> I believe so because I had an understanding from a participants perspective of what there was. . .all of those Programmatic aspects that eat up a lot of your time. I had an understanding from a different perspective of how much time that could really take. It did take a lot of adjustment. . .probably 2 years to adjust to being on the other side of the fence.

The descriptions presented above demonstrate the essence of the multitude of skills, behaviors, strategies, and actions needed to lead Programs well. The descriptions also begin to paint the picture in a more holistic way of what 4-H Program Leaders are experiencing and what they need to survive in their jobs. Appendix D provides a detailed list of skills identified as needed to lead well, in addition to those noted as being ones that staff would like more training on. Chapter 5 will address how this information could be used in developing organizational solutions.

Accepting the need to change and challenges associated with change. The overall category for this section is titled *cultivating leadership and resources*. In Chapter 2, a review of literature on change management was presented. Devos et al. (2007) confirmed that change management is complex, leadership needs to understand the multiple dimensions of this challenge, and leadership must develop trust with individuals within their organization to lead and implement change efforts successfully. They also concluded that the three aforementioned factors needed to be considered independently when developing change implementation plans. The essences I derived from the interviews included 4-H Program Leaders recognize the need to and structural barriers to change within the 4-H Program and CCE.

Seven out of the ten 4-H Program Leaders recognize the need for the 4-H Program to change, while also noting the challenges that exist allowing for change to occur. Participant 10 (pp. 1 & 2) described to *current state of the 4-H Program* as:

> The desire for 4-H is strong in those who know what 4-H is. . .trouble reaching nontraditional 4-H'ers who don't have a family history of knowing what it is or. . .because they don't have a cow, they're not what we're targeting. . .the 4-H Program is strong. . .we're offering traditional club Programming. . .we're reaching their needs. . .our opportunities for outside traditional club Programming are strong and available. It's just a matter of doing some better educating to get people interested. . .in those types of "out of the box" 4-H.

Participant 1 (p. 3) recognizes the need to *change with society*:

> As much as we like to shun the traditional term we have to keep that in our mind that that is a piece of our history and it's okay to embrace that. But we need to realize that we can change with society. Society is not the same as it was 5 years ago even 2 years ago. Technology is going faster and in order to reach our youth we have to find a way. . .promoting 4-H on their level.

Furthermore, Participant 6 concluded that "we need to really think about our priorities as an organization and what CE has further in our strategic visioning and how our 4-H Program is working on that." (p.8) Interviewing the 4-H Program Leaders resulted in the essence of *structural barriers to change*. The following quotes represent this essence and present some of the challenges 4-H Program Leaders are dealing in relation to change.

Participant 1 (p. 6) mentioned these *structural barriers*:

> I have a board that really wants. . .more traditional 4-H. . .an advisory that is of the same mindset. I've tried to get in some new thinking on both. . .when they come into the groups with. . .new ideas, they get shut down. I try to steer the conversations so that maybe some of our. . .traditional members will open to. . .new theories and ideas. My Director understands. . .and is very supportive of me getting into after school, community settings. Our board and advisory does one push and we try to kind of meet in the middle.

Participant 5 (p. 1) commented on some staff doing the *status quo*:

> Some staff take that research and will say. . .this part of the Program doesn't really meet this new need or here is information that maybe we should change this part of the Program to make it better. . .some staff that do that. . .on a regular basis and there is other staff that don't. . .just kind of status quo unless somebody. . .steps in and says maybe we need to take a look at this.

Participant 4 (p. 3) referred to the *challenges traditional 4-H people are having with changes* to how 4-H is presented:

> Participants are struggling to understand the transition from being a market animal to being animal science (STEM). . .traditional people are not able to make the connections between those two things. . .having a hard time changing with the trends. We don't like change as human beings. . .their needs to be some guidance as to how to guide these people through these changes and get them to understand

> we're not changing what you're doing; we're really just changing the way we talk about it.

Lastly, Participant 7 (p. 5) shares her thoughts on another *structural barrier*:

> Don't ask me about the education association. I find that very commanding and restricting to what we are trying to engage. . .it's supposed to be a professional development, but. . .it really gets its fingers into public presentations and whether or not you've paid your dues. . .if you haven't paid your dues, get out from the area meeting. . .it does not build camaraderie and I find that very frustrating and archaic. [follow up question-"Do you have a suggestion for a solution?"]. . .a solution would be hard to find because there's so much tradition involved.

This section has provided deep descriptions from 4-H Program Leaders on the *Importance of Cultivating Leadership and Resources within the 4-H Program.* The participants identified that *leading well takes survival strategies* and they are *accepting the need to change and challenges associated with change.* This section leads fluidly into the next portion of this chapter in that the next category addresses the *Dynamic Tensions* 4-H Program Leaders are experiencing. The four themes that were drawn from the interviews include: (a) *pulls and pressures leaders experience*, (b) *facing funding realities,* (c) *staffing truth, and (d) organizational changes and challenges.*

Category 2: Dynamic Tensions. As noted in Chapter 2, organizational leaders need to understand, from a leader's perspective, the challenges of the organization so they can develop efforts to solve issues as they derive a deeper understanding of these issues (Chait et al., 2005; Gentry et al., 2014). The descriptions provided by the 4-H Program Leaders show the dynamic tensions they face resulting in the following essences: (a) complexities of the job; (b) diversifying funding and sustainability efforts; (c) budget realities; (d) funder driven direction; (e) dichotomies of decision makers, stakeholders, and staff; (f) organizational changes and challenges; and (g) staffing truths. In addition, three themes emerged from the interviews which include *pulls and pressures leaders experience, facing funding realities, and organizational changes and challenges.* In the following section 4-H Program Leaders share information that show how these themes came to be. Throughout the categories presented, I noticed how many of the answers to questions overlapped.

The following participants shared overall *pulls and pressures leaders [they] experience.* Participant 4 (p. 14) noted:

> You have to be very strategic about your budget. . .know where you want your priorities to be or. . .needs its priorities to be. . .priority base first and foremost. . .making sure you have the staff to support what you want to do. . .making sure you have the money available for purchase of resources or basic office functioning. . .one of the hardest things is learning to balance being a Program deliverer and an administrator.

Participant 8 (p. 2) shares the *challenges experienced*:

> We hear more and more is the resources and the lack. It’s really lack of funding staying relevant, staffing is a huge issue. We’re finding more and more that as you’re working with millennials. . .they are a very different animal to work with. Trying to manage staff issues with the resources and trying to stay current is probably a three-fold challenge.

Several of the 4-H Program Leaders discussed the *complexities of their jobs.*

Participant 7 (p. 6) discussed the challenges associated with the *4-H club model:*

> The club model is so heavy with administrative tasks and when the educator is tasked with those tasks as I am. . .I have no administrative help, every phone call. . .enrollment. . .volunteer background check, paperwork, everything's got to go through me. There is no funding for administrative assistants. I get so bogged down in the club model.

Participant 8 (p. 3) referred to the *administrative and management aspects of the work:*

> You don't do any of the jobs very well. . .the most challenging thing is the administrative end of things. . .budget management. . . find resources to fix the roof over the tractor. Which aren't things I think a lot of Issue Leaders are dealing with. I excel at working with the kids to develop new Programs. I do those things a little bit better because I like them more. Then all this managing staff. . .very different work styles and work ethics. Just educational backgrounds is kind of a different thing that I deal with.

Participant 2 (p. 1) summarized the *pulls and pressures* of the job in this way:

> The 4-H Program is, ever changing. . .try to do everything for everyone. . .try to be everything to everybody. . .its staff and volunteers naturally. . .we want to help, we want to do what we can for everyone. No isn't necessarily in our vocabulary. You have pressures. . . so you're getting pulled in a lot of different directions. . .you get spread very thin. We have breadth. . .not necessarily depth. That's a serious issue in our Program.

Participant 6 (p. 7) discussed *new educators and Program Leader pressures:*

> Younger 4-H educators. . .certainly have passion and energy. . .they are hired in their counties to focus on one thing whether it's urban 4-H or after school. They're not facing the same things that some of us do as Program Leaders. There are even Program Leaders over two Program areas.

When asked "how do you develop resources and position your Program for success and how much time do you dedicate to this," Participant 10 (p. 7) described the *understanding of her job as:*

> It's a pretty good chunk. . .its' probably sixty percent of my time I spend at meetings and networking. . .making collaborations and working on grant writing with others. Working on marketing and what we're doing to save the county supervisors and things like that.

Participant 6 (p. 5) further explains *understanding the job and worries about the job:*

> If I leave my job tomorrow I would be worried. We've been doing it for a while and it works for us. . ..they could advertise and find, but someone would really have to. . . figure out what they're supposed to be. . .it's a difficult job to figure out. You can try. . .what should I be learning about but there are all these other pieces of that, the community engagement piece. You can't do 4-H just in your little office. You can't sign contracts all these little intimate details. . .hidden secrets and lead 4-H into a lot of trouble if nobody tells you. 4-H Educators get really burned out if you just think about it by yourself.

Lastly, when referring to the dynamic tensions, complexities of the job, and lack of time, Participant 5 (p. 4) shared the following when discussing *Program growth:*

> Not enough time to be able to really focus on it. . .to follow up on things. . .a lot of staff that I've talked to. . .you go from one Program to another. . .and you don't have time to sit and pre plan, and get all of the pieces in play. . .you get through the Program and you're like, oh yay, nothing major happened, great! And then you're on to your next one. . .you don't get time to. . .reflect on it. . .don't have time to do all of that. That can hurt the Program.

Within the same category of *Dynamic Tensions,* the theme of *facing funding realities* materialized from these interviews. Essences of diversifying funding and sustainability efforts, budget realities, funder driven direction emerged. The 4-H Program Leaders answers to questions directly related to funding and resources are woven into descriptions around *pulls and pressures, dichotomies of decision makers, stakeholders, and staff* (presented below), *and leading well takes survival strategies.*

Participant 5 (p. 12 & 13) discussed *diversity of funding sources and sustainability:*

> Some of the things we're looking at where we always say that we'll come in and do it for free. That's not necessarily how we're functioning now. . .we want to be able to support the community and take this knowledge out. . .and provide it to them. . .we also need to have some funding to be able to do what we need to do on a day to day basis.

Participant 3 (p. 3) mentioned *balancing funder sources and funder driven direction:*

> We always balance our funder sources. We have one funder that wants you to. . .make more positive differences in youth which we know is traditional 4-H clubs in my county. . .very time consuming. We have another funder that wants to reach

lots of people. So one time shots and go do that. . .finding the balance and that mixture and keeping your funders happy.

Participant 1 (p. 2) expressed concern about *budget realities and restrictions:*

> Having to do more with less staff, less funding. I am budgeted for 2016 with one hundred dollars of teaching materials. How far do I go with a hundred dollars when I'm trying to do club, after school and community center Programming. I just think the obstacles. . .they're pretty challenging with that piece. . .with such tight budget restrictions sometimes it's hard to be taken seriously. . .to do an outstanding Program you need the financial resources. . .with budgets so tight it's hard to consistently promote and produce top quality Programming.

Furthermore, when asked "what challenges do 4-H Program Leaders face," Participant 2 (p. 2) explained that *funding drives Programming:*

> One of the biggest is funding, budgeting, where do you allocate your resources? Where do you allocate your staff? Where do you reduce expenses? Lots of opportunities come our way as far as funding and grants. . . the challenges that funding drives Programming now. So wherever the funding sources come from, whatever their requirements or needs are you will meet them because we need funding.

Participant 6 (p. 9) described the importance of figuring out *where we are going and why* this is important in the *dynamic tensions of facing funding realities*:

> It's critical that we figure out where we're going. How are we going to get to this next step? It's 2016; how are we going to stay relevant? What are we going to say we do? Getting kids together and doing a 4-H project doesn't cut it for county

government. They think that's good; they don't deny it. But they want to see something else. They want to know "what are my dollars contributing to?"

The third theme of *organizational changes and challenges* resulted in the essences of *dichotomies of decision makers, stakeholders, and staff, and staffing truths.* What developed from the interviews was that 4-H Program Leaders are receiving numerous different messages as far as Program direction from a variety of sources. Additionally, numerous issues related to staffing emerged from these interviews. Participant 1 (p. 4) described the *direction their County Association's Board wants* to go in:

> One of our clubs; it's very urban, very low income. The leader is very passionate about making sure the girls in the club learn about safe sex because teen pregnancy has been very high. So many people from the traditional 4-H model would shun that. . .I said this is something they do need to learn about. They need to learn about healthy lifestyles. Our Board really likes to see traditional 4-H. They want to see the club motto, they want. . .traditional 4-H. When I come to them and say we've got all these other Programs sometimes I get shut down a bit.

Participant 2 (p. 7) shared thoughts on *Executive Director's (ED) roles in directing:*

> I don't think the not having to worry about budgeting or funding. . .although you'd think they go hand in hand with grant writing, it really doesn't happen in our sense because our ED is always looking for new opportunities, new audiences. ED's have kind of an ego. They want to be the first to do something or have the biggest county budget or get the most funds coming through the Association.

Participant 3 (p. 7 & 8) noted how *schools don't want her to change:*

> I've been trained to make some changes in some of my Programs. We do field trips for teachers and I find that our teachers don't want me to change. I'm trying to change up how we're doing things. . .want it this way. Those schools have been coming for 20 years, they want it the way that they know. I was trying to change things up for the schools that aren't coming.

When asked "who believes in the club model?" Participant 7 remarked "It is from the ED to the board through my funder. Because I was tasked to "Go create 4-H Clubs! We want pigs, goats, chickens and sheep at our county youth fair." (p. 6 & 7). Furthermore the same participant (p. 13) shared concerns regarding how *direction from the state* affects the job:

> There's this huge ripple effect. . . I question whether the state office realizes how it impacts my time. . ."let's find some 4-H kids, put them out there, put them on advertisements, and let's get those 4-H alum excited about 4-H again and bring them back in." When am I going to have time to deal with all of these people? Where is the structure when they start making phone calls to me? Tell us where you want us to go.

Additionally, under the theme of *organizational changes and challenges,* the essence of *staffing truths* emerged through a multitude of descriptions which included: (a) aging staff, (b) generational differences, (c) federal legislation changes, (d) hourly staff; (e) position descriptions, (f) not enough staff, (g) managing, (h) staff training, and (i) support and recognition. Throughout this section, 4-H Program Leaders quotes paint the picture of the staffing truths they are facing.

Participant 3 (p. 2) discussed the *aging staff* she is working with:

> My staff is all eligible to retire. One wants to do. . .traditional 4-H Programs and is phenomenal at it. . .she doesn't want to jump in and do anything new and different. She wants to keep doing what she does until she retires. Another person is eligible to retire. She is going to work for a long time because of the financial status of her household. I have a third person who is retiring. . .so it's hard to write grants because your staff is so completely going to change.

Participant 6 (p. 7) shared the experiences of working with *millennials (generational differences):*

> We've just hired our first millennial as a support staff. They go about their work so differently than everybody else. . .there would be no way that they could just come in to work and jump into what we're doing. Because we've had to go through step by step each day. "This is a phone that you're going to answer. You have to put a voice message on it" and different things like that. As I age out towards retirement it's going to be interesting.

4-H Programs Leaders described their concerns over the new *Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), hourly staff, and the CCE job classification system (position descriptions)* when referencing *staffing truths*. Participant 4 (p. 8) expressed concerns about FLSA:

> It's getting more difficult especially with the department of labor potential changes. I'm right now concerned as to how much I'm going to be asked to do. . .I will probably be one of the only exempt people left in my organization. Everyone else under my supervision will become hourly. . .teetering on a big

change. . . no matter how dedicated we are to our jobs are now going to be faced with some serious limitations. . .that's mostly hours. . .we are trying to communicate that to our population right now and make some strategic changes.

Participant 2 (pp. 2 & 5) noted concerns regarding similar issues:

> Working with Cornell under their. . .hr requirements, labor laws. . .the insurance company what we can and cannot do. Those are challenging, trying to do a Program that satisfies all of those requirements and needs. [Follow up question- what percentage of your time is spent programming and in administration]. . .forty percent programming and 60 percent admin. The challenging thing. . .with the new Cornell classifications. . .mine will go to ten or twenty percent programming and rest is admin. . .a struggle for programming and counties.

Some of the 4-H Program Leaders shared a sense of there *not being enough staff*, not enough funding for staff, and or the staffing scenarios in their counties affect the quality of the program. Participant 7 noted "people are stretched too thin." (p. 8). Participant shared the *links between funding and staffing:*

> The tricky part going back to staff. . .we need more funding streams to hire more staff. I have applied for an Urban Fellow. . .I have reached out to SUNY. . .and we have an intern coming in for the fall. . .I'm just reaching out for that piece.
>
> We're so short on staff that we're not able to deliver a consistent program.

Participant 6 (pp. 2 & 4) described challenges related to *diversified staffing scenarios and not having enough staff:*

> Our challenge has been having one full time person designated to 4-H instead of this diversified everybody does a little bit, is really difficult. . .diversified

> positions have multiple high level leadership and administration built into being a 4-H Program Leader. Is that doable for time and not enough staff? Very few counties have enough staff to do things they may want to. . .we went with hiring just part time. . .just doing programs. . .it definitely affects the quality.

Participant 3 (p. 3) shared the staffing truth regarding *hourly employees:*

> When you have hourly employees like I do. With no overtime, so 40 hours is 40 hours is 40 hours. So trying to chaperone teen events, chaperone horse bowl, do weekend programs that we do. . .it is overwhelming and encompassing and I think that it limits the program, what it can do.

When asked "what challenges do CCE 4-H Program Leaders face" participant 5 (p. 3 & 4) concluded that *resources are the biggest challenge:*

> Resources. . ..there is not enough money to reach out to as many youth as we want to. . .being able to fund enough staff positions to do that. . .not enough funding to do our jobs at one hundred percent. . .program leadership. . .they're constrained. That can hurt the program. . .again not just from our office but from other counties talked to and educators they seem to struggle with the same issues.

Additionally 4-H Program Leaders shared their feeling on *managing staff.* When asked "what does it take to mentor those staff?" Participant 8 (p. 8) shared the following *staffing truth:*

> That's where I'm struggling. It's a lot of personality things. I have two managers who really don't manage very well. I'm trying to manage managers and that's been a huge struggle and something that I really have to look at with this new classification system.

The final section presents descriptions from 4-H Program Leaders regarding staff training and support, and recognition. Again, there are linkages between the organizational challenges and changes and the variety of topics related to staffing, for instance how hourly employees may not have the same opportunities for training as Participant 3 (p. 3) notes in reference to her hourly employees:

> I feel they also miss out on some opportunities. Because their programs will take them over hours then there's not that extra time to do professional development, go to association conferences or do different in-services because of the program needs. . .the balance of it.

When asked "Is there any kind of support or training that you feel like you've needed, to support you as a professional, the same participant (Participant 3, p. 4) shared the following:

> I have to say that in my 17 years I'm seeing more opportunities now than I did 8 years ago. I went through the supervisor training 10 years ago. I think there are opportunities that come up that we're not made aware of.

Participant 4 (p. 6) discussed noted challenges regarding *4-H staff training:*

> I deal with a lot are parents and. . .new educators coming into the system. . .there's not really training for how to do our jobs. It doesn't matter if you've had experience working in 4-H or if you come in with no experience, there really is no training. . .you need to read the risk management manual; you need to understand that. . .need to know 4-H 101. . .that should be handed out first. . .most of the time its trial by fire and you're just thrown into it. . . you're flying by the seat of your pants most of the time. I've done it long enough that I don't fly by the seat of my

> pants most of the time because I know what needs to be in place. But I know that's a challenge for new educators.

Furthermore, when asked "leadership in the overall program needs to fully understand risk management and orient new staff on it, Participant 7 answered by stating "Right there's your word. Nobody gets oriented. You come in on a grant, you work as a community educator, you deliver the services. . .if you're here long enough, you might get thrown up the ranks." (p. 12)

Participant 10 (p. 3) summarized *support and recognition:*

> Something as simple as recognition is really important. CCE associations are not. . .good at recognition for jobs well done. . .a very basic minimal thing but all the way up to providing support for how we operate, how we run our Programs. . .the last 13, 14 years, I've seen a decline in who's available to help support associations at Cornell. I've seen them transition into a Shared Business Network (SBN) model which still doesn't provide the level of support. . .the direction and guidance that we need. Participant 10 went on to further say "I don't know whose responsibility it is to do the training. Is it a national responsibility, a state 4-H office responsibility; is it the responsibility of each county to train their own staff? I don't know the answer to that." (p. 5)

Participant 8 (p. 3) described *support structures* in this way:

> I really don't have a support structure. My ED is not a mentor. . .kind of sits on high and makes judgement calls. . .no I really don't, and I see some of our other departments who do have that and think that would be amazing. And when I did have a struggle with some particular issues my ED said let's have regular

> meetings. I thought great this will be a time for mentorship and it really didn't turn out to be that and that's tough.

Participant 1 (p. 3) described the *need for top-down support:*

> We need a little more top down leadership. I'm very supportive that counties can kind of mold the 4-H Program into what meets the needs of their communities. . .that is still a key piece. We need better systems in place. . .whether it be national or the state office to help have clear directives of what we need to be accomplishing. Do we have a clear strategic plan. . .we have those pieces but they're really hard to implement. When you're on the county level, when you look at our budgets, when you look at our staffing levels.

Participant 2 (p. 7) described *staff support* in this way:

> My investment is time. I make myself take the time to sit down with. . .staff members and do orientations, do expectations, chain of command. There are so many unwritten, well maybe they're written we just can't find them, rules and requirements and policies, I try to give the basic orientation to CE and to what their job duties are. . .as we go along I keep building upon that. If an issue arises, something I haven't covered. We'll cover that together. We use it as a learning experience and I just expect that it won't occur again or it'll be not as severe of an issue going forward.

This section has provided deep descriptions from 4-H Program Leaders as to the *Dynamic Tensions* they face in their work. They expressed their thoughts and feelings regarding the *pulls and pressures they experience,* that they are *facing funding realities,* and have come to understand the *organizational changes and challenges*.

Category 3: 4-H Grows Here. 4-H Grows Here is a national campaign to grow the 4-H Program. In Chapter 2, literature on change management was reported on. Trzcinski and Sobeck (2008) discovered that staff readiness for change and the capacity of an organization to develop were positively correlated. In addition, individuals responded positively to the capacity of their organization to develop and grow when there was a strong structure within their establishment. The theme that emerged from the interviews with 4-H Program Leaders was *adapting to and accepting what communities need.* The essences of this theme are *societal changes and trends, cultivating leadership and resources to meet community needs, training and support needed, "the best known secret," and access* which are all issues that can be addressed structurally.

Participant 1 (p. 4) is *learning about the community:*

> I do a basic needs assessment for our community and see what programs are needed. . . in an office you can sit there and. . .think this would be a great program and in reality it's not necessarily what that community needs or wants. I have tried to get more involved with. . .diverse populations within our community to reach out and try to have a better idea of what their needs are.

Participant 8 noted "I think constantly being able to say what's the newest thing out there or what's the trend and sort of responding to that but also providing a service." (p. 7)

Participant 4 (pp. 5 & 6) described *short term programming:*

> We've started offering programs when kids are off from school. I did a STEM camp for one week which was 4 hours a day. It's really up to their interests. . .we have found works really well is not to offer the same topic every day. Things like

> that have better participation. . .because the parents are looking for something for their kids to do.

Participant 6 (p. 17) expressed the need to *gauge kid's readiness to participate and the capacity* of the 4-H Program:

> We have turned down PINS Diversion, which has asked us several times to develop programs. We used to jump because of the money but the kids often aren't ready. . .the group that year wasn't ready for a variety of reasons. Kids that have uncontrollable behavioral issues; if you get more than three in the room you're in trouble.

Throughout the previous sections, under other categories, 4-H Program Leaders described the fact that society is changing and how many have accepted the need of the 4-H program to change. Additional essences that I derived from these interviews were that of *cultivating leadership and resources to meet needs and training and support needed.* Leadership was described as volunteers, boards, and staff. From the interviews descriptors such as supporting and training staff, demographically representative advisory boards, volunteer recruitment, support and training, and partnerships emerged. When asked "what does it take to lead a 4-H program well, Participant 9 stated "It takes training. There's got to be a lot of solid training." (p. 3)

Participant 1 (p. 10) was *uncertain about the type of support needed:*

> I'm not exactly sure exactly what support I would need. One of the only reasons I feel. . . I've been successful is that I've been a little vocal in reaching out to my colleagues. . .within the district and other educators across the state. . .reaching out to the state staff when I do need help. Our state staff in and of themselves has

been amazing at responding but we need a little bit. . .we need more support in the counties.

Several 4-H Programs Leaders reflected on the skills they needed training and support on. (Appendix G)

For instance, Participant 8 (p. 3) shared what *skills they wish they had:*

> To try to manage a budget. . .know financial terms. . .all of those things. . .and even when I was taking a course. . .they said, oftentimes non-profit managers are not coming in with these skills. There is no support system for that at the state. . .or county level. . .my finance director hung up on me. . .because I was asking questions that she thought were stupid. She. . .gave up and the way I learned was to. . .submit a change in the budget until it matched what she wanted. . .if I'd had those skills going in. . .managing people would have been a good place to start. I didn't study that so then. . .if you're moving up in an organization how do you get? Unless you do have a mentor that can put you through it.

Participant 1 (p. 6) discussed the *demographics of the advisory board:*

> I would like to see our advisory committee be more consistent with the demographics of our county. We have a very wide array of demographics. . .from socioeconomic difference, racial differences, cultural differences and I would like to see my advisory replicate that more and it doesn't right now.

In moving into *volunteer recruitment, training, and support*, Participant 2 (p. 5) shared the following:

> The best resources are volunteers. . .we have identified people who have skills and abilities in a specific area but also the youth development component. We had

some very poor customer service. . .we wanted to change that and. . .make sure that our new volunteers were getting a little bit more attention than everyone else. . .follow up emails, checking in and providing new opportunities. . .for the new volunteers to be involved. To nurture that flame up until they are up to par.

Participant 4 (p. 3 & 4) noted *volunteer recruitment* as a number one challenge:

> Volunteer recruitment. I have been through training to be credentialed as a volunteer administrator. . .I understand. . .what the best practices are recommended. The problem is getting EDs. . .to follow those best practices or allow me to follow those best practices. . . because they're very afraid of how things will be perceived and looked at. I think there's a huge hole in how to adequately recruit. You have to be very targeted and specific about what you're looking for. You can't just say 4-H program needs volunteers.

Along similar lines as volunteers, 4-H Program Leaders discussed the importance of partnerships and how to cultivate them.

Participant 1 (p. 9) stated the following regarding *partnerships:*

> I'm trying to reestablish partnerships within our community. . .other youth serving organizations. . .they don't have to be youth serving organizations but organizations with a common interest. I work with organizations. . .to leverage (a) funding, (b) volunteers, and (c) sometimes resources. Maybe I'm doing a program and need some specific supplies and they say "hey we have it in our budget, we could provide these supplies." The hardest thing with that is that takes time and effort. Its multi hats and you get stretched very thin.

Participant 1 led to the essence of "*the best known secret.*" Participant 1 (p. 2) expressed the following:

> 4-H is the absolute best kept secret. We've done a really lousy job. . .of promoting it. . .we haven't kept current with our societal changes. The youth we reach. . .are having amazing interactions in our program. . .we're not doing a very good job recruiting new youth. . .not doing a very good job reaching different demographics of youth. . .don't have the staffing to do any more. . .doing the best we can with a very small staff and doing more with less. . .we just do not have the resources to do as good of a program as I would like to see. . .one of the reasons we have shrinking numbers.

Participant 4 (p. 7 & 8) discussed the need for a *consistent message:*

> We need to have a consistent message. More than just the national marketing campaign. . .what we do and what are our goals? The state 4-H office is working on that. . .they're not necessarily asking the educators for their input on everything. You know here's our vision, here's our mission. . . there just needs to be a little more give and take. The state 4-H office really truly does want to know what we're doing, how we're doing it. . .I don't think that that's universally understood.

Additionally, Participant 10 (p. 3) shared a similar response:

> Youth and adults being stretched for time. What makes 4-H a priority in their life versus doing sports. . .or doing whatever is a priority for them? How do we make 4-H a priority? It may be the model. Or a lack of understanding about what 4-H actually offers . . .our model definitely lacks. We're trying. Our goal is mastery

> but that really is not maybe a priority of some to be able to master a wood working skill versus getting a scholarship to go to college. If we could figure out how to hone in on that message more than just the tangible I'm going to put my rabbit in the fair type of thing.

Many 4-H Program Leaders discussed identity, perception, broadening the understanding of 4-H, and the value of the Program. This could be within several contexts including staff, advisory boards, and the general public.

Participant 8 (p. 8) talked about *identifying with 4-H:*

> We also, kind of uniquely with youth development also. . .do a lot of outreach. But don't necessarily. . .they are just starting to identify themselves as 4-H. They don't see what the benefit is by putting the clover on things. . .our ED has been going to some of these S.B.N. meetings and Andy Turner. . .has started to push them to at least start thinking about putting the clover on it and take their educators.

Participant 7 experiences similar issues to Participant 8 and shared: "When you go out and plant trees with kids, that's 4-H because there is such resistance there by supervisors to say that was 4-H. (p. 7). The issue of *perception* came up in my interview with Participant 7 also: "We've talked about this at diversity training, that when you talk about the 4-H club model, it's very much a perception that it is a white agricultural based activity. (p. 6).

Participant 3 (p. 6) noted their *Board does not know what 4-H is doing:*

> The board members. . .don't fully know what 4-H is doing. We have key people on our board that believe in 4-H whole heartedly. Our board president. . .our past,

past, past board president is still on the board. . .our current president is a huge supporter. I wouldn't say that the board is guiding us. The board is going to support what we're doing. . .they trust that we know what we're doing.

Participant 4 (p. 14) talked about *understanding by staff and their Board:*

Other program staff not understanding. . .the full breadth of what 4-H does or can do. . .how they can work together. I don't know if that's represented well on boards. . .they're in transition so much. . .I had a board member who's been on the board for 4 years, didn't know we did public presentations. . .he evaluated for us and thought it was the most fabulous program on the planet. Why didn't he know about this?

The essence of *access* was presented in a few ways in these interviews with 4-H Program Leaders. Much has been described above that shows the challenges, best practices, and opportunities to provide greater access, for instance Participant 7 (p. 5) talked about finding the educator association less than warm and welcoming. The final section looks at access from the standpoint of 4-H Program Leaders as staff members within the CCE system trying themselves to open the doors to new youth and provide greater opportunities for all youth.

Participant 6 (pp. 5 & 6) shared concerns about *cliques:*

There's no easy entry point into the 4-H Program in New York State. . .it can sometimes be very seventh or eighth gradish. There are. . .cliques of people, this clique over here does this and this clique does this and they don't like other people to join that might be from the outside. . .that is certainly how I felt over the years. . .not within our county but within the state definitely. Particularly. . .the

> educators association I felt that strongly. Were people really there because they wanted to better the 4-H Program and provide Program leaders with direction and I just felt that it was not that.

Participant 7 (p. 4) expressed feelings about *access for youth:*

> If I inquire, if I say one iota to anybody about wanting to break those district lines. . .the other educators are screaming, but it's really it's really an economic issue for local families as far as engagement. . .where the regional event is. . .I dislike the whole district line thing.

Participant 6 (p. 17) discussed the *struggles with getting the kids that might need 4-H most:*

> Our part-time staff that I hired drives the bus for the school. . .those kids love her. . .they're not the kids that we would otherwise reach. Their parents wouldn't come to us. They come to us because of the trust they have for her. Not because of 4-H. We're in a building that they don't want to come to. That's what we're fighting a lot. She brings them in. . .it's pretty fun to watch because they're definitely underserved. The kids that aren't popular. . .they might come to our program but they don't come back. . .there's not time for that nurturing and that's what they need.

When discussing *office and meeting space*, Participant 7 (p. 15) described:

> This [space] is not convenient or comfortable for evening hours and if you try to utilize services out in the community, libraries close at 8:30. They want you out by 8:15 and most of my horse program meetings go 'til 9:00 or 9:30. So, there's a

struggle there for finding community partnerships and community meeting spaces out there.

Lastly, when asked "was the system equipped at this point to address the needs of kids that aren't ready," Participant 6 (p. 17) concluded:

> No I think that's going to be individual county comfort level. Then it will be, I think our State 4-H Program Leader will help us get ready and collect the resources. He. . .understands that diversity is more than just the color of someone's skin. It's social class and all of that too and that he doesn't want the 4-H Program just to be for white upper middle class kids. That's not what he envisions. . .that's really going to help us because those are the kids that could potentially end up in. . .that don't have any caring adults.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore and understand the current state of the NYS 4-H Program. I asked 4-H Program leaders to describe challenges CCE4-H is currently facing, how they lead a program well, and what is the current state of the NYS 4-H Program. I specifically examined the topic through a practitioner's lens of open-ended inquiry utilizing a theoretical rationale of organizational effectiveness. The purpose of this study, then, was to provide CCE4-H administration, from a leader's perspective, with a deeper understanding of the challenges of the organization so that efforts can be developed to resolve those (Gentry et al., 2014).

Three categories and six themes formed as a result of the interviews with 10 4-H Program Leaders from across NYS. The categories included the importance of cultivating leadership and resources in the 4-H Program, dynamic tensions, and 4-H grows here. The six themes that emerged included: (a) leading well takes survival strategies, (b) accepting the needs to change and challenges associated with change, (c) pulls and pressures leaders experience, (d) facing funding realities, (e) organizational changes and challenges, and (f) adapting to and accepting what communities need. These categories and themes provided deep descriptions from the perspective of 4-H Program Leaders and will provide much evidence to administration and stakeholders on what staff across the state are experiencing daily.

Chapter 5 will give meaning to the information provided in these interviews. In addition, I will discuss the importance of the data, suggest future research, and propose suggested opportunities for addressing challenges addressed in the interviews.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The findings of this study relate to the problem statement presented in Chapter 1 validating that NPO leaders are experiencing several challenges within their organizations; of which the NYS 4-H Youth Development Program was the context of this study. The county 4-H Programs Leaders involved in this study provided descriptions of the many skills and behaviors needed to do their jobs well and the challenges they face. Additionally these interviews provided expressed feelings about their jobs and training and support they felt was most needed now. This study was conducted through a qualitative descriptive study from the perspective of leadership; which was one gap identified in the literature.

One gap that emerged from the literature was that most research has focused on standalone challenges and the practices leaders can follow to solve them; with little follow up to show evidence if these practices worked. The goal of this study was to provide a holistic picture of what challenges CCE4-H Program Leaders are facing, while simultaneously examining best practices (what it takes to lead well). This study also filled a gap in that no researcher has explored the current state of the CCE4-H Program and what collective challenges it may face.

Furthermore, this study confirms that CE staff are still experiencing similar challenges as were identified by Ingram in 2005 and by APLU in 2010. These challenges include: (a) staff accepting the status quo, (b) organizational resistance to change, (c) sustainability, (d) addressing a breadth of community needs, (e) funding, (f) flexibility, (g) personnel development, and (h) Program expansion and transformation. Those studies' occurred several years ago and staff and Programs are still experiencing similar challenges. This study adds depth to these issues and provides additional challenges CE is facing (Appendices D and E). This could be an opportunity for CCE and the CCE4-H Program to become a leader in addressing issues that CE staff are facing in New York and across the United States. The significance of the data obtained from the study is that it contributes to the body of knowledge of NPO challenges and NPO effectiveness. This chapter provides limitations of the study and suggestions for future research. Lastly, the study may aid in informing CCE of the challenges 4-H Program Leaders are facing and provides considerations for system action to address them.

Furthermore, this study was guided by the theoretical rationale of Organizational Effectiveness. As noted in Chapter 1, Herman and Renz (2008) confirmed that there is little agreement across the NPO community on definitions of Organizational Effectiveness and operationalizing those elements can be valuable in sustaining organizations. This study further tested the Organizational Effective framework from the organization Mission Capital (2015) by incorporating approved questions into the semi structured interviews.

Lastly, this study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does leadership describe the current state of the 4-H Program?
2. What challenges do CCE4-H Program Leaders face?
3. What does it take to lead a 4-H program well?

Implications

As a result of the findings of the semi structured interview with ten NYS County 4-H Program Leaders, three categories emerged: (a) Cultivating Leadership and Resources, (b) Dynamic Tension, and (c) 4-H Grows Here. The central category which emerged and drives this study's implications and suggestions for practice is the category of 4-H Grows here. As noted in Chapter 4, the theme that emerged from the category of 4-H Grows Here was *adapting to and accepting what communities need.* The essences of this theme are *societal changes and trends, cultivating leadership and resources to meet community needs, training and support needed, "the best known secret," and access* which are all issues that can be addressed structurally. Research conducted by Trzcinski and Sobeck in 2012 confirmed if there were strong structures within organizations, individuals responded positively to the capacity of their Program to grow. If the CCE4-H Program wants to grow, there will have to be stronger structures to support that growth.

Several CCE supporting documents make reference to growth and the structural needs behind growth. Cornell Cooperative Extension Strategic Plan for 2013-2017:

> Strategic Initiative D: Resource Stability: the allocation of existing core resources and the acquisition of new resources will be focused on building the capacity of the system to achieve new strategic initiatives and the ongoing priorities of all CCE Programming and administrative functions. (p. 6)

The NYS 4-H Guiding Principle state:

> Grow Leadership: Our goal is to grow and support a team of highly trained and committed 4-H Leaders (professionals, volunteers, and youth). Anticipated outcomes include connecting 4-H leaders to one another through a variety of in-

person and on-line relationship building opportunities to develop a learning community within 4-H, develop progressive leaderships roles for professionals, volunteers, and youth leaders, and leaders demonstrate intercultural competence and cultural humility. (p. 5)

Furthermore, "the NYSACCE4-HE, the New York State Association of Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Educators, aims to develop staff, build relationships, and market our profession." (CCE, 2016)

Research from both Mission Capital (2015) and Campbell and Menezes (The Bridgespan Group, 2010) refer to the importance of cultivating, engaging, and supporting leadership (staff and board members). Mission Capital concludes the following:

> At the helm of a great organization are strong, visionary leaders who can chart the course for the future and marshal resources, all while maintaining laser sharp focus on results. They must be able to inspire and motivate, as well as plan, organize and coordinate efforts. The responsibility is spearheaded by the Executive Director/CEO who champions the organization in partnership with senior staff and the board of directors. Together, this leadership team focuses on building individual, organizational, and systems capacity with ultimate goal of creating lasting social change (p. 9).

After interviewing these ten 4-H Program Leaders, it was very apparent that the NYS 4-H Program has highly talented staff in the counties. They strive to do the best work they can, while juggling the pulls and pressures of the job with little guidance or support. If CCE truly wants to grow the program and be an effective and sustainable organization it will need to continue to "prepare systematically for growth" (Campbell & Menezes, 2010, p. 11).

4-H Program Leaders noted how much improvement they have seen from the NYS 4-H office recently, while noting some suggested CCE system-wide areas for improvement. The recent areas of improvement they have noticed include the development of a vision and mission for the NYS 4-H Program, approachable and involved leadership at the state level, progress on marketing and promotion, the development of a 4-H diversity and inclusion working group, and involvement of county staff in guiding and making program decisions. The areas suggested as needing attention include guiding people through change, locally suitable promotional and recruitment efforts, building a welcoming system, simple and clear channels of information sharing, board engagement and support, and realistic position descriptions and responsibilities. The responsibility of the aforementioned topics are not the sole responsibility of the NYS 4-H office, but rather efforts that can be taken by CCE at the state and local levels. The next two sections of Chapter 5 will provide limitations of the study, suggestions for future research, and recommendations for practice/opportunities to consider.

Delimitations, Limitations, and Opportunities for Future Research

The delimitations were designed into the study, not unplanned for limitations; however provide opportunities for future research. Delimitations of this study included the length of time available to conduct interviews resulting in ten interviews when there are 57 4-H Program Leaders across the state. Those ten represented 4 of the seven NYS 4-H program districts. In the context of the NYS 4-H Program, it may be very valuable to interview a wider cross-section of 4-H Program Leaders across all districts (Appendix F).

Additionally, the 4-H Program Leaders in this study had at least 6 years of experience in CCE. If there are identified 4-H Program Leaders that have less than 6 years of experience, results may differ for those staff. From a broader CCE perspective a comparison study of county Program Leaders from other program areas might be valuable to see if there are similarities in challenges being experienced and skills and attitudes needed to lead programs well.

Furthermore, the delimitation of length of time available in the program did not allow for delving more deeply into topics such as (a) mentoring and supporting organizational leaders; (b) connecting to, understanding, and utilizing on-line training resources and how staff within the context of this study are learning about and utilizing those resources; (c) changes in volunteering; and (d) what it takes to manage different program delivery models within the 4-H Youth Development Program. Future research on those topics could guide the system to cultivate leadership and resources to grow 4-H and CCE programs in general. Lastly, research on these topics directly align with expressed feelings and training and support needed as provided through descriptions by the 4-H Program Leaders.

Moreover, this study was guided by the theoretical rationale of Organization Effectiveness and further tested Mission Capital's Nonprofit Effectiveness Framework through the use of Mission Capital approved interview questions. Further research with Mission Capital on how to utilize such a framework within CCE may be valuable because it could provide standard language and guidance on organizational effectiveness.

Lastly, a limitation of the study that could be considered was that the researcher works for the CCE4-H Program. The researcher bracketed the fact that she worked for the organization and utilized an interview protocol (Appendix G) and followed proper ethical guidelines. However, it may be valuable to consider having research done within these Programs by an outside or less familiar researcher.

Recommendations

Before recommendations are provided, acknowledgement must be given for the work that has already been done and the systems that are currently in place to cultivate leadership and resources to help grow programs. The following is a list of resources and training available to CCE staff and efforts underway to support these efforts, recognizing that this list may not be fully extensive. These include: (a) CCE Distance Learning Center; (b) CCE Program Development Leadership Cohort; (c) NYS 4-H Staff website; (d) NYSACCE4-HE and NAE4-HA (professional associations); (e) County Executive Directors, state staff, ACT for Youth, Cornell departments and researchers; and (f) several growth focused efforts underway (Appendix H). The recommendations from this study build upon many of these systems, resources, and efforts by suggesting considerations. Recommendations are presented as opportunities to consider and questions that should be addressed (Figure 5.1 and Appendix I). These recommendations align with the category *4-H Grows Here* and the theme of *adapting to and accepting what communities need* (the communities the Program serves and wants to serve, and the community of staff). This alignment is that in order for growth to occur, leaders need to accept that change may need to occur within the organization to get to the point of growing the Program to meet the needs of the most youth possible.

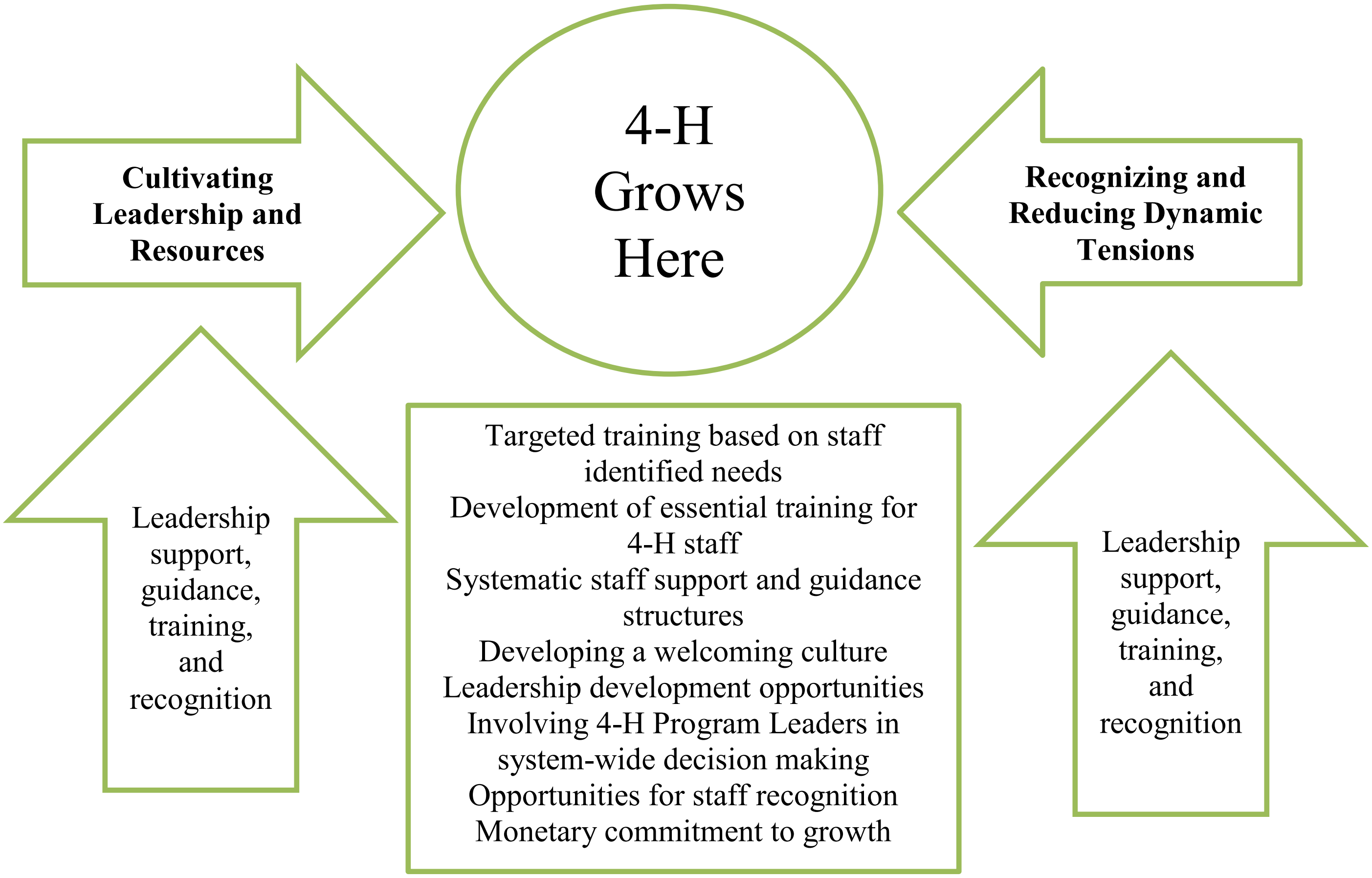

Figure 5.1. Considerations for growing the 4-H Program.

Opportunities to Consider

Development of a statewide 4-H professional development working group. As evidenced from the interviews with 4-H Program Leaders, these individuals are talented and skilled professionals that are rarely recognized for that fact. Utilizing the skills and talents of staff on such a working group recognizes that state leadership are aware of strengths of 4-H staff across the organization. Jean Crawford (2010) noted, from her research on nonprofit leaders of tomorrow, that "the traditional "heroic" model of leadership is being replaced by this, more participatory leadership style." (p. 9) In an effort to provide voices from the two state offices (CCE and 4-H) and county representation and getting staff across the organization to participate together, the working group should be made up of staff from CCE administration, state 4-H office staff, county 4-H Program Leaders (making sure that at least one person is a member of NYSACCE4-HE), and at least one county Executive Director. By bringing this variety of staff together, there is the potential for a deeper understanding on all levels what is needed to grow a 4-H Program and its staff.

This working group could consider some of the following opportunities: (a) develop systematic approaches for gaining information from CCE4-H staff on training, resources, guidance, and support needed, (b) continue to develop a set of core competencies/essential training for varying levels of 4-H staff, (c) determine if the organization has training to support those core competencies and needs, (d) research funding sources for 4-H staff professional/leadership development, (e) work with NYSACCE4-HE to align professional development conference workshops with staff identified needs, (f) work with NYSACCE4-HE to design and implement a survey on how well they are meeting their identified goals, (g) work with NYSACCE4-HE to further develop their mentoring Program, and (h) development of regional 4-H specialist positions (career ladder). Addressing these areas may aid in solving training and supported needed and expressed feelings that 4-H Programs Leaders described.

To further expand on the aforementioned concept (h) development of regional 4-H specialists and in recognizing the talent of NYS 4-H Program Leaders, Weng and McElroy (2012) noted this about career ladders:

> Organizations that provide for career goals and professional development in organizations and that reward their employees with promotions and compensation not only offer an emotional incentive to stay, but also constitute large opportunity costs associated with leaving that organization. Opportunities for professional growth not only resulted in reduced job turnover, but also occupational commitment more broadly as employees are reinforced as to their choice of career (pp. 258 & 262).

The recommendation is for the statewide 4-H professional development working group to research the possibility of such staff positions. Some considerations for the working group when researching this opportunity include: (a) could it be half time for 4-H Programs Leaders within CCE and help supplement county budgets to add 4-H administrative staff, (b) essential duties should be considered and possibly those be responsibilities that address 4-H Program Leader's expressed feelings and training and support needed, and (c) utilize the CCE Strategic Plan and NYS 4-H Youth Development Guiding Principles to develop these positions. In a 2014, David Nutt conducted an interview with Chris Watkins, CCE Director, in which he stated the following about regionalization:

> The concept behind that is to gain efficiencies across regions. We are always looking at how we can build teams of educators within the regions to ensure the best delivery of information. But again, because of the very unique nature of New York, with the strong cooperative funding system, we have to be very careful about how we do that. We can't mandate that. We have to work with the associations to manage change (p.2).

The above staffing scenario aligns with Director Watkin's concept.

Additionally, an immediate topic that 4-H Program Leaders shared as needing support and guidance on is the subject of change management. Concerns and expressed feelings were shared regarding the Federal Standard Labor Act (FSLA), traditional staff and volunteers not wanting to change, funding source changes, staffing changes, and lack of guidance or support. Devos, Buelens, and Bouckenooghe (2007) confirmed that change management is complex, leadership needs to understand the multiple dimensions of this challenge, and leadership must develop trust with individuals within their organization to lead and implement change efforts successfully. If priority was given to one topic for this state-wide working group and/or leadership should immediately work through, it would be this one. Furthermore, Rafferty and Griffin (2006) discovered that if change efforts were well planned out, staffs were more likely to be content with their jobs and less likely to leave and leaders played an integral role in helping their staff through a well-planned-out change event. When the majority of Program leadership is asking for guidance on this topic, overall leadership needs to find a way to respond so the process will be a success.

This section provided recommendations focused on cultivating leadership and resources through training and support. Research by Bowie and Bronte-Tinkew (2006) concluded the importance of the professional development of youth workers for these reasons: "(a) professional development improves Program quality, (b) professional development affects the survival of providers in the field, (c) a comprehensive professional development agenda is vital to enhancing and sustaining a cadre of quality youth workers, (d) professional development benefits the individual, (e) professional development benefits the Program, and (f) professional development benefits the field." (pp. 2-3) Both the NYS 4-H Guiding Principles and the CCE 2013-2017 Strategic Plan included goals in alignment with cultivating leadership and resources and supports the aforementioned research.

An additional suggestion for consideration is the development of a statewide "operations" working group. Again, this working group would consist of state and county staff working together. This group would be charged with addressing the category of *Dynamic Tensions* and themes of *pulls and pressures leaders experience, facing funding realities, and organizational changes and challenges.* As was noted by many of the 4-H Program Leaders that were interviewed and as confirmed in the literature presented in Chapter 2, there are an immense amount of challenges they deal with in their jobs. These challenges include (Appendix F) (a) staffing, (b) not enough time, (c) funding, (d) no training and support, (e) organizational cliques, (f) different directions, (g) change, and (h) needing better systems. Additionally, 4-H Program Leaders indicated the need for more top down support for counties. In an effort to address these dynamic tensions noted in Chapter 4, enlisting staff from all of the levels of the organization may lead to breaking down some barriers to growing Programs.

Mission Capital's (2016) Nonprofit Effectiveness Framework fourth element is titled "Smart Operations." Based on research they note:

> Great leaders, a solid business plan, and a strategy are all necessary components of organizational success. However, to achieve lasting success, organizations must build and manage internal operations to carry out their mission. They must

recruit and retain the right people, build a strong brand and culture and ensure necessary resources and procedures are in place to support day-to-day activities.

Several challenges emerged from the interviews with 4-H Program Leaders that could be addressed within this state-wide working group which include: (a) streamlining processes and consolidation of information, (b) development of a "portal" for Program Leader sharing, (c) development of county diversity and inclusion plans, (d) examining the value of time tracking and finding staff who would take part in a time tracking study, (e) assessing how accurately job descriptions reflect community needs and the jobs at hand, (f) evaluating organizational communication systems for effectiveness, (g) defining and agreeing upon measurements of success, and (h) developing plans for how to effectively engage, educate, utilize county boards of directors.

This study was guided by the theoretical rationale of Organizational Effectiveness. As was noted in Chapter 1, Barzilai (2011) defined organizational theory (OT) as "the study of organizations for the benefit of identifying common themes for the purpose of solving problems, maximizing efficiency and productivity, and meeting the needs of stakeholders." (p. 1) Additionally, Mission Capital (2015) confirmed that NPO leaders are facing a multitude of challenges that are impeding organizational effectiveness. The recommendations and opportunities provided in this chapter suggest ways of critically examining practices and research that could lead organizational effectiveness and growth in Programs.

This section will be ended by providing a list of questions for the system to address in an effort to grow Programs based on feedback provided by 4-H Program Leaders:

1. Does the 4-H Club Program have to look the same and be as administratively heavy?
2. Could the County Association board of directors become more actively engaged in and supportive of non-traditional 4-H Programming? Are board members representative of county demographics?
3. Should 4-H Program Leaders have Programming responsibilities or should they be 100% administrators?
4. What actions and commitments are needed within the organization to open the doors to more non-white individuals and become a welcoming place to all?
5. What resources are needed to grow the organization and does the organization have those resources and/or the ability to grow them?

Mission Capital (2015) stated the following:

> All nonprofits must be willing to take a hard look at their organizational performance and better understand how they can be more effective. . .Nonprofit organizations and their partners must assess their strengths and weaknesses in these areas and hold themselves accountable for improved impact (p. 13).

If CCE want to grow 4-H, they will have make some critical assessments and organizational changes to meet that goal.

Conclusion

Chapter 5 provided an overview of the findings and made connections to the literature on the topics of the challenges that NPO leaders are facing, how NPO leaders' are addressing those challenges, and studies that have begun to examine these topics on a broader scale. It was discussed how the findings related to the problem statement, purpose of the study, and potential significance. Additionally Chapter 5 reintroduced the research questions that guided the study and weaved in the theoretical rationale of Organizational Effectiveness.

Key findings were shared in Chapter 5 and in subsequent detailed appendices. Recommendations, opportunities to consider, and questions needing answers (for practice), along with study limitations and suggestions for future research. The intent of this study was to add to the bodies of knowledge on NPO challenges and NPO effectiveness. Additionally, the aim was to inform stakeholders of challenges leadership are faced with within the particular organization of CCE, develop an understanding of best practices that are being implemented with this organization, and recommend future opportunities for system improvement. The ultimate goal for this study and for the 4-H Program Leaders emerged as the desire to grow the 4-H Program in New York State.

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Appendix A

Interview questions

1. Describe the current state of the 4-H Program?
    a. Overall state 4-H Program
    b. Your county 4-H Program
2. What challenges do CCE4-H Program Leaders face?
    a. System-wide or unique to your County?
    b. From your perspective or hearing from others?
3. What does it take to lead a 4-H Program well?
    a. Successful practices?
    b. Areas for improvement?
    c. Support/training needed?

Organizational effectiveness framework (Mission Capital)

4. **Element 1: Clarity of Purpose:**
    a. How you define and align your work and impact?
5. **Element 2: Sustainable Business Model:**
    a. How you develop resources and position your Program for success?
6. **Element 3: The Right Leadership:**
    a. How do staff and board leaders steer and steward Program effort?
7. **Element 4: Smart Operations:**
    a. How do you manage and marshal Program resources?
8. **Element 5: Implementation & Improvement:**
    a. How do you use information to adapt and improve?
9. **Element 6: Strategic Collaborations:**
    a. How do you leverage the community for greater impact?

Appendix B

IRB Letter

ST. JOHN FISHER COLLEGE

January 28, 2016

File No: 3520-012116-10

Megan Tifft
St. John Fisher College

Dear Ms. Tifft:

Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Institutional Review Board.

I am pleased to inform you that the Board has approved your Expedited Review project, "A qualitative Descriptive Study Examining the Current State of the Cornell".

Following federal guidelines, research related records should be maintained in a secure area for three years following the completion of the project at which time they may be destroyed.

Should you have any questions about this process or your responsibilities, please contact me at irb@sjfc.edu.

Sincerely,

Eileen Lynd-Balta

Eileen Lynd-Balta, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

ELB:jdr

Appendix C

NYS 4-H Program Director Letter of Support

Cornell University

Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research
Cornell Cooperative Extension
New York State 4-H Office
202 Beebe Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853-5905
t. 607 255-7809
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ast4@cornell.edu
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January 14, 2016

Dr. Eileen Lynd-Balta
St. John Fisher College

Dear Dr. Lynd-Balta,

Please be informed that as the Director of the New York State 4-H Youth Development program I am fully supportive of the 4-H Program Leader study currently before you, submitted by Ed. D candidate Megan Tifft.

The NYS 4-H program is in the midst of an active and ambitious change process and the results of this study have the potential to contribute significantly to the process that is underway.

I am very interested in reviewing and applying the results of this study and will provide support to the process in any way I can.

Thank you for your consideration,

Andrew S. Turner

Andrew S. Turner
Director, NYS 4-H Youth Development
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

Appendix D

Skills and Attitudes Needed to Lead a 4-H Program Well and Expressed Feelings/Challenges

Skills and Attitudes	Skills and Attitudes
Multitask and prioritize	Positivity
People skills	Creativity
Flexibility	Understands purpose
Try new things	Reflects back
Open minded	Planning and evaluation
Confident	Team player and builder
Understand leadership	Decision making
Leverage and manage resources	Lifelong and self-directed learner
Can say no	4-H experience
Marketing	Accepts and adapts to change
Community outreach and engagement	Educating and training
Network, collaborate, and partner	Strategic
Give authority away	Visioning
Support staff and volunteers	Utilizes research and information
Organizational skills	Fund development and management
Foster relationships	Manage variety of staff
Effective communication	Administrative abilities
Programming	Ability to balance
Sustainability planning	Human resource knowledge
Youth development	Risk management
Sets expectations and goals	Understands community needs
Reaches out to colleagues	Involves/educates stakeholders (including Board)
Expressed Feelings	**Expressed Feelings**
Staffing is a huge issues	Bogged down with club model
Don't do any jobs well	Pulled in different directions
Spread very thin	Get really burned out
Not enough time	Do more with less
I get shut down a bit	I've been burned or hurt enough
Teetering on a big change	We're so short on staff
Is that doable for time?	Leadership. . .they're constrained
I struggle	There really is no training for our job
Trial by fire	Flying by the seat of your pants
CCE. . .not good at recognition for a job well done	Decline in who's available to support Associations
We are just getting by	Low staff morale
I really don't have a support structure	We need better systems
It's hard to find. . .funding sources	So many. . .rules, requirements, and policies
Doing the best we can	No easy entry point into Program
There are these cliques of people	Feeling alone
Not able to deliver a consistent Program	This job. . .it's multi hats
Staff moving to other organizations	No isn't. . .in our vocab
A lot of pressures	Programs with breadth, not depth
My Executive Director is not a mentor	So much time just surviving

Appendix E

NYSACCE4-HE Districts

NYSACCE4-HE Districts:

Capital
Albany
Columbia
Fulton
Greene
Montgomery
Rensselaer
Saratoga
Schenectady
Schoharie
Warren
Washington

Finger Lakes
Cayuga
Genesee
Livingston
Monroe
Ontario
Seneca
Steuben
Wayne
Yates

North Central
Hamilton
Herkimer
Madison
Oneida
Onondaga
Oswego

South East
Dutchess
Nassau
New York City
Orange
Putnam
Rockland
Suffolk
Sullivan
Ulster
Westchester

South Central
Broome
Chemung
Chenango
Cortland
Delaware
Otsego
Schuyler
Tioga
Tompkins

Western
Erie
Niagara
Chautauqua
Cattaraugus
Wyoming
Allegany
Orleans

North Country
Jefferson
Lewis
St. Lawrence
Franklin
Clinton
Essex

Appendix F

Interview Protocol Form

A Qualitative Descriptive Study Examining the Current State of the New York State 4-H Program from Leaderships' Perspective

Date ___________________________

Start time _______________________

End time ________________________

Location ________________________

County/District: __________________

Interviewer ______________________

Interviewee ______________________

Release form signed? ____

Notes to interviewee:

Are you okay with me recording this?

My hope is to be able to learn about the experiences CCE4-H Program Leaders are addressing in their day to day work. The results will be presented comprehensively in an effort to avoid singling out responses of participants. The value to the information I will gain from your participation may help to information administration of needs and best practices which may results in practical actions.

Confidentiality of responses is guaranteed.

Please ask for any clarification along the way.

Approximate length of interview: no more than one hour.

Methods of disseminating results:

The proposed research is a component of the dissertation for the Doctorate of Education Program. Results will also be shared with Cooperative Extension administration. In addition, articles will be written on the topic and results will be shared with members of the Non Profit community. Lastly, the researcher will shared the results through poster and live presentations. Results will be presented comprehensively in an effort to avoid singling out responses of participants.

Appendix G

Resources, Training and Projects

Resource/Training/Projects	Details
CCE Distance Learning Center (CCE, 2016)	Information Technology Volunteer Involvement New Staff Orientations-CCE 101 & CCE 102 Executive Director Boot Camp Human Resources-including *Staff Skills for Success* model Program Development Curriculum Program specific trainings
CCE Program Development Leadership Cohort (CCE, 2016)	Skill development & learning through sessions, practice, & feedback Designed for staff with major Program leadership responsibilities Includes focus on: Program development, assessment, evaluation, & reporting Colleague mentor focus
Business Systems Launchpad (CCE, 2016)	On-line mechanism & portal Reporting data Tracking registrations & volunteers Important documents
NYS 4-H Staff Website (NYS 4-H, CCE, 2016)	eLists New Staff - An Introduction to 4-H Resources Program Management Cornell Departments Marketing 4-H NYSACCE4-HE (professional Assoc.) Risk Management State 4-H Staff Volunteer Development Opportunities Volunteer Involvement
NYSACCE4-HE NAE4-HA (State & National 4-H Professional Assoc.)	Professional Development Awards and Recognition Connecting Educators Mentoring Program
County Executive Directors, State CCE staff, including 4-H Staff, ACT for Youth, eXtension, Cornell Departments and Cornell Researchers.	Guidance Training-including diversity and inclusion Research Connections Best practices
Projects underway to support 4-H Grows Here	4-H Spring In-service- 4-H Grows Professionals-began the development of what it means to be a 4-H Professional Grow Campus-County Connections

	Grow Connections Development of: *CCE Organizational Development Framework for Building Skills & Recognizing Attributes for Extension Excellence* Momentum to adopt the National 4-H Grows Here campaign Development of a state-wide diversity and inclusion working group

Appendix H

Identified training and support, opportunities to consider, and future research

Training and Support Needed	Training and Support Needed
We need more. . .top down support Statewide initiatives to support counties	Board understanding of 4-H, staff involvement with Board and Board support of 4-H and staff
Volunteer recruitment, training, and support	4-H Program specific-assessing the value, impact, and decision making tools Defining and agreeing upon measurements of success
Communicating effectively and efficiently with decision makers and stakeholders	Fund and budget development and management
People skills-negotiating, dealing with difficult people	Executive Director support, direction, and guidance
Strategic and sustainability planning (including staffing plans)	Guiding change processes
Administrators understanding the job	Learning to balance the demands
Breaking down barriers to meet community needs	Partnering and collaborating for success
Streamlining processes, consolidation of information, information communication	Effective staff management
Opportunities to Consider	**Opportunities to Consider**
Tapping into and recognizing the skills of 4-H Program Leaders.	Job descriptions that accurately reflect the work needed in the community and what can be achieved with one posi Job descriptions that reflect 4-H language in any CCE work being done with youth.
Regional 4-H Program Leaders-% of time to orient, train, mentor, support staff. Takes on roles such as community partnership and fund development.	Building a welcoming culture and modeling that culture. County diversity plans (based on county demographics and agreed upon definition of diversity).
Training based on feedback from staff-emerging needs and trends.	Program Leaders/Issue Leaders/Team Coordinators should have very little Programming responsibilities
Standardizing board position descriptions and training-best practices from County staff.	Expand upon mentoring Programs Connecting staff-in-person or building connection on-line
Build upon 4-H grows professionals and other work being done-standard orientations-what are the basics for 4-H staff. Career ladder building. State professional development working group.	Work being done on promotion-buy-in needed, what are the promotion goals? Inconsistent brand. . .county by county, no guidelines, changing perceptions, getting on the same page across the state-clear, concise consistent messaging.
Future Research	**Future Research**
Interviewing Program Leaders from additional CE Program areas and Program Leaders with less than 6 years of experience.	Research involving Executive Leaders to develop deeper understanding of their leadership skills and practices.
An in-depth review of what it takes to manage the different models 4-H offers.	Use of CCE on-line resources and training and how staff are learning about them.
Leadership Teams and Organizational Effectiveness.	Today's volunteer realities.

Appendix I

Mission Capital Letter of Support

mission CAPITAL
To the Power of Good.

LETTER OF SUPPORT

1 June 2016

Dear Committee:

On behalf of Mission Capital, I give permission for Megan Tifft to further test our organization's Nonprofit Effectiveness Framework within the context of her Doctoral Program and organization study.

Mission Capital has identified six elements that are critical to all organizations, regardless of size, mission or scope. Megan has agreed to utilize survey questions in her study that align with this Framework, will give Mission Capital credit for the Framework, and will share with us her results.

I am glad that Megan identified our resource in the course of her research, and I look forward to learning the results of Megan's study.

Sincerely,
Tara Levy
Senior Consultant
Mission Capital

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