

**MEETING CHALLENGES IN THE FACE OF CHANGE: HOW THE NEWLY
INDEPENDENT 4-H ONTARIO IS LEARNING TO DO BY DOING**

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by

M. COURTNEY DENARD

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ABSTRACT

MEETING CHALLENGES IN THE FACE OF CHANGE: HOW THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT 4-H ONTARIO IS LEARNING TO DO BY DOING

M. Courtney Denard, M.Sc
University of Guelph, 2006

Supervisor:
Dr. Helen Hambly Odame

The following research on 4-H Ontario was conducted to display the importance of organizations which represent rural youth in Ontario. The researcher analyzed the process a non-government organization must take when faced with a major decrease in government support and funding. As part of the research process, a detailed literature review on organizational capacity development and a conceptual framework were completed. Data collection was accomplished by conducting semi-structured personal interviews with 4-H stakeholders. A focus group and direct observation activity with 4-H Ontario members were completed as well as a mail out/Internet survey.

The following conclusions were determined in this study: 1) 4-H Ontario has successfully maintained its organization throughout its five year transitional period; 2) 4-H Ontario has dealt with the organizational responsibilities and challenges stemming from its independence from OMAFRA in a variety of positive ways, but focus needs to be placed on challenges facing the organization and 3) organizational change experienced by 4-H Ontario has had an impact on the organization's ability to offer capacity development. The results, conclusions and recommendations presented are intended to assist 4-H Ontario in strengthening its organizational capacity development, which in turn will lend to the overall development of capacity for rural youth in Ontario.

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Regardless of critics, I have always had a deep love for agriculture, farming and anything rural. I feel that there is a way to the land and life that prevails in a small town that is more valuable to today's society than many of us gives credit to. I feel that farmers are some of society's hardest working people, who get the least amount of appreciation for the irreplaceable work that they do. This love and passion I hold for the small town, farm life, rurality, or whatever you want to call it, are two of the reasons I have taken on the research that you are about to read.

I chose to complete my research on 4-H Ontario because I admire the work they do with youth and agriculture across the province. I also admire young people who hold the desire to learn about an industry that, in my opinion, is ignored by too many. It is the younger generation in any industry that will establish the future, maintain the present and build upon the past, a process that is especially important in the agricultural sector today.

There are so many people for whom I owe the deepest gratitude and appreciation for the pages that lay before you and I am quite certain that the simple words "thank you" are nowhere close to being sufficient. However, I will use this phrase to attempt to begin to thank all of the people who have supported me academically and personally in the past few years.

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organization with a simple idea and with your support and involvement; it has evolved into the research that lay before you. I respect and admire the work 4-H Ontario does with the youth of our province and consider the organization to be an invaluable resource to boys and girls everywhere.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Organizations which support and represent young people are a valuable resource to any community large or small. These organizations can act as a linking mechanism between communities, across generations, as a support system for young citizens, and as an educational and social outlet for young people. According to the Canadian Rural Information Service, Canada currently has seven organizations specifically representing rural youth throughout the country¹. Support for rural youth is also available through programs, frameworks, and initiatives developed by the federal and provincial governments of Canada².

This study focuses on displaying the importance of organizations which represent rural youth in Ontario and investigates necessary steps these organizations must take in order to remain successful and sustainable in a changing Canadian society. A case study was completed on one of the province's oldest known youth organizations, 4-H Ontario, which is still in existence over 50 years following its inception in 1952.

4-H Ontario plays a vital role in the personal development of rural youth and capacity building across the province. The national 4-H organization has effectively

¹ These organizations consist of the Provincial 4-H Organizations, the Junior Farmers Association of Ontario, Associations des Jeunes Ruraux du Quebec, The National Farmers' Union, Town Youth Participation Strategies (TYPs), the International Agricultural Exchange Association and AgriVenture (http://www.rural.gc.ca/cris/about_e.phtml).

² The Canadian Rural Partnership, the Canadian Rural Secretariat, and the Canadian Rural Information Service provide information, support, and services for rural youth in Canada (http://www.rural.gc.ca/home_e.phtml).

serviced many young people in Canada for almost 100 years, preparing them for life and work as they follow the path from young person on to adulthood.

There was a need for an analysis of 4-H Ontario's organizational change process as well as changes experienced by rural youth organizations in general. The results of this study will offer 4-H Ontario a working and up-to-date document that can be used for future organizational management and decision making. The results will also promote action and change within 4-H Ontario itself, and act as a case study, which may be useful for other NGOs, especially those focused on rural youth in Ontario.

1.2 Background Information

In order to fulfill its role as a leading youth organization, 4-H Ontario relies on support and funding from numerous outside sources including government departments such as the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). 4-H Ontario has recently experienced a reduction in both governmental support and funding. In April 2000, 4-H Ontario became entirely accountable for the development and delivery of the 4-H program, taking over the responsibility from OMAFRA. To successfully handle this transition, 4-H Ontario delegated this responsibility to The Ontario 4-H Council, a committee created in 1988 by 4-H to provide direction and vision to the organization on behalf of its many participants. In August 1999, marketing specialists PricewaterhouseCoopers presented a report to 4-H Ontario introducing the New Delivery Model (NDM), a response to the organization's process to independence. "The objective of the New Delivery Model project was to develop a recommended plan and approach, so that by April 1, 2000 the Ontario 4-H Council would be in a position to take on the

delivery responsibilities that were being handed over from OMAFRA and for OMAFRA to provide on-going financial assistance to help fund the Council's plan and activities (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999: 7)" Today, OMAFRA continues to be an important sponsor of the 4-H Ontario, offering annual funding to the organization of approximately \$500,000.

This study was the result of a partnership made between the researcher and 4-H Ontario. In December 2003, the researcher approached the Executive Director of 4-H Ontario, Rob Black, with the concept of completing a research project focusing on 4-H Ontario in hopes of delivering a practical and useful document on a topic that would benefit and strengthen the organization's capacity development. 4-H Ontario accepted the researcher's proposal to complete a project on their organization and through this partnership developed the topic of study, an investigation into the transition 4-H Ontario has experienced since gaining independence from the OMAFRA in April 2000 when 4-H Ontario became an independent, non-governmental organization (NGO).

4-H Ontario offered both logistical and financial support to this project. A liaison team made up of Rob Black, Tammy Dallyn (4-H Ontario's current Business Manager) and Lucy Duke (a recently retired long-time employee of 4-H Ontario) was established to work with the researcher. Rob, Tammy and Lucy acted as the main contacts throughout the duration of this project.

1.3 Problem Statement

Since April 2000, 4-H Ontario has transformed from being a government run organization within OMAFRA to restructuring itself as a NGO. The central problem of

this project is that within the context of transforming from a public agency to a NGO and the transitional period which follows, how does a NGO continue to build upon and maintain capacity development for rural youth? This problem was addressed through the case study portion of the project where the researcher focused on the organizational changes 4-H Ontario has experienced since 2000 when taking on the full responsibility of development and delivery of the program.

The hypothesis of the research is that despite the loss of government funding and support, 4-H Ontario has successfully restructured its organization, maintaining its volunteer base and internal administration functions while continuing to provide high quality service to its members, volunteers, and supporters.

1.4 Research Goal and Objectives

The goal of this study was to improve existing opportunities for capacity development for rural youth and their representative organization, specifically 4-H Ontario. To improve the existing opportunities for rural youth, the research investigated the impact of transition resulting from organizational change on the organization's potential to deliver capacity development.

The specific objectives of the research were:

- 1) To analyze and document the transitional process 4-H Ontario has taken since gaining independence from OMAFRA in April 2000.
- 2) To gain an understanding of how 4-H Ontario dealt with new organizational responsibilities and challenges that resulted from becoming an independent organization.

3) To determine how the organizational change experienced by 4-H Ontario has affected its ability to provide capacity development for rural youth in Ontario.

1.5 Limitations of the Research

There are limitations connected to all research projects that must be recognized and addressed. One of the limitations associated with this project is concerned with the research sample. The layout of the research focused on interviewing many individuals who are linked to 4-H Ontario from the inside, mainly paid employees of the organization. This may present somewhat of a biased data set and may present the impression that the research does not take external sources into account. However, since one of the objectives of the research was to provide 4-H Ontario with a comprehensive review of the current perceptions of the organization, including the needs and wants of those involved, the researcher felt that to obtain applicable information, consulting inside sources was a necessary and important component of the study. External participants who are not paid employees of 4-H Ontario were also incorporated into the sample, including 4-H Ontario volunteers, board members, members, and sponsors as well as representatives from OMAFRA who are currently involved with the organization or who were involved with 4-H Ontario in the past.

Some of the limitations associated with the qualitative research methods used in this project include: the significant length of time it takes to complete the research project, the need for greater clarity of research goals during the design stages of the project, and the amount of time and attention needed for qualitative data analysis (Berg,

2001)³. To respond to these limitations facing qualitative research methods, the researcher maintained a constant and consistent workload to complete the research within the appropriate amount of time discussed with her committee and participating organization; she incorporated 4-H Ontario's opinions into the research design to quickly delivery a valuable research strategy useful for the organization as well as meeting her academic requirements; and she has also used up to date data analysis technologies such as EXCEL and SPSS to analyze the data. Despite the time consuming nature of qualitative research, the qualitative methods employed in this project were definitely the most suitable methods to gather data from a small sample size. Quantitative data collection methods were also used in coordination with the above mentioned qualitative methods to create an overall holistic data collection process.

A more practical limitation that was recognized in this study concerns the low return rate of the mail-out/Internet survey distributed to 4-H Ontario volunteers. Through random selection of the organization's 1,600 adult volunteers, 700 surveys were mailed out in late November 2004. Respondents were given the option to return the paper copy sent to them in the mail or to complete the online version on 4-H Ontario's website. Participants were asked to complete only one version of the survey, either the paper copy or the online version. The requested return date for the surveys was January 15th, 2005. Participants were not sent any reminder postcards throughout the eight-week process, but 4-H Ontario regional representatives sent out two reminder e-mails to all volunteers asking them to fill out the survey and return it if they were chosen as participants. The researcher obtained 74 paper surveys and 45 online surveys (total = 119) from

³ Qualitative research methods used in this project include focus group, active observation, personal one-on-one interviews, and transcription of taped interviews.

respondents with a return rate of approximately 17%. The low return rate can perhaps be attributed to the time of year chosen for the survey distribution and/or for the lack of mail out reminders sent to participants. Due to the low response rate, limitations in the generalizations of the survey data were acknowledged throughout the data analysis portion of the research.

1.6 Significance of the Research

There were a number of reasons why this research was significant. Firstly, it was a project that was not only important but potentially necessary for the future development of 4-H Ontario and other rural NGOs that are facing the threat of reduced or lost funding. The following factors are presented to emphasize the significance of the research.

- There is currently a need for research on the topic of 4-H Ontario as well as on rural youth organizations in general, especially regarding organizational capacity development and sustainability.
- The results of the study will promote action and change within 4-H Ontario and act as a case study for other rural youth NGOs to follow.
- The conclusions made from the research may affect the quality of life of rural residents in Ontario, young and old.
- Important information was obtained that potentially can improve policy for leadership and capacity developing opportunities for rural youth in Ontario.
- The study will present 4-H Ontario with a working and up to date document that can be used for future organizational management and decision making especially regarding organizational capacity development.

- The completion of the study will reveal to those associated with 4-H Ontario that this is an organization that cares about the opinions and perceptions of its stakeholders. The project will act as a linking mechanism between 4-H Ontario and these stakeholders.
- Through this study, 4-H Ontario volunteers and members will be given the opportunity to voice their opinions and perceptions about the past, present and future directions of the organization.

1.7 Overview of Thesis

This thesis is organized into seven chapters: Introduction, Review of Literature and Conceptual Framework, Research Methodology, 4-H Ontario: Organizational Context, Organizational Capacity and Transition, Discussion of Research Results, and Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.

In Chapter Two, the researcher looks at four major bodies of literature: organizational capacity, rural youth organizations, 4-H as a global, national and provincial organization, and the role of adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector. Particular emphasis was placed on reviewing literature that would frame the research completed in this project and link to the unique situation of 4-H Ontario, the chosen case study. The researcher concludes Chapter Two with the presentation of a conceptual framework regarding the organizational capacity development of 4-H Ontario and the internal and external forces that impact the organizational development and sustainability of this non-profit group.

In Chapter Three, the researcher begins by discussing the inductive research methodology, the most appropriate methodological framework for this study. The researcher also reviews Grounded Theory as the secondary framework incorporated into the study. The chapter continues on to discuss the triangulation of methods used in the project. The chapter also includes a discussion of the data analysis techniques used in the project. These consisted of transcription and categorization of interview notes, open and axial coding of interview notes, as well as EXCEL and SPSS analysis of the quantitative data collected. Statistical analysis included calculating the range, median, and averages expressed as percentages. Statistical analysis was also conducted through SPSS, completing frequency distributions, cross tabulations and Chi-square analysis of the quantitative data found in the mail out/ Internet survey. The Standard Error of Measurement was also calculated. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the limitations of the methodology chosen.

Chapter Four and Five offer a presentation of the results found in this research study. Chapter Four presents results focusing on 4-H Ontario's organizational context, disclosing an in-depth look into the organization's structure from the perspective of its internal and external stakeholders. Part two of the results presentation is made in Chapter Five, which highlights the organizational transition experienced by 4-H Ontario as it made its way from a government agency to an independent organization in April 2000. Chapter Five also focuses on the organizational capacity of 4-H Ontario as it currently stands, independent from the government. The chapter highlights the major results found in the personal interviews, mail out/Internet survey, focus group and direct observation activity.

Chapter Six presents a discussion of the major research findings in reference to the concepts and theories presented in Chapter Two. Through this discussion, the researcher will reveal the significance of the study's results, as well as their connection to the literature, emphasizing the importance of the findings in relation to the literature on organizational capacity development in the non-profit sector. Chapter Six discusses the degree of agreement with the literature reviewed and also indicates where the findings fill a gap in the current literature on organizational capacity development. The discussion of results in Chapter Six centres around the following six topics: 1) the 4-H Ontario Stakeholder; 2) rural youth and their organization; 3) the 4-H Ontario volunteer; 4) organizational restructuring; 5) 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity; and 6) a conceptual framework for 4-H Ontario.

The final chapter of this thesis presents a summary of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations. Reference to the study's original research goal and objectives is made in Chapter Seven. Recommendations are offered on three different levels: 1) policy; 2) organizational and 3) areas for further research. The chapter closes with a brief set of concluding remarks.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The following review of literature focuses on four major subjects related to the organizational capacity and sustainability of 4-H Ontario. These four topics of literature consist of: 1) organizational capacity development; 2) Canadian rural youth organizations and programs; 3) 4-H as a global, national and provincial organization; and 4) the role of adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector. The body of literature representing these four categories is extensive and detailed; however, only literature that relates to this project and works towards a conceptual framework concerning sustainable organizational capacity development will be reviewed in this chapter.

The researcher concludes the review of literature with the presentation of a conceptual framework that is original, unique and representative of the work completed in this study. The conceptual framework reveals how each of the four above noted categories has a direct relationship and impact on 4-H Ontario's organizational sustainability, a concept that has previously been addressed but never in this particular context. What is distinct about the framework presented here is that it represents the convergence of four major concepts and reveals how they overlap and work together; creating a conceptual framework that is a matchless addition to the current literature on 4-H Ontario. What is equally important about the conceptual framework presented in this chapter is that it will be the first time any such theoretical concept has been created for a rural youth non-governmental organization (NGO) in Canada. The researcher hopes that

this conceptual framework will act as a model to be adopted by 4-H Ontario and other NGOs representing rural youth who find themselves in situations similar to 4-H.

2.2 Organizational Capacity Development

The literature reveals the importance of capacity development in local organizations (Bolger, J., 2000; CIDA, 2005; Chaskin, R., 2001; Horton *et al.*, 2003; Kaplan, A., 2000; Morgan, 1997). Much of the literature on capacity development is derived from an international context on a macro-level scale. Secure information on this subject in a Canadian context on a micro-level scale is not only necessary but something that will positively benefit local NGOs (Bossuyt, 1994; Schacter, 2000). Through the review and adoption of worldly literature, a domestic body of literature that represents the challenges and opportunities facing Canadian NGOs can be created. This study will use the information retained from international and domestic literature to shed light on organizational capacity development in a Canadian context, specifically addressing rural youth organizations and more specifically addressing 4-H Ontario.

2.3 Defining Capacity Development

Capacity development is a complex and often misunderstood term. One single definition does not exist for the concept that some suggest is still in the beginning stages of infancy, constantly changing and being re-evaluated as new developments occur (Lusthaus *et al.*, 1999). There are a number of meanings of capacity development that are used by different researchers in different contexts at different times (Bolger, 2000;

Lusthaus *et al.*, 1999, Morgan, 1998). For the purpose of this project, the researcher will employ the definition of capacity development offered by Morgan:

capacity development is taken to mean the growth of formal organizational relationships and abilities, i.e. those changes in organizational behaviour, values, skills and relationships that lead to the improved abilities of the groups and organizations to carry out functions and achieve desired outcomes over time (Morgan, 1997: p. 4).

Morgan believes that capacity development has a double meaning and can be referred to as both a process and an outcome (1997). In other words, Morgan states that capacity development is “those efforts to improve organizational performance and/or results of those efforts in terms of capacities developed” (Morgan, 1997, p. 4).

Although a relatively newer concept in organizational literature, capacity development has become the central purpose behind many influential agencies, such as the United Nations, working to enrich and strengthen the development movement (Lusthaus *et al.*, 1999). In fact, capacity development became the central purpose of technical cooperation in the 1990s for the United Nations Development Program (Lusthaus *et al.*, 1999). What is unique about the term capacity development is that it works with pre-established concepts like organizational development, community development, and integrated rural development, to name a few, acting as an umbrella concept encompassing these and other related terms (Lusthaus *et al.*, 1999). Capacity development can be viewed as an umbrella concept that connects previously separated approaches to a consistent strategy with a long-term perspective and foresight of social change (Morgan, 1998).

2.4 Strengthening Organizational Capacity

The literature suggests that capacities may need to be strengthened at a variety of levels including individuals, work groups, entire organizations, or organizational arrangements such as partnerships (Horton *et al*, 2003; Bolger, J., 2000). According to Bolger, capacity development can be accomplished at a number of levels, including *organizational* capacity development (2000). This study has reviewed the organizational capacity development of 4-H Ontario by retaining the perceptions of its staff, members, volunteers, and sponsors.

Lusthaus *et al.* see organizational capacity development as a specific approach stemming from the more general concept of capacity development. They believe that the organizational approach to capacity development focuses on the capacities of organizations, looking from the inside out, identifying the elements or components of capacity within the organization (Lusthaus *et al.*, 1999). Therefore, an organizational capacity approach highlights organizational structures, processes, resources and management issues concerning the group in question (Bolger, J., 2000). Organizational performance is connected to organizational capacity development and as research has shown, if you strengthen an organization's capacity, you in turn improve its performance making it a more productive and positive place to work (Grindle & Hilderbrand, 1994).

Capacity development at the organizational level encourages thorough analyses. Evaluating important organizational life lines, especially in the non-profit sector, such as funding resources, staff motivation, program development, volunteer availability and future partnerships, is essential to the sustainability of the organization (Horton *et. al.*, 2003). Evaluations should occur in a professional and consistent manner with clear goals

and objectives at the outset. According to Horton *et al*, every evaluation of a capacity development effort should itself contribute to the capacity development effort and ultimately to the organization's performance (2003). The study presented here was put into place five years following the time when 4-H Ontario became an independent organization, moving away from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) into a new role as a NPO. 4-H Ontario believed it was critical for the future of their organization to review the five year transition process that has occurred since April of 2000, to be aware of any thoughts and concerns from their stakeholders that may have arisen throughout this time. It is believed by the researcher, and as the literature has shown, this decision by 4-H Ontario to investigate the five year transition period is a big step in strengthening their organizational capacity and thus a step towards making the newly independent 4-H Ontario sustainable and representative of its stakeholders' needs.

2.5 Rural Youth Organizations and Programs

Canada currently has a number of organizations representing rural youth throughout the country. Many of these groups are community based youth programs that are accessible to both rural and urban youth e.g. Guides/Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Cadets. Although these clubs ensure that their services are made available to rural youth, in most cases the organizations do not have a direct focus on rural life or agricultural issues. At the same time, there are various organizations that do specifically target rural youth and focus on issues facing rural communities, farming and the agriculture industry. These organizations consist of the Canadian 4-H Council,

Provincial 4-H Organizations, the Junior Farmers Association of Ontario, Associations des Jeunes Ruraux du Quebec, The National Farmers' Union, Town Youth Participation Strategies (TYPS), the International Agricultural Exchange Association and AgriVenture Canada to name a few (Government of Canada, 2005). Many individual commodity groups such as Holstein Canada and Jersey Canada also have separate youth representative groups supporting their organization.

Support for rural youth is also available through programs, frameworks, and initiatives developed by the federal and provincial governments of Canada. The Canadian Rural Partnership, the Canadian Rural Secretariat, and the Canadian Rural Information Service provide information, support, and services for rural youth in Canada (Government of Canada, 2005).

2.6 Working through a Rural Lens

There are a number of similarities between the above mentioned organizations and programs. One of the main similarities is that each of the organizations and programs has a specific focus on bettering the livelihoods of rural youth and the rural communities in which they live. What is unique to these programs is that they have been created and developed with rural youth and rural communities in mind. Whether it is the older organizations that have been around for many years like 4-H, Junior Farmers or the National Farmers' Union, or younger initiatives like TYPS, each of these programs are reaching out directly to rural youth, presenting a club with activities that are complementary to rural youth and their culture. Although clubs like Boy Scouts and Girl Guides are made available to rural youth, they do not provide this type of service, one

that hopes to make rural Canada a sustainable and viable place to live filled with motivated, educated and hard working rural representatives.

2.7 Leadership Development for Rural Youth

Another theme common to each of these groups revolves around the personal development and leadership skills of rural youth. All of these programs, including the government sponsored initiatives, in one way or the other, state that the personal growth and development of leadership skills for rural youth is one of their main priorities. For example, the Junior Farmers' Association's Mission Statement declares that they are an organization created to "build future rural leaders through self-help and community building" (Junior Farmers' Association, 2005). Similarly, 4-H Ontario's Mission Statement declares that "4-H Ontario is dedicated to the personal development of youth while providing a positive impact on volunteers and communities in Ontario" (4-H Ontario, 2005).

2.8 Committing to Rural Youth around the World

Some of the organizations working with rural youth like 4-H, Junior Farmers, TYPS, and the National Farmers' Union work on a county, provincial and national level. However, there are other groups that are committed to working with rural youth in Canada and around the world. Although most of the programs offer rural youth the opportunity to travel and exchange internationally, it may not be their first priority. However, for other groups international exchange and travel is the organization's number

one objective. For example, the International Agricultural Exchange Association (IAEA) has “been working with rural youth since 1963 to provide rural youth with an opportunity to learn about agricultural methods in other parts of the world” (Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 2005). Agri-Venture Canada works in partnership with the IAEA to promote and establish international travel among rural youth all over the world (Agri-Venture Canada, 2005). By setting up international exchanges with an agricultural and rural focus, both of these organizations work together to promote the IAEA’s main objectives:

1) to provide rural youth with an opportunity to learn about agricultural methods in other parts of the world; 2) to develop an understanding of the culture of other countries; and 3) to strengthen and improve mutual understanding between the countries involved through personal contacts established between the participants and the host family” (Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 2005).

2.9 Protecting Rural Rights

The National Farmers’ Union (NFU) and TYPS also distinguish themselves between the other organizations discussed here. Although in an indirect way each of the groups work to promote and protect the rights of rural communities and its people, TYPS and NFU make it their main concern. NFU is “a national organization of farmers for farmers” (National Farmers’ Union, 2005). Representing every agricultural region and their varying commodities, the NFU works with “farm families (farmer, spouse and children ages 14 to 21) to create policy based on cooperation between farmers rather than competition” (National Farmers’ Union, 2005). Over the past 35 years, the NFU has taken a proactive stance for the rights of Canadian farm families working towards their goal of “achieving agricultural policies which will ensure dignity and security of income

for farm families while enhancing the land for future generations” (National Farmers’ Union, 2005). Likewise, TYPS works with rural areas, towns and small cities to promote and protect the rights of rural youth. TYPS recognizes youth as citizens with rights and responsibilities who are able to make contributions through active community involvement, participation, partnerships, and meaningful decision-making (Town Youth Participation Strategies, 2005). Their organizational mandate is to “encourage, support, and provide information and training to youth and youth groups in rural areas, towns and small cities in Canada” (Town Youth Participation Strategies, 2005).

2.10 4-H: A Global, National, and Provincial Organization

The 4-H program began in the early 1900s in the United States of America, with rural men and women helping young boys and girls learn better farming and home economic skills. Today, the 4-H youth movement is an international phenomenon, with over 80 4-H and similar rural youth educational organizations active around the world (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005; Canadian 4-H Council, 2005). Each organization has its own vision and mandate and specific way of working with the original 4-H ideals, but the concept that connects them all is the principle of “learning to do by doing.” This section looks at a variety of 4-H organizations including: 4-H USA, The Finnish 4-H Federation, 4-H Canada, and 4-H Ontario. The researcher would like to emphasize the significance of the 4-H organization by taking a look at 4-H around the world, while narrowing it down to a review on 4-H Ontario. The organizations will be compared on a number of levels including: historical background, organizational information and funding, and organizational values and mission.

2.11 Historical Background- 4-H USA

At the end of the 19th century and into the 20th it became apparent there was a need for extending agricultural and homemaking education to young rural boys and girls. Improved education on these topics was becoming a required component to the changing life in the countryside. In response to this, in 1902 the first ever 4-H clubs were established popping up in rural counties across the US (4-H USA, 2005). 4-H USA had its roots in many sections of the country and no individual county can claim responsibility for the first club. The birth of 4-H USA was a collective effort of various stakeholders including: rural men and women, agricultural organizations and rural schools (Cormack, 1971). 4-H USA continued to grow and in 1912, through the efforts of O.H. Benson, federal-state-county programs were established through cooperative agreements (4-H USA, 2005). At this time 4-H USA grew to 96,000 members, boys and girls completing club work on topics like dress making for girls and showing cattle for boys.

The early days of the US movement encouraged demonstration, not so much to show the project to the audience as to teach the demonstrator the skills and characteristics necessary to be a strong competitor (Cormack, 1971). The early demonstrations were meant to “build up the character of the children, not by means of the Three R’s, but rather by means of the three H’s- Head, Heart and Hand, and make it fit for self-government, self-control, self-help: a living thinking, being” (Cormack, 1971:2). In the beginning there were only 3 H’s in the 4-H motto, however, that did not last long. It was in 1911 when O. B. Martin suggested that health be the fourth H added to the original three (4-H USA, 2005). The 4-H emblem has stood for head, heart, hands, and health ever since.

2.12 Historical Background- The Finnish 4-H Federation

4-H USA continued to thrive throughout US rural communities well into the 20th and 21st century becoming a revolutionary model for rural youth organizations around the world. In the early days, many places near and far began to adopt the 4-H USA template as their own, adjusting and fine tuning the American version to fit their agricultural and rural lifestyle. One such country to do so was Finland. A Finnish youth based agricultural and home economic program was established in 1928 with its origin having a direct relation to the 4-H organization formed three decades earlier in the US (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). A comparative study on The Finnish 4-H Federation and 4-H USA was completed by Saude in 2002. According to Saude,

the Finnish 4-H Federation began after two men visited the United States and observed the success of club work administered by the United States Department of Agriculture. The program ideas were changed to fit the needs of the Finnish people, with the key concept of life skill development remaining the same (Saude, 2002:3).

It was not until 1939 that this youth based program took on the name of The Finnish 4-H Federation, although it was decided from the beginning that the organization would be consistent with the core 4-H theme, teaching life skills by “learning to do by doing” as promoted in American 4-H clubs (Saude, 2002).

2.13 Historical Background- 4-H Canada

Around the same time in Roland, Manitoba, Canada, a new club was established to extend education to young rural boys and girls, emphasizing the latest advances in the

agricultural and homemaking sectors (4-H Ontario, 2002). Cormack documents the early history of 4-H Canada, firstly known as The Boys and Girls Club upon its establishment in 1913, stating that “the Canadian 4-H Club started as a very definite rural development, originated for the purpose of improving agriculture, increasing and bettering production, and enriching rural life as a whole” (Cormack, 1971:1). As previously mentioned, 4-H had its beginnings in the US and like Finland, 4-H Canada adopted many of the same club values and structure, however, the US organization was copied with definite adaptations to Canadian conditions (Cormack, 1971). Unlike Finland, the Canadian version of 4-H was not an exact mold of the American club.

The Boys and Girls’ Club of Canada grew into a phenomenally successful youth group and in 1952 the name was officially changed to the Canadian Council on 4-H Clubs (4-H Canada, 2005). The appeal of 4-H Canada continued to extend across the country becoming one of the strongest rural and agricultural youth movements Canada has ever seen. Another name change occurred in 1971 when the organization became known as the Canadian 4-H Council, the name it is referred to as today (4-H Canada, 2005). Through all the name changes and structural re-organizations, 4-H Canada has remained a stable and successful group for Canadian rural youth. 4-H clubs are present in almost every province and/or territory across the nation, teaching over 30,000 young Canadians skills that are reflective of their home and place (4-H Canada, 2005).

2.14 Historical Background- 4-H Ontario

Most of the literature reviewed specifically concerning 4-H Ontario comes from the organization itself and is in the form of handbooks, guidebooks, annual reports,

newsletters, and information from their website. In these particular forms of literature, 4-H Ontario is presented as a well rounded youth organization with a tradition in agriculture and a future in youth capacity development (4-H Ontario, 1998).

Historical data is written on the organization in Canada, but there is a lack of detailed information on the beginnings of 4-H Ontario (4-H Ontario, 2002). As detailed above, 4-H in Canada started in 1913 in Roland, Manitoba, and was known then as simply The Boys and Girls Club (4-H Ontario, 2002). The popularity of The Boys and Girls Club spread throughout the country and the first evidence of 4-H in Ontario was a mixed livestock club in Waterloo County in 1915 (4-H Ontario, 2002). The Ontario 4-H program was historically considered part of the management function of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, providing education and training to Agriculture Extension officers across the province (Lee, 1995). Similar to the American clubs, the early years of 4-H Ontario placed a lot of value on the local fair and demonstration skills of its young members (Lee, 1995). 4-H Ontario grew steadily as the 20th century progressed with the introduction of new clubs like sheep club, home beautification club, and canning club continuing through the 1930s 4-H (Ontario, 2002).

Like 4-H Canada, the agricultural clubs in Ontario took on the name 4-H in 1952, however, the Ontario homemaking clubs did not follow suit until 1954 (Lee, 1995). French clubs were formed throughout the province in the late 1970s, making 4-H Ontario a bi-lingual organization. It was also at this time that many leaders' workshops and training sessions began to be conducted in both of Canada's official languages, French and English (Lee, 1995).

2.15 Organizational Information and Funding- 4-H USA

Today, 4-H USA is made up of 7 million members across the country (See Table 2.1). The organization is found in each of the 50 US states, working with boys and girls ranging from the age 9 to 19 depending on the county (4-H USA, 2005). Most states have a junior 4-H program known as “Clover Buds” or “Primaries,” which works with younger kids aged 5-9 who are interested in agricultural topics but still too young to participate as an official 4-H member (4-H USA, 2005). 4-H USA also has a program called “Collegiate 4-H” for young men and women who are in their college years. 4-H membership consists of one year where youth complete various projects (4-H USA, 2005). 7 million US youth are involved in over 125 different projects ranging from biotechnology to the arts. Out of all US states, Texas has the most 4-H involvement with 1,054,221 enrolled youth (4-H USA, 2005).

What is unique about 4-H USA, as well as the other 4-H organizations discussed here, is that the clubs range from small town local initiatives to an international youth exchange throughout the world. 4-Hers can start locally in a home town club where they learn about any topic they like. If there is a club on their topic, they can learn about it. From the local point, they can go onto participate in public speaking contests, 4-H county fairs, conferences, as well as state, national and international exchanges (4-H USA, 2005). 4-H USA clubs also do a lot of community service within their respective project area or wherever help is needed.

4-H USA has a National 4-H Council that is considered the national, private sector non-profit partner of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Cooperative Extension System. “The national 4-H Council manages the National 4-H

Conference Center, a full-service conference facility in Chevy Chase, Maryland, and the National 4-H Supply Service, the authorized agent for items bearing the 4-H name and emblem” (4-H USA, 2005). The council acts as a partner to the national, state and local 4-H organization, “providing training and support, curriculum development, fostering innovative programming, and facilitating meetings and connections within the 4-H partnership” (4-H USA, 2005). The council is governed by its own Board of Trustees, made up of youth representatives from 4-H/extension/land-grant universities, corporate executives and other private citizens (Saude, 2002).

In the US, 4-H is a part of the University system and is administered by the representative state’s Land Grant College (Saude, 2002). The program is funded through monies from the USDA, state taxes and county taxes, as well as private funding. The received public funds pay salaries and provide support to 4-H USA personnel (Saude, 2002). However, as is the case in most 4-H organizations, this funding is insufficient support and does not fully cover the cost of educational programs and county level activities. Funds must be obtained from private donors in order to sustain local clubs. Fundraising at the local and state level is also a major funding component of the organization and also a big part of belonging to 4-H (4-H USA, 2005). The price to belong to 4-H USA varies from state to state, with the average state charge ranging from \$10-20 dollars for one year membership (4-H USA, 2005). In a number of states, it is completely free to join a 4-H club and in many cases, families who cannot afford the fee can have the cost waived (4-H USA, 2005).

2.16 Organizational Information and Funding- The Finnish 4-H Federation

As previously mentioned, The Finnish 4-H Federation was created in 1928 as a close reproduction of the US organization. Today, The 4-H Finnish Federation is considered a “non-political organization that is supported by all sections of the community” (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). It is open to all children and adults between the age 8 and 28 regardless of location. 4-H Finland prides itself on providing opportunities to both rural and urban citizens, stating that there are benefits to all members regardless of demographics. “In urban areas 4-H offers young people a unique opportunity to learn about themselves, about their community and about the people around them” (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). Recently, the proportion of urban dwelling 4-H members has consistently grown, a trend that is not consistent with 4-H in the US and Canada. The Finnish 4-H Federation is now the largest youth education program in the country with over 70,000 members, 60% female, 40% male, representing 3,000 clubs in Finland. (Saude, 2002).

1,300 adults acting as 4-H leaders and advisors volunteer their time to 310 4-H associations across the country. A Finnish 4-H advisor is employed by the local 4-H association and is in charge of administering 4-H activities as well as new member and volunteer enrollment (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). A unique component of the Finnish Federation is that in some districts there are currently 4-H advisors who are dedicated to working with under privileged youth, an activity that is in cooperation with local schools and social workers (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005).

The 4-H Finnish program is “financed by an annual grant from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, as well as aid from the participating municipalities” (The

Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). Similar to the US organization, the Finnish Federation relies heavily on money raised through volunteer fundraising activities in 4-H clubs, associations and districts. Local fundraising is not the only initiative the Federation operates; in 2001, the organization took money making to a much bigger level. The Finnish 4-H Federation raised funds to launch a development project in Namibia with the aim to encourage and provide valuable skills to young people in Africa and to make 4-H youth in Finland more aware of global issues (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). The organization also has provided funding to a development cooperation project in Tanzania, building 150 schools and registering 10,000 members carrying out 4-H projects since 2001 (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005).

2.17 Organizational Information and Funding- 4-H Canada

In Canada, the national 4-H program is represented by the Canadian 4-H Council. This is an organization that “provides relevant programs and services which are consistent with the 4-H philosophy and which serve to enhance the provincial 4-H programs” (4-H Canada, 2005). As a non-governmental agency, the Council acts as a linking mechanism to the provincial 4-H programs by organizing and coordinating 4-H initiatives on a country wide basis (See Table 2.2).

One of the council’s major responsibilities is to coordinate national and international conferences, exchanges and scholarships which focus on “citizenship, leadership development, career choices, technology transfer and other pressing issues being faced by today’s rural communities and their young people” (4-H Canada, 2005). Another responsibility of the Council is to communicate and deliver the 4-H message

across the country, increasing and promoting the organization's visibility through national run information sharing programs. Council staff is made up individuals from sponsoring organizations, with an annually elected president, a dedicated person who offers twelve months of their time to act as the national team leader.

According to the Canadian 4-H Council 2004/05 Annual Report, 30, 276 young boys and girls across the country enrolled in a 4-H club in the 2004 season (Canadian 4-H Council, 2005). Of this number, 11,646 were male and 18,630 were female, similar to the trend in the Finnish 4-H Federation. Alberta had the most members enrolled in 2004 with 8,018 registered youth. Statistics showed that the top three 4-H projects across Canada in 2004 were: 1) Beef, 2) Horse, and 3) Dairy, revealing that the Canadian 4-H members are still predominantly interested in learning about the traditional agricultural topics with which the organization was founded upon (Canadian 4-H Council, 2005).

The Canadian 4-H Council is financially supported by numerous sectors including government, corporate and association, as well as provincial 4-H programs, individual members and personal sponsors (Canadian 4-H Council, 2005). The most of this support comes from leading corporations in the agriculture industry and funds from the Federal and Provincial Governments (See Figure 2.3). In 2005, the Council made a new agreement with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), one of their major funding partners, to continue the extension and development of national programs (Canadian 4-H Council, 2005). AAFC will donate \$600,000 per year for four years to the Council, as well as provide \$300,000 to develop and launch an Aboriginal 4-H Pilot Project. This is an example of the way the Canadian chapter of 4-H has differed from the US

organization by creating and developing programs that are appropriate and beneficial to Canada's unique and diverse culture.

2.18 Organizational Information and Funding- 4-H Ontario

On a provincial basis, 4-H agencies operate independently from one another and in most cases receive support from the provincial Ministry of Agriculture and the provincial 4-H Council (Canadian 4-H Council, 2004) (See Figure 2.2 for 4-H Ontario's Staffing Structure). Of all 4-H organizations in Canada, 4-H Ontario has the second highest membership rate after Alberta. Although 4-H Ontario's membership numbers hit a slump in the early 1990s, in 2004 4-H Ontario extended agricultural and leadership education to 6,619 boys and girls (Canadian 4-H Council, 2005). Even with threatening factors like a declining rural population, urban out sprawl and diversified youth opportunities like sports, 90 years following its inception youth interest and membership rates remain stable within 4-H Ontario (Rob Black, personal communication, 2005).

It was in the mid-1980s when annual administrative changes became an issue for the organization. In 1988, The Ontario 4-H Council was formed consisting of 18 provincial directors and 5 staff members from OMAFRA (4-H Ontario, 2005). By 1992, the Ontario 4-H Council had delivered its official strategic plan placing importance on their role to "provide leadership to the Ontario 4-H program" (4-H Ontario, 1998). Eight years later in April of 2000, 4-H Ontario experienced yet another major administrative change when OMAFRA transferred full responsibility of delivering the 4-H program to The Ontario 4-H Council (OMAFRA, 2005). At this point, 4-H Ontario took a step away from the provincial ministry and became an independent entity. In its last few

years under the ministry, PricewaterhouseCoopers conducted a major evaluation of 4-H Ontario, presenting the organization with a strategic outline and organizational plan to follow under its new life as a non-governmental organization. This new plan was known as The New Delivery Model and was created under the guidance and influence of 4-H Ontario staff, volunteers, sponsors, and also representatives from OMAFRA (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999).

Prior to the independence of 4-H Ontario in 2000, the organization was completely funded and operated by OMAFRA. Today, 4-H Ontario still receives funding from OMAFRA in three year agreements with the value of approximately \$300,000. At the end of each three year agreement, a new contract must be approved by the government. There is much speculation that these funding contracts will eventually cease, leaving 4-H Ontario to fend for itself financially speaking. In response to this speculation, the organization has started planning for a future where governmental support is a thing of the past. The 4-H Foundation, which was created in 1969, plays a significant role in the success of the 4-H program (4-H Canada, 2005). The Foundation is a “not-for-profit organization whose main purpose is to raise funds which are used to support the continuation of national 4-H programs” (4-H Canada, 2005).

As a self-governing organization, 4-H Ontario has had more opportunity to create new funding partnerships, which is one benefit of no longer being a part of the government. 4-H Ontario has worked with their new status by building relationships with private donors, mainly corporate members of the agricultural community, who most likely would not have been willing to provide funding to a governmental agency. However, as a non-profit organization, 4-H Ontario has now secured a number of

lucrative and supportive sponsors that will provide funding for the organization and ensure its development into the future.

2.19 Organizational Values and Mission

In 1907 the first official 4-H symbol was created in the US by O.H. Benson. The first emblem used nationally was “a three-leaf clover that stood for head, heart, and hands” (4-H USA, 2005). But as previously mentioned, it was O. B. Martin who made the suggestion of adding Health as a fourth H in the logo (4-H USA, 2005). 4-H organizations around the world have adopted the green four leaf logo and have taken the original 4-H ideals and developed them into the values and mission that make up their organization today.

2.20 Organizational Values and Mission- 4-H USA

As the original 4-H organization, 4-H USA has paved the way for other 4-H groups around the world. The US organization continues to value the original Head, Heart, Hands and Health motto and cites itself as “a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills” (4-H USA, 2005). They expand on the 4H’s by stating that the head is concerned with managing and thinking; the heart is concerned with relating and caring; the hands are concerned with giving and working; and health is concerned with being and living (4-H USA, 2005). The US 4-H motto is “To Make the Best Better” and their pledge is:

I pledge my head to clearer thinking,
My heart to greater loyalty,
My hands to larger service,
and my health to better living,
for my club, my community, my country, and my world

4-H USA has changed dramatically since its early beginning in the 1900's when the USDA and the land grant universities began to organize and assist the organization. Back then, 4-H members were mostly young people from rural areas whose main concern was building a skill base that would enable them to flourish and sustain a life in the rural and agricultural communities. At the centre of the organization was the on-farm and home-economic projects such as raising animals and growing and canning produce.

In present day times, the major focus of 4-H USA remains to be the personal development of young boys and girls interested in learning about the local, national and international world around them. The 4-H program in the US prides itself on the variability of opportunities offered to the youth involved. A diversified collection of learning experiences is presented to the youth to enhance and improve their skill base.

The US 4-H program strives to allow members a variety of learning experiences. Some activities allow members to work in groups, while other activities, such as contests, allow the work of members to be judged against a standard group of peers (4-H USA, 2005).

2.21 Organizational Values and Mission- The Finnish 4-H Federation

The Finnish 4-H Federation is an organization that is committed to meeting the needs of all youth, rural or urban, through 4-H projects, club activities, camps, courses, and international activities (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). They consider themselves a counseling organization that teaches practical skills to young people and

their aim is to help young people learn and understand these skills in order to apply them to daily work and life. Such skills that they emphasize includes: leading others, expressing yourself, respecting others, adapting to change, being responsible, making decisions and exploring career options. Similar to 4-H USA, the Finnish chapter believes in the 4-H's; head for thinking, hands for doing, heart for feeling and health for living.

What seems unique about the Finnish Federation, compared to the other 4-H clubs, is that they place a strong emphasis on entrepreneurship and generating income through 4-H projects. Members are encouraged to transform their 4-H projects into a "mini-enterprise" that can reap practical benefits as well as build their life skills (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). "Encouraging enterprise among youth is also one way to help rural areas to develop themselves. Through young people, a 4-H advisor can introduce a fresh way of thinking to the countryside and thus promote positive attitudes" (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005).

International and intercultural relations is another characteristic highly valued by the Finnish 4-H Federation. The organization promotes this by offering a wide range of international opportunities such as exchange programs, camps, courses, development projects, and correspondence. The Federation believes that a "modern society requires intercultural skills and 4-H programs help youth to acquire this competence" (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). The International Youth Exchange (IYE) is one program that focuses on enhancing international relations between Finn youth and those beyond. The IYE is a challenging educational program where participants can choose to travel to the USA and European countries such as Austria, Estonia and Hungary (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005). The Finnish 4-H Federation also has a number of development

partnerships in the Baltics, Karelia and the Kola Peninsula in Russia (The Finnish 4-H Federation, 2005).

Rural and urban youth are equally important to the Finnish 4-H Federation. Quite often in rural areas, 4-H clubs are the only venue for young boys and girls to meet and socialize. Other than school or work, rural youth can be somewhat isolated from the youth around them, especially in the cases where rural youth are bused to urban schools miles away from home to socialize with a group of young adults that may have other likes and interests. However, it is important for all youth to socialize together, whether they are from the country or the city, and by making the clubs open to all kids, rural or urban, the Finnish 4-H Federation, is opening up a new world to both groups of kids.

2.22 Organizational Values and Mission- 4-H Canada

Seeing as each Canadian province administers their own 4-H organization through Provincial 4-H Agencies, the Canadian 4-H Council acts as a coordinating body across the country. Bringing clubs together on a national level, the council provides programs and services to each provincial organization, responding to their specific needs as they may arise. The national level of support and coordination is unique to the 4-H organizations presented here. 4-H USA and The Finnish 4-H Federation do not have a similar coordinating body like the Canadian 4-H Council, another aspect on how the Canadian organization adopted the American version but did not imitate it. The Canadian 4-H Council provides a level of consistency throughout the country, while taking into account the diversity of Canadian clubs, the council remains relevant to each the issues and lifestyle of the individual provinces.

The 2004/05 mission of the Canadian 4-H Council stated that “the Canadian 4-H Council enhances 4-H in Canada by providing national programs and services in partnership with stakeholders” (Canadian 4-H Council, 2005:2). Their vision is that “the Canadian 4-H Council will continue to be a relevant organization through regular evaluation and willingness to change to ensure organizational effectiveness, efficiency and viability” (Canadian 4-H Council, 2005:2).

2.23 Organizational Values and Mission- 4-H Ontario

In 1952 when the Boys and Girls Club officially took on the name of 4-H Ontario, a number of organizational changes came with it. The new name led the program towards a greater emphasis on leadership and personal development (Dube, 1998). The emphasis on leadership remained a focus of 4-H Ontario into the 1980s and beyond. As the organization moves towards its 90th birthday a number of key strategic directions have been put into place to keep 4-H Ontario sustainable and applicable to the youth of the 21st century. 4-H Ontario’s key strategic directions include:

- Awareness and Communications
- Volunteer Training, Retention & Burnout
- Fund Raising
- Coalition Building/ Increasing Joint Ventures
- Declining Membership/ Changing Demographics

These key strategic directions are all major issues facing 4-H Ontario, issues that the organization must bear in mind when planning for the future. 4-H Ontario’s organizational structure, current and future funding partnerships and membership

numbers will all be impacted by the above mentioned directions and it is an effective move for the 4-H Ontario to be aware and working on this.

4-H Ontario's current mission statement states that "4-H Ontario is dedicated to the personal development of youth while providing a positive impact on volunteers and communities in Ontario" (4-H Ontario, 2005). Their vision states that:

4-H Ontario, as a primary youth development organization, is recognized and respected for the significant and positive role it plays within the community in developing Ontario's future leaders. Through mutual support, respect and encouragement the program places people first (4-H Ontario, 2005).

Unlike the other organization mentioned here, 4-H Ontario has laid out a number of values that they consider a priority to their organization (See Table 2.3). The Value Statement of 4-H Ontario states that the organization will:

- Display respect, integrity and ethical conduct in all aspects and activities;
- Encourage and support members and volunteers in helping them grow and develop;
- Encourage 4-H members and volunteers to 'learn to do by doing';
- Recognize, value and appreciate the commitment of volunteers;
- Encourage a balanced lifestyle- head, heart, hands, health (intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual);
- Provide safe, enjoyable, positive and high quality learning environments;
- Provide interactive learning environments with youth/ adult interaction;
- Appreciate the importance of community and people/ mentor relationships.

4-H Ontario feels that these statements, when put into action, will have a positive impact in rural communities across Ontario, by developing youth, volunteers, and the leadership capacity for the future (www.4-hontario.ca).

Along with the above stated values, the Ontario 4-H program also promotes "opportunity building, personal development, making friends, and having fun" (www.4-hontario.ca). By bringing rural youth together to teach these skills, 4-H Ontario helps

young people learn self-confidence and practical life skills. 4-H Ontario also promotes communication and leadership skills, problem solving, and goal setting (www.4-hontario.ca).

2.24 The Role of Adult Volunteers in 4-H and the Non-Governmental Sector

4-H Ontario's volunteer base is made up of 1,700 committed men and women who dedicate their time and efforts to make the organization operable for its 7,000 youth members. There is no doubt that if it were not for these 1,700 adult volunteers, 4-H Ontario would not be the organization it is today. As a newly independent organization 4-H Ontario is even more heavily reliant upon its volunteers and it is clear that without these individuals 4-H Ontario would not be able to maintain the organizational capacity it currently upholds. This is a typical fact common to many NGOs in Canada that rely upon invaluable input from their volunteers. This input can be as simple as driving young members to activities, or making financially donations, or can include more involved positions such as acting as a club leader or coordinating and running program activities.

In the non-governmental sector, there are certain influential factors that will impact its volunteer base. These factors can have both a negative or positive impact on the organization's volunteer base, and can be a very powerful force when concerning the future sustainability of the NGO. When reviewing adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector, the literature has shown that it is important to consider factors like volunteer recruitment, training, motivation, and defining roles and responsibilities (Stewart, 1996; Kiernan & Ott, 1986; White and Arnold, 2003; Anderson, 1981; Rouse

and Clawson, 1992; Kaslon *et al.*, 2005; and Cook *et al.*, 1986). And in today's society where volunteers are hard to come by, difficult to keep and burning out on a daily basis, it is imperative for organizations to understand these key factors. The following sections will highlight the factors surrounding the volunteer movement, revealing the necessity and importance of each towards the maintenance of the volunteer base, organizational function and ultimately the overall sustainability of the organization.

2.25 Volunteer Recruitment

Effective volunteer recruitment is vital to any organization that relies upon the contribution of external unpaid staff (Stewart, 1996). Choosing the appropriate individuals to work with your organization is vital in building a strong and reliable volunteer base and understanding the basics behind volunteer recruitment is one direction that should not be undervalued. According to the literature reviewed, there are a number of steps a NGO can take to strengthen and maintain a successful volunteer base (Anderson, 1981; Cook *et. al.*, 1986; Rouse and Clawson, 1992; Stewart, 1996).

One of the first steps in effective volunteer recruitment may be to investigate why individuals decide to volunteer with an organization in the first place (White and Arnold, 2003). White and Arnold (2003) surveyed 4-H volunteer leaders in order to discover just this. Although having children in the 4-H club was one of the reasons adults volunteered, it was not the number one reason disclosed in their study. According to their results, the top two reasons people volunteered with their local 4-H organization was to "make a difference in the lives of youth and receive satisfaction through helping others (White and Arnold, 2003). White and Arnold state that the implications of this are critical when

considering volunteer recruitment for the 4-H organization. They state that “organizations may want to emphasize that those who desire to make a difference, whether or not they have 4-H children, can fill the role of a 4-H volunteer” (White and Arnold, 2003). They also state that when considering volunteer recruitment, an increased emphasis needs to be placed on helping leaders understand the impact on youth regardless of family ties (White and Arnold, 2003).

Providing volunteers with a specific role and designated tasks was another key factor in strengthening the volunteer recruitment process for NGOs (Stewart, 1996; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999; Cook *et. al.*, 1986). PricewaterhouseCoopers’ 1999 organizational plan for the soon to be independent 4-H Ontario stated that “volunteers need to be recruited on the basis of specific tasks” (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999:7). Stewart’s 1996 4-H Ontario study stated that volunteer management within 4-H Ontario was a concern for the organization and suggested that recruiting volunteers based on roles and responsibilities is one option towards improving the process. Cook *et al.* reviewed the role of ‘intentional selection’ of volunteers in regards to the recruitment process and concluded that it was a very effective way to develop a strong volunteer base (1986). According to Cook *et. al.* ‘intentional selection’ of volunteers is an organized way to match volunteers to specific jobs and tasks upon recruitment into the organization (1986). They concluded that this is an important factor to consider throughout the recruitment process and the lifetime of an organization stating that “when one looks at a complete and well functioning organization, one tends to see those involved with a defined, appropriate and meaningful task” (Cook *et. al.*, 1986: 20).

Stewart's 1996 study of 4-H Ontario's organizational effectiveness concluded that "4-H Ontario should examine their recruitment process in light of long term sustainability." He states that effective volunteer recruitment is more likely to occur if it includes a combination of the following:

- A personal request,
- An explanation of the overall program,
- A good job description,
- Good communication,
- Organized recruiters,
- Recruiters with strong management skills,
- Motivated and positive representation of recruiters.

Stewart's study also concluded that volunteer recruitment within 4-H Ontario would be more successful with the development of a formal recruitment process. He believes that the development of a formal recruitment process is required to assist in the long term sustainability of 4-H associations across the province and is based on the organization's mission and strategic plan as well as the perceived needs of the 4-H Ontario volunteer (Stewart, 1996). In their study on the type of adults who volunteer, Rouse and Clawson reinforced the concept of a formal recruitment process, especially as a response to the shortage and burnout of current volunteers (1992). They suggested that organizations that are dependent upon volunteers should create a recruitment system that would draft or enlist specific volunteers that may be more available to contribute their time and efforts to the organization. For example, they state, "to deal with the shortage of volunteers in youth development programs, efforts could be made to recruit more men, adults over the age of 65 and retired adults since this study indicated these groups of people are volunteering" (Rouse and Clawson, 1992:34). By creating a formal recruitment process

that is purposeful and selective, volunteer recruitment has the potential to become more effective and certainly more efficient.

2.26 Volunteer Training

The body of literature reviewed revealed a positive relationship between training and orientation and the perpetuation of an organization and its volunteers (Stewart, 1996). More simply put, a trained volunteer tends to be a more committed and longstanding volunteer. This fact alone should be considered a strong motivator when it comes to dedicating organizational time and money towards the training of volunteers. Many important studies have been completed on the topic of volunteer training within NGOs, with all of them, in one way or the other, highlighting the significance volunteer training can have on the future sustainability of an organization (Anderson, 1981; Cook *et. al.*, 1986; Rouse and Clawson, 1992; Snider, 1985; Stewart, 1996; and White and Arnold, 2003).

The benefits of volunteer training are twofold. Not only will training increase the effectiveness of the volunteers themselves, in the long term view it will create a more solid and sustainable organization. Stewart states that “leadership training that provides leaders with the opportunity to learn more about their role as a 4-H leader will increase the enjoyment and satisfaction they receive as a 4-H leader” (1996:28). He also concludes that volunteer training would be beneficial not only to 4-H members, but would also likely result in more effective 4-H organizations (Stewart, 1996). Results of Stewart’s study found that 60% of those surveyed, who have never received any previous volunteer training, would result in positive and productive outcomes for the organization (1996). Cook *et. al.* have indicated that the lack of volunteer training may be one of the

reasons that volunteer turnover may be so great within NGOs (1986). A high volunteer turnover can lead to an instable and weak volunteer base, which in turn can have a negative impact on organizational effectiveness. Their study also found that without appropriate training, volunteers may not be able to complete their assigned tasks in a satisfactory method, leading to a feeling of dissatisfaction with volunteers (Cook *et. al.*, 1986).

Rouse and Clawson's study on older adult volunteers revealed that volunteer training is a desired as part of the volunteering process (1992). Survey responses indicated that both youth development and adult organization volunteers consider training desirable (Rouse and Clawson, 1992). Many respondents indicated that they were not receiving adequate training for their volunteer position and that potential volunteers should be assured of adequate training throughout the organization's recruitment process (Rouse and Clawson, 1992). Respondents also recommended that volunteer training should be prepared with flexible programs for adults of all ages (Rouse and Clawson, 1992). Cook *et. al.*, also found that there was a desire for training among 4-H volunteers in their study of over 2,400 North Central and West Central Pennsylvania 4-H volunteers (1986). The survey asked 4-H volunteers to discuss their previous training and years of experience in 4-H to establish if these two characteristics made a difference in the kind of training method that was desired (Cook *et. al.*, 1986). Results indicated that 79.9% to 95.5% of 4-H volunteers desired more training. Volunteers stated that future training in the following areas would be most beneficial to the volunteer experience and to the future of the organization: club mechanics, leadership roles, public relations, program development, awards and recognition, and leisure and education (Cook *et. al.*, 1986).

The results of the study disclosed the hunger for volunteer training within the 4-H organization.

Not only is there a desire for training among 4-H volunteers, there is also a need for it (Stewart, 1996). Stewart's study on 4-H Ontario indicated that "volunteer training was a concern for the organization" indicating that there is a need for further attention and research on this topic where the provincial organization is concerned (1996:28). Cook *et. al.*'s study indicated that it is important for organizational representatives to spend more time on training and supervision and less time in 4-H meetings and activities (1986). They state that if an organization has a team made up of committed, trained volunteers and extension professionals working together, this will have a positive impact on organizational leadership, service and program delivery (Cook *et. al.*, 1986). However, volunteers must receive appropriate training where this is concerned. Both Cook *et. al.*, and Stewart feel in order to respond to the organizational need for volunteer training, it is important to develop and follow a formalized training process. In regards to 4-H Ontario, Stewart states that "a formalized training program needs to be designed to meet the needs of both new, returning, and continuing volunteers and designed to meet the needs of the organization" (1996:28). Cook *et. al.* feel that the lack of a formalized training program is perhaps one of the most common oversights amongst organizations that rely on volunteers (1986).

2.27 Volunteer Motivation

To maintain the quality and quantity of existing 4-H programs, volunteers who are motivated are an important addition to the organization now more than ever

(Anderson, 1981). Both studies completed by Stewart and PricewaterhouseCoopers in the late 1990s distinguished that volunteer motivation remained a concern not only for the 4-H Ontario organization but for its volunteers as well (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999; Stewart, 1996). Stewart's study findings indicated that "it is important for 4-H Ontario to be concerned about the motivating factors and motivation levels of its volunteers" (1996:15). This conclusion is even more pertinent to the 4-H organization ten years later as volunteer numbers continue to drop and burnout annually.

There are a variety of theories and definitions surrounding the topic of volunteer motivation that are relevant to organizations in the non-governmental sector. For example, as quoted in Anderson (1981) and Stewart (1996:16) Peter and Lawler define motivation as a way to explain how behaviour gets started, is energized, is sustained, is directed, is stopped and what kind of reaction is present in the individual while this is happening." Anderson (1981) provides a lengthy review of motivational theories surrounding adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector. She states that although there are many theories on motivation (Porter and Hewler; Wilson; Herzerg; and McClelland & Atkinson) each of them see motivation as a complex phenomenon and a challenge when working with any group of people (Anderson, 1981). Her study on 4-H USA concluded that, "if 4-H staff can understand the behaviour that occurs when a volunteer is motivated, the chances of effectively managing adults in their volunteer role are increased" (Anderson, 1981:26).

Effective management of adult volunteers is certainly important to NGOs, for as previously revealed, the volunteer base makes up a critical portion of the organization's functioning team. Therefore it is obvious that volunteer motivation is a key factor for

NGOs to consider. Stewart's literature review on volunteer motivation identified that 'motivation' was a concern for NGOs in regards to organizational sustainability (1996). He states that "it seems important, therefore, for organizations and their leaders to be aware of and understand the behaviour that occurs when a volunteer is motivated" (Stewart, 1996:16).

Studies have exhibited that there is a relationship between volunteer motivation and volunteer retention, a significant factor directly related to maintaining a volunteer base and the overall sustainability of the organization (Rouse and Clawson, 1992; and Stewart, 1996). Stewart claims that "motivation, while directly aiding in the functioning of an organization, also aids in the retention of leaders" (Stewart, 1996:16). He states that "experiences contributing to individual development and the opportunity to help others are still important to the motivation of leaders. If leaders receive satisfaction for both types of incentives, they are more likely to re-enroll" (Stewart, 1996:16). Cook *et al.*'s review of motivation literature highlights a study by Smith, McCracken and Suandi (1982) that found that the level of commitment of American 4-H volunteers was low in the first five years of involvement and increased after five years tenure and beyond. This suggests that 4-H volunteer tenure could be increased by placing a strong emphasis on volunteer motivation in the first five years to increase the chances of the individual making it to the five year mark and getting past the hump of early volunteer drop out.

Throughout all of the discussion of volunteer motivation, from the definitions to the theories surrounding the phenomenon, perhaps one of the most important questions to consider and be aware of is *what* motivates a volunteer in the first place? Studies on 4-H in Ontario and beyond have asked this question throughout the years and a number of

conclusions have been obtained (Anderson, 1981; Cook *et. al.*, 1986; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999; Rouse and Clawson, 1992; Stewart, 1996; and White and Arnold, 2003). White and Arnold (2003) found that one of the key questions every volunteer organization should ask is “what motivates adults to become volunteers?” In their study, White and Arnold offer an answer to this question by quoting Bracken *et. al.* (2000) who states that volunteers are motivated by “the desire to contribute and to feel good about themselves rather than by extrinsic benefits” (White and Arnold, 2003). Rouse and Clawson found that both youth and adult volunteers were equally motivated to volunteer because of the high importance of affiliation in the lives of human beings (1992). Stewart’s 4-H Ontario study affirmed the importance of affiliation in regards to adult volunteers. His literature review revealed that along with power and achievement, affiliation was one of the most prevalent reasons adults volunteered with the organization (Stewart, 1996).

Rouse and Clawson also discussed the role incentives play in the volunteer motivation dynamic by quoting Atkinson who believes that “a person is motivated to behave by the strength of his or her motives, the expectancy of obtaining the goal and perceived incentives” (Rouse and Clawson, 1992). In their study of older adult volunteers, results indicated that volunteers with both youth development and adult organizations were motivated by achievement and affiliation and preferred purposive incentives (Rouse and Clawson, 1992). When surveying 4-H Ontario volunteers, Stewart also found that incentives played an important role in volunteer motivation. Statistics from his study showed that when asked what incentives matter to 4-H Ontario volunteers, 88% said their number one motivation for volunteering was “simply knowing that I have

done a good job or made a contribution to something important,” while 78% of respondents stated that “receiving appreciation from a 4-H Ontario member” was a valuable incentive (Stewart, 1996:16). Other motivating factors included, having children in the 4-H organization, enjoying working with youth and children, and wanting the opportunity for achievement and new challenges (Stewart, 1996:16).

2.28 Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

Providing volunteers with specific roles and responsibilities not only strengthens the volunteer recruitment process, it also plays a part in maintaining a solid and animated volunteer base. Volunteers feel more attached to an organization if they feel they are in charge of a specific task and are less likely to quit if they feel as though they are responsible for an activity (Cook *et. al.*, 1986). Cook *et. al.*'s 1986 study quotes Hass who found that volunteers stayed longer in 4-H if they could explain their role. Cook *et. al.*'s study also found that definable roles and laid out responsibilities were factors that were of importance to adult volunteers (1986). Their study points out just how important organizational roles and responsibilities are to volunteers, and reveals the consistency of this thought throughout the literature on adult volunteers. For example, Cook *et. al.* state “the value of some type of job description in all phases of leadership development is documented in the literature: Boone, Drech and Greenwalt indicate that leaders would have done a better job if their responsibilities were clarified and better understood” (Cook *et. al.*, 1986:20).

Stewart's 1996 study on 4-H Ontario also revealed the importance of having unified, clearly defined roles and associated responsibilities. His study also revealed that

there is a major need for further investigation and involvement concerning this area, specifically pertaining to training and orientation (Stewart, 1996). According to Stewart, “there is a need for improvement in the areas of roles and responsibilities within and among 4-H associations and the Ontario 4-H council” (Stewart, 1996:25). He concludes that volunteer organizations such as 4-H Ontario would benefit from a formally established statement on volunteer roles and responsibilities that is deemed appropriate according to the organization’s mission and strategic plan (Stewart, 1996). Stewart feels that with a formal declaration of volunteer roles and responsibilities, confusion and ignorance surrounding the topic would be drastically reduced. He states that, “it is important to have a group fully aware of their respective roles/responsibilities and thus be better able to effectively and efficiently work together as a cohesive team toward the attainment of the established goals” (Stewart, 1996:25). Proper training and formally stated roles and responsibilities would be two very important steps in building the cohesive organizational team that Stewart values so highly.

The issue of roles and responsibilities is definitely important to the maintenance of a reliable volunteer group, but it is also important for easing some of the negative impact organizations receive from volunteer burnout. When it comes to the reality of volunteer burnout, it is not so much the definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities as it is the delegation and distribution of who takes on these roles. For example, PricewaterhouseCoopers’ 1999 study on 4-H Ontario surveyed 4-H associations across the province, questioning leaders and volunteers on the topic of volunteer roles and responsibilities. The results of this study concluded that if the distribution of roles and responsibilities within the 4-H association were changed, volunteer burnout could be

reduced (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999). Their survey of 157 respondents indicated that there is a role for senior members to play when it comes to delegating some of the tasks normally taken on by adult volunteers. Their results showed that, 32% of respondents 'agreed strongly' and 56% 'agreed somewhat' that 4-H Ontario senior members (those who are 18 years or older) should have a larger role in delivering the 4-H program (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999). Taking these results into consideration, 4-H Ontario and other volunteer organizations could not only provide relief to the many overworked volunteers but would also teach older participants, who may be growing bored of club activities, new responsibilities, peaking their interest and increasing their skills and knowledge.

The literature has shown a need for increased understanding where adult volunteers are concerned, especially within the non-governmental sector where volunteer input is invaluable. The literature has also stated that a need exists for further information and research about adult volunteers (Anderson, 1981). White and Arnold successfully illustrate this point in saying that:

one of the key factors in successfully managing a club is a stable and satisfied group of volunteers. It becomes clear then that understanding the factors involved in becoming a 4-H volunteer, the experience of the person while serving as a volunteer, and the reasons for leaving the volunteer role can provide insights useful to the agent in managing the volunteer portion of the county 4-H program (2003:8).

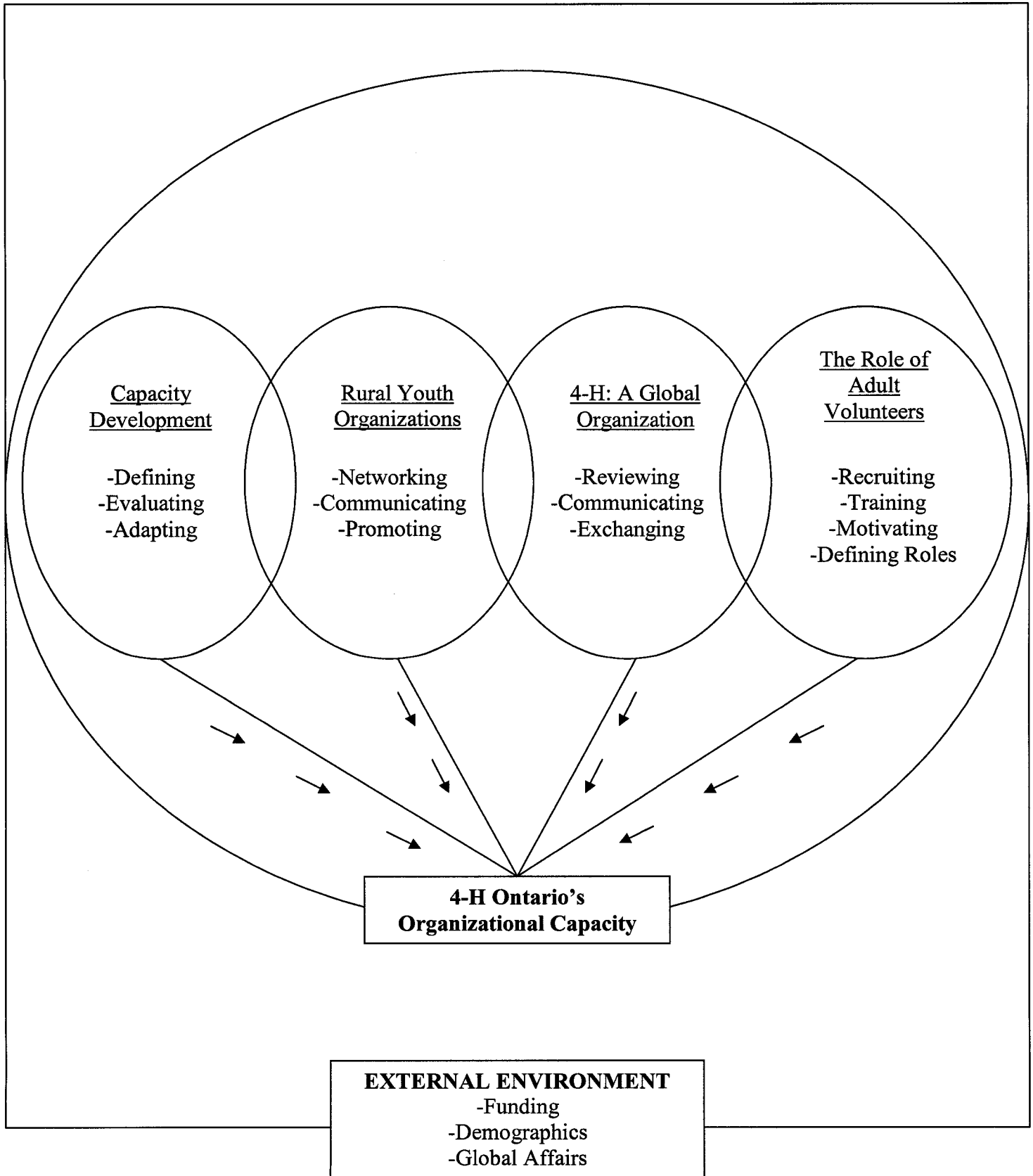
Given the role adult volunteers play in the non-governmental sector, and specifically to this research 4-H Ontario, it is crucial to maintain and strengthen the organization's understanding and involvement with the actions and efforts of their adult volunteers. After all, without adult volunteers, there would be no 4-H program (Rouse and Clawson, 2003).

2.29 Conceptual Framework for Organizational Capacity in 4-H Ontario

Lusthaus *et al.* in partnership with the International Development Research Centre have proposed a lens through which the organizational capacity of a NGO can be examined (1999). This work has influenced the work by Horton *et al.* on capacity development. However, there has not yet been an application of the Lusthaus *et al.* model to a rural youth NGO in Canada. The framework for strengthening organizational capacity presented here was inspired by and is similar to the Lusthaus *et al.* model (see Figure 2.1) but it is the first time that the model will be made specifically relevant to a local Canadian NGO working with rural youth. What is also unique about this framework, is that it highlights the importance of connecting separate concepts, creating a conceptual combination that works together to strengthen the overall capacity, and thus sustainability, of an organization, in this case 4-H Ontario.

4-H Ontario's organizational capacity will be measured in terms of four main, interconnected areas that are believed to be the foundation of the organization's performance: organizational capacity development, Canadian rural youth organizations, 4-H around the world, and the role of adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector. Each of these areas must be considered, reviewed and evaluated in order to build and maintain a strong organizational capacity. 4-H Ontario, and other similar organizations, can use this model to remain sustainable and up to date in an unpredictable external environment.

FIGURE 2.1- CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



2.30 Organizational Capacity Development

For the purposes of this paper, organizational capacity development was previously defined as the growth of formal organizational relationships and abilities (Morgan, 1997). In other words, “those changes in organizational behaviour, values, skills and relationships that lead to the improved abilities of the groups and organizations to carry out functions and achieve desired outcomes over time” (Morgan, 1997, p. 4). The model presented here suggests that in order to develop and maintain a strong organizational capacity, capacity *development* should be a never ending progression. The process of developing capacity is not stagnant; rather it is a constantly moving force that is continuous throughout the life of the organization.

As shown in the model, it is important for an organization to define the term capacity as it relates to their organization. Once defined, an organization’s capacity must be evaluated and re-evaluated on a consistent basis in order to ensure that the definition they are working under remains relevant to their group. The organization should also be flexible in that they are willing to make adjustments and adapt to the external world around them. Throughout this process, maintaining a true sense of what your organization does and who they are should not be undervalued. It is a combination of the two, remaining true to your past while looking towards the future that will assist in creating and preserving a solid organizational capacity.

2.31 Rural Youth Organizations and Programs

Organizations designed and developed to work with rural youth in Canada share one major commonality: they are specifically organized to improve and maintain the livelihoods of rural youth and the rural communities within which they live. The organizations share other commonalities as well, such as, they are volunteer-based, they have minimal funding, and they are all working with youth from similar demographics and backgrounds. Because of these commonalities, these organizations have been subjected to similar experiences, both positive and negative. Seeing how each of these organizations is still successfully running, they have also lived through these experiences and have gained practical knowledge, learning how to deal with each situation that has been presented to them. This practical knowledge is a valuable tool that could be adopted by other rural youth representative organizations that may experience the same circumstances.

The conceptual framework presented in this chapter indicates that as part of developing a strong organizational capacity, 4-H Ontario should be aware of and affiliated with other Canadian organizations that represent rural youth. Incorporated into their organizational plan and structure should be an initiative to network and communicate with other similar rural youth organizations. Networking and communicating can be as simple as contacting a respective organization and arranging to share information, or working together on similar tasks or problems that may be occurring. Make your organization known throughout the sector and use the organizations around you as a resource for future planning. An increase in networking and communicating can lead to an increase in support, something every organization

should have plenty of and will undoubtedly need to rely on from time to time. 4-H Ontario should also work with other rural youth organizations when considering organizational promotion. It is important to see what other groups have done in the past, how cost effective they were and how much of an impact they had on the organization. Also, 4-H Ontario can partner with other organizations, promoting one another in an agreed arrangement.

2.32 4-H: A Global, National, and Provincial Organization

Throughout its 100 years in existence, 4-H has grown from a small local US club to an international phenomenon that is present in over 80 countries around the world (www.4h-usa.org). What is unique about the story of 4-H is that each club has developed from the experiences of the others. The original 4-H USA organization acted as a template for the dozens of international organizations that mimicked the structure and direction taken by clubs in America. Although the 4-H USA organization did play a role in the creation of 4-H organizations abroad, the new clubs were not identical replicas of the American born group. Each organization has adopted the core 4-H values and traditions and has worked them into a mold that fits their country's culture and lifestyle. Each organization's unique rendition of the first 4-H USA club is an important factor to take into account when considering 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity.

As it is important for 4-H Ontario to network and communicate with organizations that represent Canadian rural youth, it is just as important to build and maintain relationships between 4-H organizations around the world. By doing so, the 4-H Ontario organization will mark its place in the global world of rural youth

organizations, expanding the scope within which they work and perhaps increasing the number of rural youth who benefit from their services. It is a global world that is among us and it is important to embrace all of the opportunities that will make an organization stronger, and by establishing international ties, 4-H Ontario will be able to offer its youth an organization like no other.

4-H Ontario should review and be aware of various international organizations that represent rural youth, ultimately communicating and building positive relationships with these groups. Once a relationship has been developed, one of the opportunities that could be offered could be organizational exchanges. Obviously, international travel and conferencing is certainly not inexpensive, however, this is not something that has to be of major scale. Through the latest technology, ideas can be exchanged without leaving the comforts of your own office or home. The basic ideal of the model is simply be aware of your international partners and familiarize your organization with what has worked and not worked for those abroad. The more partnerships and liaisons created, the stronger your organizational capacity becomes. Of course it is important not to lose sight of what is local and close to home, however, being conscious of the international programs that are offered will have a positive impact on the organizational capacity of any local group.

2.33 The Role of Adult Volunteers in the Non-Governmental Sector

The 1,700 men and women who make up 4-H Ontario's adult volunteer base play a vital and essential role in the daily functioning and the future sustainability of the organization. This group has a direct link to the organization's capacity and thus it is important for the organization to understand, relate to and meet the needs of these

dedicated men and women. The literature presented on adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector emphasized the importance of reviewing volunteer recruitment, training, motivation and definition of roles and responsibilities in relation to maintaining a strong and committed volunteer base. As a newly independent organization, it is important now more than ever to pay attention to its volunteer's needs and consider these above mentioned factors.

Maintaining a strong volunteer base is presented in the conceptual framework as an important factor that works in connection with the other three factors working towards the ultimate goal of strengthening 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity. The same factors that were presented in the literature were repeated in the conceptual framework. Recruiting volunteers, training volunteers, motivating volunteers, and defining volunteer roles and responsibilities are all components that have the potential to wreak positive benefits on not only 4-H volunteers but on the overall organizational capacity of 4-H Ontario as well. Taking the time to recognize these factors and the impact they have on the organization's volunteering movement is critical at a point where volunteers are few and far between and experiencing burnout at an unprecedented rate. With this in mind, the framework was designed to present the idea that a well-developed and committed volunteer group is a key ingredient in developing a strong organizational capacity and reviewing each of these factors on a consistent basis is a necessary step towards attaining such. 4-H Ontario should recognize the significance of each element and make a commitment towards producing a formalized system or process to respond to each factor. It is also important for the organization to recognize the need for continuous and consistent review and analysis of any formalized process that may be developed.

While it is beyond the scope of this study to consider organizational performance and the external environment, the researcher recognizes that these factors are influential. The researcher expects that consideration must be given to some of these elements; for example, 4-H Ontario's mandate in relevance to youth in rural areas and political initiatives such as a move from a conservative government to a liberal government at a provincial level.

2.34 Summary

In a world where money rules the future of most organizations, it is important for non-profit organizations like 4-H Ontario to know skills and have strategies that enables them to remain sustainable in a viable way. In order to achieve these skills and develop this plan, 4-H Ontario must be aware that there are a number of vital components that are important to the life of any non-government organization. The role of four of these components was reviewed in this chapter.

The literature presented revealed that maintaining a strong sense of organizational capacity development is an important factor in any non-profit organization. It was stated that there are a variety of definitions for this term and that it is important for each organization to work with the definition that best fits and enhances their operating strategy. 4-H Ontario has to become and remain familiar with *their* organizational capacity. They have taken the first steps by working with the researcher on this project, conducting the first investigation since they became an independent entity in April 2000. However, it must not stop here. As the conceptual framework depicted, building organizational capacity is a continual process that is constantly shifting and changing as

the years go by. This is a never ending process that will require a consistent look at the organization's capacity making changes as future internal and external issues arise.

The role of adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector was discussed, with specific reference to 4-H in Ontario and the US. It is a typical fact among the non-profit sector that without the timely efforts of volunteers, many organizations would be unable to operate or even exist. The literature revealed various factors that should be considered when dealing with adult volunteers in the non-profit sector, including: volunteer recruitment, training, motivation, and roles and responsibilities. When discussing volunteer recruitment it was revealed that certain tasks should be completed. Firstly, it is important to understand why people are volunteering in the first place. Secondly, volunteer recruitment has the potential to be more successful if organizations provide volunteers with specific roles and tasks. Finally it was suggested that a formal process for volunteer recruitment should be put into place by organizations that are reliant upon their time and labour. Volunteer training was also highlighted in this section. In regards to this factor, the literature revealed that volunteer training has the ability to increase organizational effectiveness and strengthen a volunteer base. It was also shown that volunteer training is something that is desired by volunteers and also needed by the organization.

A definition of motivation was presented along with various theories on the topic. It was concluded that volunteer motivation is a central part of any NGO working with volunteers. One key question that should be considered by organizations working with volunteers is what motivates an adult volunteer? Lastly, volunteer roles and responsibilities were considered in this section. It was stated that having a clearly

defined set of roles and responsibilities for volunteers maintains a strong and motivated group of volunteers and fights volunteer burnout. It was also stated that it would be beneficial to 4-H Ontario to complete a formal declaration of volunteer roles and responsibilities and change these as appropriate seen fit throughout the years to come.

Organizations that represent rural youth across Canada were compared and contrasted, highlighting the opportunities and programs that are available to and geared specifically towards youth interested in the rural and agricultural lifestyle. There is no documented list of every youth organization representing rural youth in Canada; however, the list presented in this chapter provides a general breakdown of the clubs currently available to Canadian rural youth. Many of these clubs do run as NGOs and share a number of similarities in structure and funding. The researcher feels that it would be of value to both the agricultural and research communities to develop and make available an extensive list of all of the clubs specifically representing rural youth in Canada. One of the most efficient ways to continue sustainability and experience growth is to network and communicate with other organizations who deal with similar situations (e.g. funding cuts, volunteer burnout, and increasing organizational costs). If such a list was accessible, the networking and communicating process between non-government organizations representing rural youth would be facilitated.

4-H organizations around the world were presented in this chapter to reveal the grand scope of this international organization. Although, each of the international clubs are not identical in history or structure, they show how each country took the main concepts of the original 4-H USA club and adapted it to their own personal culture and lifestyle. Not only is it important for NGOs like 4-H Ontario to look provincially and

nationally for examples of similar organizations, it is also a very beneficial idea to expand that view, reviewing, communicating and exchanging with 4-H organizations throughout the world.

The conceptual framework presented at the end of this chapter reveals the importance of gaining and sustaining a strong organizational capacity. Drawing from the influence of Lusthaus *et. al.*, the model shown here brings the concept to a local level, exclusively designed for non-governmental organizations working with rural youth in Canada, especially 4-H Ontario. The model offers a novel suggestion on how groups like 4-H Ontario should consider their organizational capacity and what factors they should bear in mind when developing that capacity. The researcher suggests that organizational capacity is made up of four interconnecting components and should be measured in terms of organizational capacity development, relationships with Canadian rural youth organizations, relationships with 4-H organizations around the world, and the role of adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector. NGOs representing rural youth in Canada can adopt the process presented in this model to increase and strengthen their organizational capacity. It is meant to be seen as a flexible and dynamic model that can be altered and adapted to suit the needs and wants of the organization at hand.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the methodological background and research methods utilized in this project. According to Schutz, it is important to incorporate a methodology in all fields of research (1970). Schutz stresses the significance of selecting a methodology for the right reasons, stating that one should adopt a methodology “not because one method is easier in comparison to another; not because certain methods are associated with more prestigious fields of inquiry; and certainly not because a method is expedient to adopt in the short term” (Schutz, 1970:270). The methodology chosen for this study will be presented to emphasize the important role a theoretical backing plays in research and to present the logic behind the selected methods. The research methods will be explained individually and will highlight the strong level of triangulation used in the research, increasing the validity of the project.

3.2 Inductive Research Methodology

This study has an inductive research methodology, where observation in the field preceded the generation of theoretical concepts (Palys, 2003). The inductive framework was appropriate for this project because the methodology is also partly exploratory in nature with the researcher seeking to understand 4-H Ontario’s transition to independence, without knowing the specific dynamics at first hand. Through inductive research, exclusive research categories and themes are developed from the informants’

responses throughout the course of the study (Palys, 2003). Unlike the deductive mode of research where the project is built around testing pre-existing theories, the inductive methodology forms categories and themes after the data has been collected and reviewed by the researcher (Creswell, 1994; Winegardner, 2001; McCracken, 1988; Tellis, 1997). As argued by Palys, for researchers using the inductive mode of reference, theory is not something you start with, rather it is something you create and develop as you work your way through the research study (2003). Instead of beginning with a preformed theory, the inductive framework typically involves beginning with “individual case studies in context, trying to understand each situation on its own terms, and leaving open, for the moment, the question of whether generalizable theoretical concepts can ever eventually be drawn together” (Palys, 2003:12). This sense of openness and understanding of the research situation is an important characteristic of the inductive methodology and worked in coordination with this research project.

Under the inductive framework, study results are often presented in the form of themes, categories, concepts, hypotheses, or theories (Creswell, 1994). For the purposes of this research project, the perceptions of those closely involved with 4-H Ontario—volunteers, staff, board members, youth members, sponsors and representatives from OMAFRA were sought to contribute to the field of organizational capacity, in particular to organizations representing Canadian rural youth. With 4-H Ontario’s process to independence acting as the case study portion of the project and the researcher’s unfamiliarity with the specific details of this transition, it was necessary to choose a research methodology which allowed the study to follow an exploratory path prior to making any generalizations about the process.

3.3 Case Study Research

Case study research is “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (Stake, 1995:xi). It is an investigation of “a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin, 1994:13). In this project, the case study involved the researcher working closely with 4-H Ontario focusing on the organization’s five year transitional period from a government agency under OMAFRA to an organization independently run and operated. With an organizational focus, it was decided that adopting a case study methodology would be the most successful way to proceed.

Along with the inductive and case study frameworks, this project works with an exploratory research methodology. The exploratory framework is applied to the case study portion of the project through the researcher’s investigation of 4-H Ontario’s organizational capacity, a topic unknown to the researcher at the onset of the study. In exploratory case studies, the researcher can interact with research participants prior to the definition of the research questions and hypotheses (Tellis, 1997). As was the case for this study, the researcher requested 4-H Ontario’s involvement in the design and development of the research topic, research questions and study proposal. Reviewing 4-H Ontario’s organizational capacity throughout its transition was a topic suggested by 4-H Ontario and accepted by the researcher. Both the researcher and the organization felt that reviewing the five year transitional period experienced by the organization, as seen by those closely involved, would provide valuable data on where the organization has gone, where it is today and where it should be going in the future.

Choosing which topic to study can be a difficult process when working under a case study framework (Tellis, 1997). However, the literature has provided guidance in this area (Yin, 1989; Stake, 1995). As highlighted in Tellis, Stake (1995) recommended that selecting a case for study offers the opportunity to maximize what can be learned knowing that time and resources are limited (1997). To optimize the case study process, Stake believes that cases that are selected should be easy and willing subjects (Tellis, 1997). Upon the literature's reference, the researcher has involved individuals from 4-H Ontario in the project from day one, as well as acting as willing participants, the organization has also provided both financial and logistic support. The researcher has communicated with three 4-H Ontario liaisons throughout the course of the study: Rob Black, Tammy Dallyn, and Lucy Duke. These three individuals have provided support on various levels throughout the project, mainly through the provision of contacts and information on 4-H Ontario, and offering extensive help with the mail-out survey portion of the study.

One of the main criticisms of the case study approach is that it can be too specific and too narrow to make a valuable contribution to the general external world (Yin, 1994). There is a level of validity that needs to be adhered to in research projects, especially those working under the case study framework. "External validity deals with knowing whether the results are generalizable beyond the immediate case" (Tellis, 1997). In regards to this project, the researcher agreed to work under the topic suggested by 4-H Ontario because it is a phenomenon not uncommon to other non-governmental organizations in Canada today. As the literature has shown, many non-governmental organizations, including 4-H Ontario, are dealing with cuts in funding, decreasing and

burnt out volunteers, and an unsure future concerning the organization (Black, 2005; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999; Rouse and Clawson, 1992). Because of the similar experiences shared amongst NGOs, the researcher feels that the results from this project will offer valuable data and important conclusions that are generalizable to other NGOs, especially those working within a rural Canadian context.

3.4 Triangulation of Methods

The use of multiple lines of sight is frequently called triangulation of methods (Berg, 2001). In simpler terms, triangulation is a practice where throughout the research process the researcher uses more than one supplier of evidence and more than one data collection method (Tellis, 1997). In many cases, triangulation has been used to describe multiple data-collection techniques designed to measure a single concept or construct (Berg, 2001). It has been suggested that the fundamental feature of triangulation is not the combination of different kinds of data gathering techniques, but the attempt to relate them to one another so as to counteract the threats to validity identified in each” (Berg, 2001:5). According to Berg, triangulation of methods in research projects is important because:

Each individual method used is a different line of sight directed toward the same point, observing social and symbolic reality. By combining several lines of sight, researchers obtain a better, more substantive picture of reality; a richer more complete array of symbols and theoretical concepts; and a means of verifying many of these elements (Berg, 2001:4).

The research literature continues to support Denzin’s (1970, 1978) recommendation to triangulate during research (Berg, 2001). In recognition of this and the previously stated information on triangulation, this project incorporates the use of triangulation throughout

the research by adopting an assortment of both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques working with various sets of data, investigators, theories and methods.

3.5 Research Sample and Selection of Participants

The research sample for this project included five main groups comprised of 4-H Ontario staff, volunteers, members, sponsors and representatives from OMAFRA who had worked closely with 4-H during its time as a government agency or throughout the five year transitional period. Individuals representing each group were asked to participate in the study and were involved only if they so consented. 4-H Ontario youth members were asked to participate in the study; however, no minors (those under the age of 18) were personally interviewed by the researcher. Minors were included in the sample as part of the direct observation section of the study, but the researcher did not personally interact or speak to any individual under the age of 18.

Individuals were chosen to participate in one of four research activities conducted by the researcher. These included a mail out/ Internet survey, a direct observation activity, one-on-one personal interviews, and a focus group. All research participants were given a general written description of the project (See Appendix A). All participants were ensured confidentiality and those participating in the mail out/ Internet survey were also ensured anonymity. Signed individual informed consent was obtained from all participants in the study, excluding 4-H Ontario members who were involved in the direct observation activity (See Appendix B). The researcher felt that since there was no direct interaction with these participants, there was no need to receive signed consent. Those participants who responded to the mail out/ Internet survey were informed that

completing the survey, either online or through the mail, would be the participants' way of giving the researcher consent to use all information provided in their responses. Survey respondents were sent a letter of information detailing this information (See Appendix C).

Participants for the survey portion of the study were chosen randomly, with random replacement as needed, from 4-H Ontario's membership and volunteer databases. Through 4-H Ontario's head office in Guelph, Ontario, one paper survey was sent out to 700 4-H adult volunteers across the province. With 4-H Ontario staff handling all of the distribution details for the survey, volunteers' names and addresses were never revealed to the researcher.

Participants for the personal interviews were purposely selected through discussions with 4-H Ontario staff. Prior to any interviews, the researcher contacted perspective interviewees to seek permission to be involved in the study. The researcher met with only those individuals who wished to partake in the study. In total, the researcher conducted 16 personal one-on-one interviews with 4-H Ontario staff, sponsors and board members, as well as representatives from OMAFRA.

The researcher selected focus group participants by conducting one class room talk at the University of Guelph, speaking to a class of 3rd year agricultural degree students. The researcher also, sent out an e-mail over the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC) student listserve, inviting individuals to participate. The researcher indicated that all participants must be a past or present member of 4-H Ontario over the age of 18 years. The researcher also hired a note taker for the focus group interview, a senior member of 4-H in Nova Scotia, who took interest in the project but did not fit the sample criteria.

To complete the direct observation component of the project, the researcher attended a leadership camp hosted by 4-H Ontario in Acton, Ontario. Research participants included one 4-H Ontario staff member in charge of leading the event and approximately 50 4-H Ontario youth members between the ages of 15-21. The researcher did not interview any of the youth members and used this event mainly for observation purposes.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

Researching the process of organizational change experienced by 4-H Ontario was accomplished by applying a number of data collection methods to the project. Table 3.0 presents the data collection sequence for this study.

Table 3.0- Data Collection Sequence

SUMMER 2004
-Construction of mail out/ Internet survey
SEPTEMBER 2004
-Beginning of personal one-on-one interviews
OCTOBER 16-17, 2004
-Direct observation activity at 4-H Ontario 'Future Talk' camp
NOVEMBER 2004
-700 mail out surveys sent to 4-H Ontario volunteers
-Survey posted on 4-H Ontario's website
NOVEMBER 16, 2004
-Focus Group Activity with 4-H Ontario members
DECEMBER 2004
-Two e-mail reminders sent out to 4-H Ontario volunteers
-Conclusion of personal one-on-one interviews
JANUARY 15, 2005
-Survey return deadline

Both quantitative and qualitative collection methods were employed including, reviewing relevant literature on the organization (see Chapter Two), distributing a mail out/ Internet survey, carrying out semi-structured one-on-one interviews with both open-ended and closed-ended questions, conducting a focus group, and observing chosen research participants. The benefits and limitations of the chosen collection methods were taken into consideration throughout the research process.

3.7 Mail Out/ Internet Survey

According to Palys, the mail out survey is an advantageous form of the questionnaire research method (2003). He states that a mail out survey is an efficient way to cover a large population in a cost effective manner; a way to offer maximized anonymity to research participants; and an excellent tool for receiving a heterogeneous sample (Palys, 2003). Each of these factors was important and fitting for this project, making a mail out survey the right choice for this study.

Complementary to the mail out survey, the researcher also posted the questionnaire on 4-H Ontario's website increasing the level of access and expanding the reach of the project. By providing research participants the opportunity to respond to the questionnaire either online or by mail, the researcher recognized the limitations each of the methods individually retain. The researcher requested that participants only complete one version of the questionnaire, either the paper copy or the version posted online. The researcher recognized that when sending a mail out survey there is potential for the questionnaire to be forgotten in the hectic lives of respondents, making deadlines easy to forget and creating the potential for participants to miss the opportunity to submit their

responses. With the option of completing the survey online, research participants had a secondary convenient mode of response alternative to the paper version. Considering many of the research participants in this study reside in rural areas and access the Internet through dial-up connections, the mail out survey was a convenient alternative to the Internet survey as well and a response to the digital divide in rural Ontario communities.

The construction of the mail out/ Internet survey began in the summer of 2004. The researcher worked extensively with the three liaisons from 4-H Ontario previously mentioned through question development to final formatting of the survey. The survey went through a number of phases and was ready to be sent out to 4-H adult volunteers in late November 2004 (See Appendix D). A total of 700 paper copies of the survey were mailed out to randomly selected 4-H Ontario adult volunteers. 4-H Ontario placed the survey within their fall newsletter, informing volunteers that the organization was in full support of the survey and encouraging volunteers to participate. 4-H Ontario and the researcher both agreed that including the survey with the newsletter would have the potential to increase the number of returned surveys.

Along with the survey, the researcher included a general letter of information, detailing the purpose and goal of the survey, with contact information for participants if any questions or concerns were to arise (See Appendix C). Participants received an envelope with pre-paid postage to return the surveys. Surveys were pre-addressed to be returned to the University of Guelph, making the survey completion and return as convenient as possible for participants in hopes of a higher return rate. The researcher arranged for 4-H Ontario to send out two reminder e-mails over their county e-mail listserves between the time the survey was sent out and the return deadline, to further

encourage participants to complete and return the questionnaire. The deadline for surveys to be returned was January 15th, 2005 and participants were informed that they could either complete the survey online or mail the paper version of the survey to the University postmarked by this date.

3.8 Personal One-on-One Interviews

Within the constraints of this study, interviews were deemed the most appropriate method for gathering detailed information on 4-H Ontario. The literature states that interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behaviour, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them (Merriam, 1998:72). Taking this into consideration, the researcher felt that solely completing a mail out/Internet survey would not provide in depth knowledge on the daily activities and interactions of 4-H Ontario. Thus, it was in the opinion of the researcher to conduct personal interviews with 4-H Ontario stakeholders to gain a deeper depiction of their organization from their point of view.

The most common form of interview is the personal one-on-one encounter in which one person, the interviewer, elicits information from another, the interviewee or research participant (Merriam, 1998). In this study, the researcher conducted 16 personal one-on-one interviews between the months of September and December 2004. Interviewees included 4-H Ontario staff, board members and sponsors as well as representatives from OMAFRA. The researcher met with each participant individually at a designated location agreed upon between the interviewer and the interviewee. On average, the interview length was approximately 1 hour; however, there were a few interviews that lasted two to three hours. The researcher sought permission to tape record

the interview and gained acceptance of each research participant to do so. In coordination with the recordings, the researcher also drafted field notes throughout the interview session.

The goal of the personal interviews was to receive a verbal account of 4-H Ontario's transition to independence from the perspective of the individuals who were closely involved with organization at the time of its independence and also from those who continue to be involved with 4-H Ontario today. Interviewees were also questioned on their perceptions of 4-H Ontario's future role in rural Ontario and what impact this may or may not have on rural youth. A separate set of interview questions were prepared for each group of interviewees (see Appendix E)

3.9 Focus Group Interview

“As a research technique, focus group interviews or discussions have existed since the beginning of World War II...when military psychologists and civilian consultants used group interviews to determine the effectiveness of radio programs designed to boost army morale” (Berg, 2001:112). More recently, social scientists, who are completing research on individual's perception of a given topic, have adopted the use of focus group interviews (Berg, 2001).

A focus group may be defined as an interview style designed for small groups addressing a particular topic of interest that is of relevance to both the group and the researcher (Berg, 2001). It is basically an informal group discussion where participants are encouraged speak freely and completely about behaviours, attitudes and opinions they possess towards the chosen topic (Berg, 2001). Focus group interviewing was an

appropriate research method for this study because it allowed the researcher to interact with 4-H Ontario members while collecting qualitative data on members' attitudes and opinions concerning the organization. The focus group provided the researcher with an opportunity to see 4-H Ontario members interact with one another in a comfortable setting in a cost-effective manner. Also, by conducting a focus group interview, the researcher was able to receive valuable verbal data from 4-H Ontario members, implementing an additional data collection method to gain yet another perspective on the research topic.

The researcher conducted one focus group interview at the University of Guelph on November 16th, 2004. As mentioned earlier, participants were selected through one class room visit and e-mail requests over the OAC e-mail listserve. Six individuals, two male, four female, from five different counties across Ontario participated in the focus group answering questions surrounding their involvement with, and opinions of 4-H Ontario. The focus group interview was two hours in length and was guided by the researcher who led the discussion by presenting specific questions to attendees (See Appendix F). The entire session was documented by a hired note taker.

The researcher began the focus group interview by briefly introducing herself and the evening's note taker following with a short description of the research project. Participants were then briefed on the process of the focus group and were asked to sign a consent form before initiating the documented conversation. Before presenting the guiding questions, the researcher asked each participant to deliver a short introduction on whom they were and why they had decided to participate in the focus group. Following

all instructions and introductions, the researcher began the official conversation by stating the three interview questions that would be guiding the evening's discussion.

The first question asked participants to share some of their experiences they have had as a 4-H Ontario member. For example, the researcher asked participants to discuss:

- How and why did you become a member of 4-H Ontario?
- What are some of the positive experiences you have had as a member?
- What are some of the negative experiences you have had as a member?
- Why did you choose to stop being a member of 4-H Ontario?
- Out of the group, who here feels that in the future they will volunteer for 4-H Ontario as a leader or another position?

The second guiding question focused on 4-H Ontario as an organization. The researcher asked participants, "given the opportunity, how they as young adults would make 4-H Ontario better for present and future members?" More specifically, the researcher requested information on how participants would make 4-H Ontario better for both members and volunteers. The researcher also asked participants to create a 4-H Ontario "wish list," an opinion list of what they feel 4-H Ontario should be offering in terms of resources and/ or services that they are not already.

The third and final guiding question of the focus group concentrated on 4-H Ontario's organizational sustainability, future and presence across rural Ontario. The researcher asked participants to state their opinions on where they saw the organization in the next five years. In regards to this question, the researcher asked participants to concentrate on factors such as membership enrollment, available clubs, available resources, variety of projects, 4-H Ontario in urban locations, relationship with OMAFRA, competition with other extra curricular activities, and any other area participants saw as important for discussion. The researcher completed the focus group

with short deliberation on accessing the project's results and thanking participants for attending.

3.10 Direct Observation

The definition of a direct observer is one who is present and researching but does not participate in the activities and discussions observed (Creswell, 1994). This method of data collection allows the researcher to obtain first hand information from research participants in a true life, interactive experience. Because the researcher did not choose to include minors in this project, the direct observation method allowed her to work with younger 4-H Ontario members in a way that did not violate the ethics of the study. The researcher chose direct observation over other observation methods such as participant observation because it allowed her to effectively view and absorb participants in their role as 4-H Ontario youth member without interrupting the natural flow of the day.

To complete the direct observation activity, the researcher attended a 4-H Ontario Leadership Camp 'Future Talk' on October 16th and 17th, 2004 in Acton, Ontario. Although the camp was a full weekend event, the researcher was invited to observe activities throughout the first and second day, leaving in the afternoon of the first day and returning to the camp the morning of the second day. In total, the researcher observed approximately 10 hours of 4-H Ontario camp activity. The researcher's role was made known to attending 4-H Ontario members by the 4-H Ontario volunteer leading the camp. After the short introduction and explanation of the researcher's presence, the researcher sat quietly amongst the members and observed the day's events. As part of the direct observation, the researcher took detailed field notes, documenting the day's activities,

interactions amongst the participants and noting her own personal interpretations. As previously stated, no personal encounters or interviews were conducted between the researcher and the 4-H Ontario members attending the camp.

3.11 Data Analysis

Taking into account that this study generated both qualitative and quantitative data, the researcher adopted both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods. For organizational purposes, the researcher divided the data analysis process into two sections. The first section saw an analysis of the project's larger set of qualitative data and the second section focused on the smaller, yet equally important, quantitative data set. The analysis of the qualitative data implemented techniques and concepts from the Interpretivist Approach such as coding and categorization. Quantitative data generated mainly from the mail out/ Internet survey were analyzed using EXCEL and SPSS. Statistical analysis included calculating the range, median, and averages expressed as percentages. Statistical analysis was also conducted through SPSS, completing frequency distributions, cross tabulations and Chi-square analysis of this quantitative data. Finally, the Standard Error of Measurement was measured.

3.12 Interpretivist Approach

The Interpretivist Approach allows a researcher to treat social action and human activity as text (Berg, 2001). Under this approach, qualitative data collected from interviews and observational activities are transcribed into written text for analysis, giving the researcher

the ability to turn human action into a collection of symbols, filled with layers of meaning (Berg, 2001). Seeing that this study generated qualitative data through each of the data collection methods, the Interpretivist Approach to data collection was a suitable choice for this study. It allowed the researcher to finding both commonalities and differences in the research participant's thoughts and perceptions on 4-H Ontario, drawing practical conclusions from the data on both sides of the spectrum. This approach signifies the importance of patterns of human activity, which is applicable to retrieving information on volunteer management, membership decline and staff satisfaction within 4-H Ontario. Finally, the Interpretivist Approach works well with the research project's methodological inductive framework. This relationship is described in further detail in section 3.13.

3.13 Qualitative Data Analysis

Analyzing the qualitative data began with the researcher transcribing the recorded interviews and all of the field notes compiled in the study into a Microsoft Word document. Qualitative data collected in the mail out/ Internet survey were also transcribed. All field notes were transcribed in accordance with the theoretical orientations of the study, mainly inductive, as describe in the methodology. Following the inductive research framework, the data was analyzed in detail, sighting connections and concepts, working towards the development of a general theory concerning 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity. Under this approach, the researcher was able to discover a practical understanding of the meanings and actions of those individuals associated with the organization.

Once the transcription of the qualitative data was complete, the researcher sought various analytic activities to produce an exhaustive review of the data. The researcher conducted open coding on the qualitative data produced in the study. Open coding is defined as, “the analytical process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in the data” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:101). Analytic tasks associated with open coding are: naming concepts, defining categories, and developing themes in terms of their properties and dimensions (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The open coding technique was beneficial to this study because it allowed the researcher to review the overall body of data, working towards the development of common themes, and eventually leading to the creation of a theory on 4-H Ontario’s organizational capacity, as highlighted in the inductive framework.

As step one of the open coding process, the researcher conducted line by line analysis. This form of coding involves a close and extensive examination of data and is the quite generative as a data analysis method (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Strauss and Corbin emphasize the importance of this task, especially at the beginning of the analysis process because “it enables the analyst to generate categories quickly and to develop those categories through further sampling” (1998:119). The researcher completed the open coding process by conducting sentence and paragraph coding, to deepen the data analysis process.

With the categories developed through the first stage of open coding (line by line) and the second stage (sentence and paragraph), the researcher then integrated all of the themes and major ideas found throughout the data set. This analytic activity can be done at any time throughout the research project but is more useful when the researcher has

several categories already established and wishes to code them in relation to one another (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

The final stage of the qualitative data analysis was that of axial coding. This data collection method involves intensive coding around a specific category and is a continuation of the open coding format that began the qualitative analysis process, furthering the theory testing and development component of the data analysis (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). With the theoretical side notes that were created through the open coding and axial coding processes, the researcher took the data and related it to previously established theories on organizational capacity as well as theories generated throughout the data analysis. According to Berg, the act of considering both established theories and those associated with the specific research furthers and strengthens the research data, eventually producing reliable and valid theories on the particular research subject (2001). This analysis technique is important to the research project because it will meet the research objective of providing 4-H Ontario with up to date information on its organizational capacity. The theories created from the study's data will provide 4-H Ontario with new direction, as seen through its stakeholders and staff. The theories will also provide new direction and information for other non-governmental organizations working with rural youth in Canada.

The second phase of analyzing the qualitative data saw the researcher reviewing data taken from the focus group interview that was conducted with 4-H Ontario's youth members. The focus group resulted in qualitative data in the form of transcribed notes, highlighting the answers to the three questions asked during the discussion. The researcher completed a Scenario Analysis on the data from the focus group interview,

pulling out vignettes (or narratives) and presenting them in two main categories: 1) participants' experience as a 4-H Ontario youth member; and 2) participants' vision of 4-H Ontario's future. By separating the data into two distinct headings, the researcher was able to reveal the youth members' take on 4-H Ontario's past, present and future- one of the main characteristics of a Scenario Analysis.

3.14 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data generated mainly from the mail out/Internet surveys were analyzed using EXCEL and SPSS. To begin, the researcher input the data from the mail out/ Internet survey into EXCEL. As previously noted, statistical analysis included calculating range/median/averages expressed as percentages. The researcher completed the analysis by individually studying each question and coming up with a percentage relating to the over all respondents. With some questions, the researcher obtained an average answer, while others offered slightly more of a descriptive response.

Secondly, the researcher coded the quantitative data in preparation of entering it into SPSS. Once input into the program, frequency distributions, cross tabulations and Chi-square analysis were completed. The following analyses were run:

- A) Frequency tables for survey questions 1, 2A, 5, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 22, 23, and 24.
- B) Cross tabulations and Chi-Square analysis comparing survey Question 14 and gender.
- C) Cross tabulations and Chi-Square analysis comparing survey Question 14 and rural vs. urban.
- D) Cross tabulations and Chi-Square analysis comparing survey Question 14 and whether or not respondents were members of 4-H in the past.

E) Cross tabulations and Chi-Square Analysis for survey Question 14 and age.

Finally, the researcher calculated the Standard Error of Measurement for the research sample.

3.15 Limitations of Data Collection Methods

Limitations of the methods chosen for the data collection process were taken into consideration by the researcher. Table 2.4 offers further explanation of the limitations of the data collection methods used in this study. Although each method may have limitations, the researcher felt that the advantages far outweighed any negative characteristics that the methods may hold.

3.16 Advantages of Data Collection Methods

The data collection methods used in this research were chosen because their advantages made them a suitable selection and allowed the researcher to fulfil the objectives of the study in a timely and cost-effective manner. Table 2.4 presents the advantages of each method and offers a rationale behind the methods chosen for this study.

3.17 Summary

This chapter has presented information relating to the research methodology and methods used in this study. The theoretical backing of this study followed an inductive research methodology where the researcher conducts observation prior to generating

theoretical concepts (Palys, 2003). The inductive framework was fitting for this project, for it allowed the researcher to develop exclusive research categories and themes from informants' responses, working towards the creation of a theory on 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity (Palys, 2003). A case study was completed on 4-H Ontario, focusing on the five year transitional period this organization has experienced since becoming an independent entity, moving away from OMAFRA and becoming fully responsible for its own development and delivery. A case study was chosen for this project because it enabled the researcher to study an individual organization as it worked through an important transformation. Triangulation of both qualitative and quantitative research methods was adopted in this project, allowing the researcher to compare and contrast the participants' response and to increase the validity of the project.

Sampling and selection of participants was presented for each data collection method and each group of respondents. Data collection methods used in this project included, a mail out/ Internet survey sent out to 700 of 4-H Ontario's 1,600 adult volunteers, 14 personal one-on-one interviews with 4-H Ontario staff, board members, and sponsor as well as representatives from OMAFRA. One focus group was conducted at the University of Guelph with six 4-H Ontario senior members attending. And lastly, the researcher conducted a two day direct observation activity at a 4-H Ontario weekend camp. Data analysis techniques included open coding and axial coding for the qualitative data gathered from all collection techniques, Scenario Analysis on the data from the focus group, and EXCEL/ SPSS analysis for the quantitative data collected through the mail out/ Internet surveys.

Throughout the data collection and analysis process, the researcher took into consideration the limitations and advantage of each method. The researcher presents these in Table 2.4, recognizing that there is not complete perfection in the adopted methods, but highlighting the advantages and benefits and revealing why they were the most suitable choice for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4-H ONTARIO- ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will be part one of two presenting the results of the data collection process used throughout this research project. The information disclosed in part one will encompass the organizational context of 4-H Ontario, revealing an in-depth look into the organization's structure from the perspective of its stakeholders. Part two of the results presentation will be made in Chapter Five and will highlight the organizational transition experienced by 4-H Ontario as it made its way from a provincial government agency to an independent organization in April 2000. Chapter Five will also focus on the organizational capacity of 4-H Ontario as it currently stands, independent from the government.

4.2 Presentation of Data

The data presented in this chapter were gathered from two main groups of 4-H Ontario stakeholders: 1) internal stakeholders and 2) external stakeholders. 4-H Ontario's internal stakeholders are made up of individuals who work within the organization (that is paid staff). External stakeholders are individuals who are closely associated with 4-H Ontario, but do not work within the organization itself (ie: OMAFRA representatives, 4-H Ontario board members, sponsors, adult volunteers and youth members). External stakeholders are individuals who are not paid employees of 4-H Ontario.

The data presented was collected from 16 one-on-one personal interviews conducted by the researcher between the months of September and December 2004. Seven internal stakeholders were interviewed- all 4-H Ontario staff. Nine external stakeholders were interviewed- five representatives from OMAFRA, two 4-H Ontario board members and two 4-H Ontario corporate sponsors.

4.3 Internal Stakeholders

For the purposes of this paper, the following definition of stakeholders will be used: “specific people or groups who have an interest or a partial stake in the products and services an organization provides” (Ten Step Inc., 2005). Organizations can have both internal and external stakeholders. “Internal stakeholders include management, other employees, administrators, etc.” (Ten Step Inc., 2005). For this project, the researcher has deemed 4-H Ontario management and staff internal stakeholders.

The researcher completed seven interviews with 4-H Ontario staff (See Table 2.5). Out of the seven interviewees, one was a part-time employee, five were full-time employees and one was a past staff member who currently did not work for the organization (however, during their time with 4-H Ontario, their position was full time). Five of the seven interviewees were female and the remaining two were male. Of the seven staff members interviewed, two were full-time contract positions, four were full-time non-contract positions and one was a part-time non-contract position. All full-time employees, both contract and non-contract, indicated that they did receive employee benefits from the organization.

Since 4-H Ontario's inception in 2000, the average length of time an employee had worked for 4-H Ontario was 3.36 years, with the range of employment being nine months to five years. Five of the respondents had worked for 4-H Ontario for over three years, whereas two of the respondents had only been in the position for less than a year at the time of the interview. Six of the seven respondents got their job at 4-H Ontario by applying for a posted position, while one of the respondents contacted the organization and offered their services. Of the six individuals who applied for their position, half were responding to a posted advertisement and the other half were informed verbally by an outside party that a position had opened within the organization.

Three of the seven respondents had experience working with 4-H prior to its independence from OMAFRA, while four of the respondents did not but began working with 4-H Ontario at the time of its independence from the government in 2000. Two of the participants had changed positions since they came on board with 4-H Ontario, whereas five of the respondents maintained the same position they were hired for.

Every respondent indicated that 4-H Ontario was a "very pleasant" place to work. Some of the reasons sighted were: great open door Human Resources policy; flexible work environment; very supportive Board of Directors; a real team atmosphere within the organization; and great relationships with other staff. Three of the seven respondents relayed that 4-H Ontario was a pleasant place to work due to its connection with rural youth in Canada.

All internal stakeholders were members of 4-H growing up. Five of the respondents were past members of 4-H in Ontario and two were past members of 4-H in

another province. The average time a 4-H Ontario employee belonged to 4-H was 8.83 years; ranging from 5 years to 12 years.

4.4 External Stakeholders

Along with internal stakeholders, organizations also have external stakeholders. “External stakeholders could include suppliers, investors, community groups and/or government organizations” (Ten Step Inc., 2005). For the sake of this project, the researcher designated 4-H Ontario’s external stakeholders to be OMAFRA representatives, 4-H Ontario board members and 4-H Ontario corporate sponsors. These individuals have a vested interest in the organization, however, they are not employed by 4-H Ontario, nor are they paid for their involvement- their time is strictly voluntary. Other 4-H Ontario external stakeholders include 4-H Ontario volunteers and 4-H Ontario youth members, however, data from these two groups will not be presented until Chapter Five.

The researcher conducted nine interviews with 4-H Ontario’s external stakeholders. Of these nine individuals, two were current 4-H Ontario board members; two were current 4-H Ontario corporate sponsors; three were representatives from OMAFRA who were working with 4-H Ontario at the time of the interview; and two were representatives from OMAFRA who had worked with 4-H Ontario throughout its transition to independence (but no longer had a professional connection to the organization at the time of the interview). Therefore in total, seven of the nine respondents were currently working with 4-H Ontario, whereas two of the respondents were no longer working with the organization.

Five of the external stakeholders were male and four were female. Five of the external stakeholders were also members of 4-H Ontario growing up, while three respondents were not former members. Of the five respondents who were members of 4-H Ontario, two interviewees were members for nine years; one interviewee was a member for five years; another completed 16 clubs and the last did not indicate how long they were youth members of the organization.

4.5 4-H Ontario Board Members

Each of the nine external stakeholders was asked what their responsibilities were concerning 4-H Ontario. The board members questioned indicated that their main responsibilities were: acting as a communication liaison between local 4-H associations and 4-H Ontario; guiding local 4-H associations through the program and providing advice when necessary; and making decisions regarding commencing, reviewing and changing policy and procedures. Each of the 4-H Ontario board members stated that their time on the board had been “very positive.” However, one of the respondents specified that further board training would be beneficial.

4.6 Representatives from OMAFRA

Representatives from OMAFRA were also questioned about their involvement with or responsibility to 4-H Ontario. These responses were highly connected to the position they were hired to do within the government department and therefore no real similarities were found between the responses. However, of the five representatives from

OMAFRA, the average time a respondent's responsibilities included working with 4-H was 16 years.

As previously mentioned, three of the five respondents continued to work with 4-H Ontario at the time of the interview, whereas two no longer had a professional link to the organization. Four of the five representatives from OMAFRA did not have a current connection to 4-H Ontario outside of their professional work; however, one of the respondents indicated that they were going to get their children involved when they were of the appropriate age and another testified that they had previously been a volunteer with the organization. The one individual who did maintain a current connection to the NGO did so as a volunteer. When questioned "what is OMAFRA's current connection to 4-H Ontario," four of the five representatives said that the government's main role was to act as 4-H Ontario's primary funding partner (one of the respondents did not answer this question).

OMAFRA representatives were also questioned on the government agency's decision to continue to support 4-H Ontario when they do not support any other youth organization in the province. Of the nine interviewees, three individuals responded to this question. Each of the respondents indicated that OMAFRA does not support any other rural youth organization in Ontario. Two of the participants stated that the closest thing to 4-H Ontario that OMAFRA supports is the Ontario Agri-Food Education Program; however, this is not a program that is devoted to youth, rural or urban. One of the respondents presented that the main reason OMAFRA continues to support 4-H Ontario is "simply because it is a tradition."

4.7 4-H Ontario Corporate Sponsors

Finally, 4-H Ontario corporate sponsors were also questioned about their roles and responsibilities to the non-profit organization. Of the two individuals who were chosen to speak on behalf of their respective organizations, one had been a member of 4-H in Ontario in the past and the other had not, however, this individual had been very familiar with 4-H growing up. Of the two corporations, one had been a 4-H sponsor since 1994 (Sponsor A) and the other had started supporting the organization in 1999 (Sponsor B). Both sponsors were asked “why their corporation chose to sponsor 4-H Ontario,” however, only one of the sponsors, Sponsor B, responded to this question by saying that they were approached by 4-H Ontario and the company felt it was the “right thing to do for rural Ontario.” This same sponsor also indicated that it was good advertising for the company and they valued the fact that 4-H Ontario turned out young new leaders (that could eventually seek out employment at the corporation) who would do an effective job representing Ontario agriculture. Both of the sponsors revealed that their corporations would continue to sponsor 4-H Ontario in the future, however, Sponsor B stated that they will continue to support 4-H Ontario “as long as I am involved,” saying that “it would be a much harder sell for someone who’s not seen the benefits of the program [*because this individual had been a former member*] and if I weren’t in this position, I would be concerned.”

4.8 Summary

This chapter presented the first part of the data gathered in this research project. The second part of the data presentation will be made in Chapter Five. Chapter Four

revealed data from the 16 one-on-one semi-structured personal interviews that were conducted between September and December 2004. The data presentation was separated into two major categories of interview respondents: 1) 4-H Ontario's internal stakeholders and 2) 4-H Ontario's external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders consisted of 4-H Ontario staff and external stakeholders consisted of 4-H Ontario board members, 4-H Ontario corporate sponsors and representatives from OMAFRA. In total, seven internal stakeholders and nine external stakeholders were interviewed.

The content of the chapter revealed the various characteristics of both groups of stakeholders and presented a brief description of their relationship, either current or past, with 4-H Ontario. The data presented in this chapter will be enhanced in Chapter Five, which will further develop the data presentation of this project by going deeper into the data to reveal perspectives concerning 4-H Ontario's transition to independence as well as the past, current and future state of 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity.

CHAPTER FIVE

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND TRANSITION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is a continuation of Chapter Four and is part two of the results presentation of this project. Unlike Chapter Four, which focused on the organizational context of 4-H Ontario, Chapter Five will highlight 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity and the transition in which it experienced as it progressed from a government agency to the non-profit organization that it is today. Chapter Five will reveal the perspectives of 4-H Ontario's stakeholders' concerning this transitional period and will also highlight their take on the organization's past, present and future organizational capacity.

5.2 Presentation of Data

Throughout the data collection process, the researcher incorporated the process of triangulation and therefore materialized various data sets. The data sets presented in Chapter Five include information accumulated from three separate groups of 4-H Ontario stakeholders and were gathered through three main data collection techniques. The techniques employed were one-on-one personal interviews with 4-H Ontario's internal and external stakeholders; a six page mail out/ Internet survey completed by 4-H Ontario volunteers; a focus group with 4-H Ontario youth members; and finally a direct observation activity involving 4-H Ontario youth members. Frequencies and Chi-Square analysis of the quantitative data generated from the mail out/ Internet survey are

presented in sections 5.15 to 5.21. The Standard Error of Measurement for the study's sample is presented in Section 5.22.

5.3 Perspectives of 4-H Ontario's Internal and External Stakeholder

For the purposes of this project, and as previously mentioned in Chapter Four, 4-H Ontario's internal stakeholders include the organization's management and staff. In contrast, representatives from OMAFRA, 4-H Ontario board members, corporate sponsors, volunteers, and youth members were defined as the organization's external stakeholders. Information was collected from both internal and external stakeholders through the various data collection methods listed in the previous section. Section 5.3 will highlight the perspectives gathered from the 16 one-on-one personal interviews conducted with 4-H Ontario's internal and external stakeholders. Not all of the external stakeholders participated in the one-on-one interviews, only the representatives from OMAFRA, the 4-H Ontario board, and 4-H Ontario corporate sponsors shared their perspectives with the researcher through the interview method. Data from the remainder of 4-H Ontario's external stakeholders (volunteers and youth members) were collected through the mail out/ Internet survey, the focus group and the direct observation activity.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the researcher conducted coding and categorization on the qualitative data generated through the one-on-one interviews. Through these processes, the researcher came up with five main categories to present the data: 1) 4-H Ontario's transitional period; 2) 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity; 3) funding; 4) 4-H Ontario's impact on youth; and 5) information on the interview

respondent (data from this section was presented in Chapter Four). Quantitative data analysis was also conducted using both EXCEL and SPSS.

5.4 4-H Ontario's Transitional Period

Most of the questions asked during the one-on-one personal interviews focused on the transitional period in which 4-H Ontario experienced following its independence from the Ministry of Agriculture in 2000.

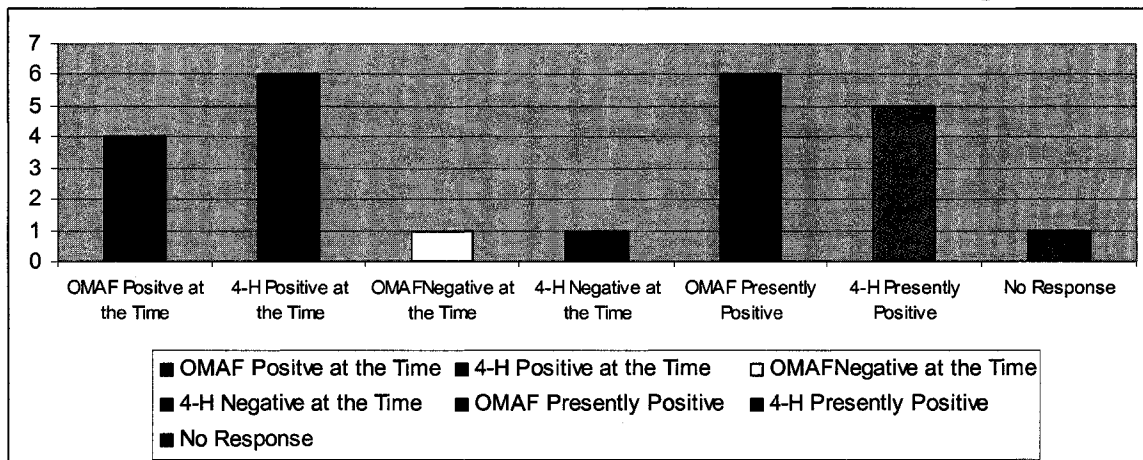
Nine respondents felt that the reason why OMAF transferred full responsibility of the 4-H program to the Ontario 4-H Council was mainly due to government cutbacks. One of these participants stated: "I think it was budget more than anything, it was a place where they could cut revenue and they did. And I have to say it would have cut millions for them. I don't think 4-H was ever as expensive as it was when it was with OMAF- they had 155 paid staff and now there are 16 or 17 paid staff." Five interviewees stated that the program was transferred due to a change in government structure or focus. One of these respondents was quoted: "There was a governmental shift to strengthen policy development rather than do program delivery." One participant stated that they did not know why the transfer was made and two others testified that there was a philosophical component to OMAFRA's decision. One of these participants stated: "there's the philosophical issue of 'I am already supporting it through my tax dollars.'" The other participant affirmed: "part of it is philosophical. Should government be running this or should an organization be running itself?" Data on these results are presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1- Reasons Why OMAFRA Transferred the 4-H Program

Reason	Percent of Respondents
Government Cutbacks	52.94%
Change in Government Structure/ Focus	29.41%
Philosophical Decision on Part of OMAFRA	11.76%
I Don't Know	5.89%

Data on whether or not OMAFRA's decision to transfer the program was a positive or negative move is presented in Chart 5.1. Participants were asked if they felt the move to independence was positive or negative, presently and at the time of independence in 2000, for both OMAFRA and the 4-H program.

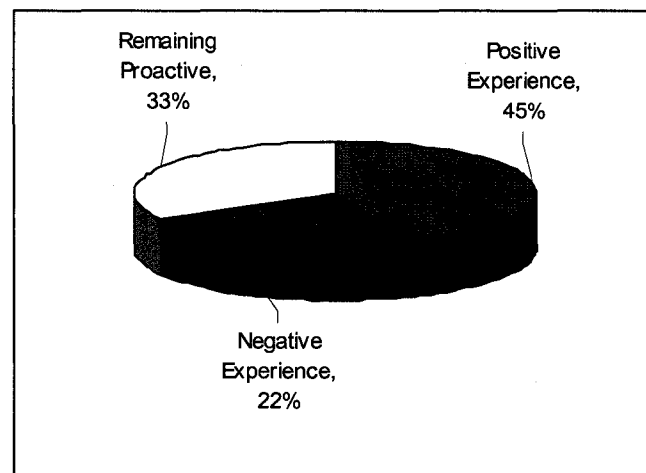
Chart 5.1- Whether or Not the Decision to Transfer 4-H was Positive or Negative



Prior to and upon its independence in 2000, the 4-H program experienced a significant amount of change. Participants were asked their opinion on how 4-H dealt with this process and the changes associated with the independence. Results indicated that the majority of respondents felt 4-H Ontario handled the transition smoothly and that it was a positive experience for the organization. One participant stated: "they've identified what their challenges were, both at a board level and a structure level and have quickly adapted to those." This same individual also said that the financial changes

resulting from the independence have been a real challenge for 4-H Ontario. Only two interviewees felt the transition negatively impacted the organization. The first stating that there has been a negative impact on the resources 4-H Ontario is able to offer members and volunteers and the second stating: “It was not a good move on the whole. It wasn’t a direction that 4-H chose, it was chosen for them.” However, this participant did feel that although it was a bad move for the organization, 4-H Ontario has successfully defeated a number of challenges throughout the process. Finally, three participants stated that 4-H Ontario has dealt with the transition by remaining proactive and taking various steps to meet challenges head on. Data is presented in Chart 5.2.

Chart 5.2- How 4-H Ontario Dealt with Transitional Process

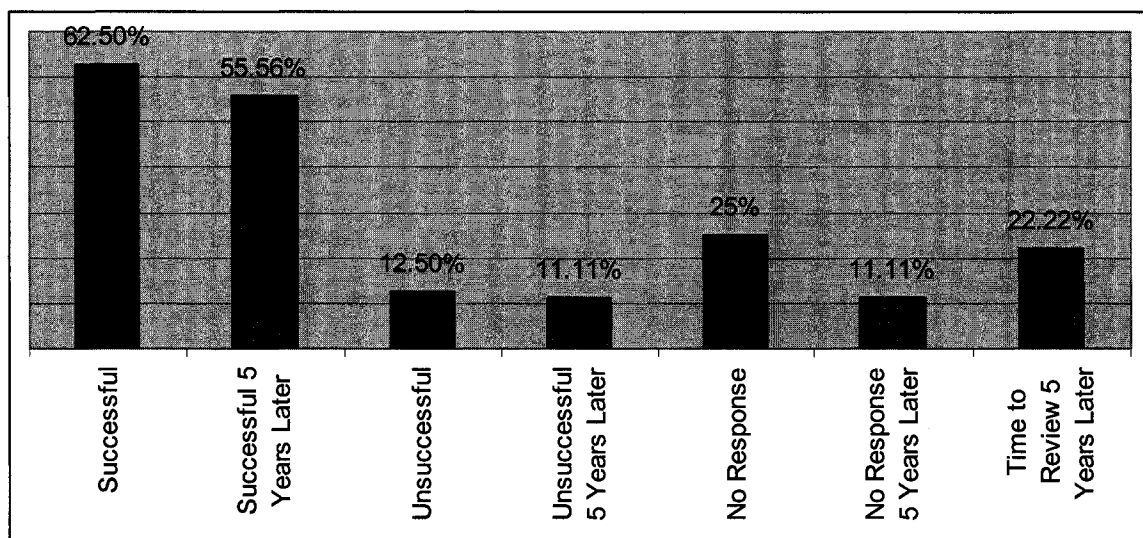


4-H Ontario worked with PricewaterhouseCoopers in developing the New Delivery Model (NDM)- the new organizational structure 4-H Ontario would take on as a NGO. Interview participants were questioned on their perception of the adoption and success of this model. The majority of respondents stated that 4-H Ontario’s adoption of the NDM was a successful process. One of these interviewees stated: “I thought it was very, very good back at the time when they did it. I think they’re seeing more good

things coming out of it- certainly within the last year and a half.” Two respondents were not able to answer this question and only one participant said that the adoption was not a successful process.

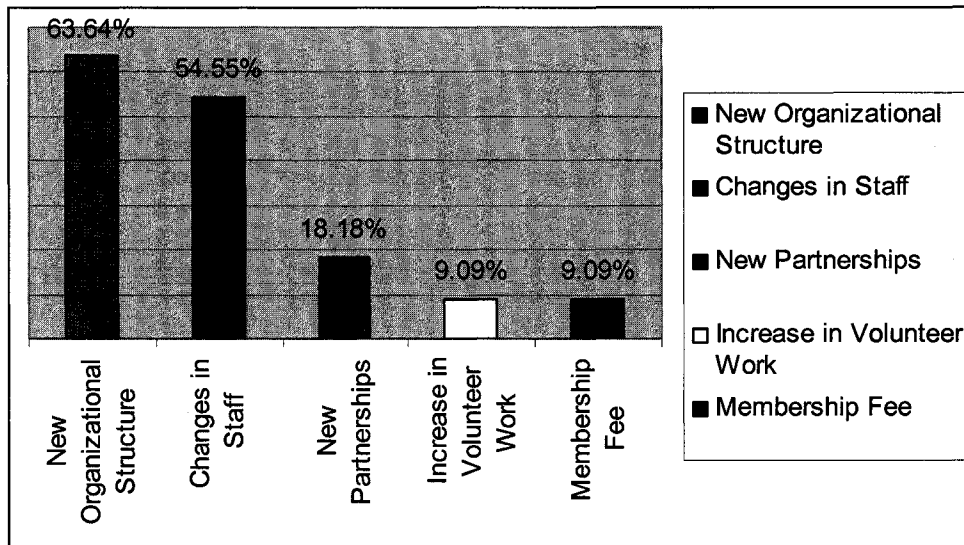
Five years after its implementation, the majority of participants felt that the NDM was still a beneficial structure for 4-H Ontario to follow. One interviewee chose not to answer this question while another stated that five years following the adoption, the model was not the best direction for the organization. Finally, two participants felt that the NDM was still the best way to go, however, a structural review was in order. This data is presented in Chart 5.3.

Chart 5.3- Measure of Success Level of 4-H Ontario’s Adoption of the NDM



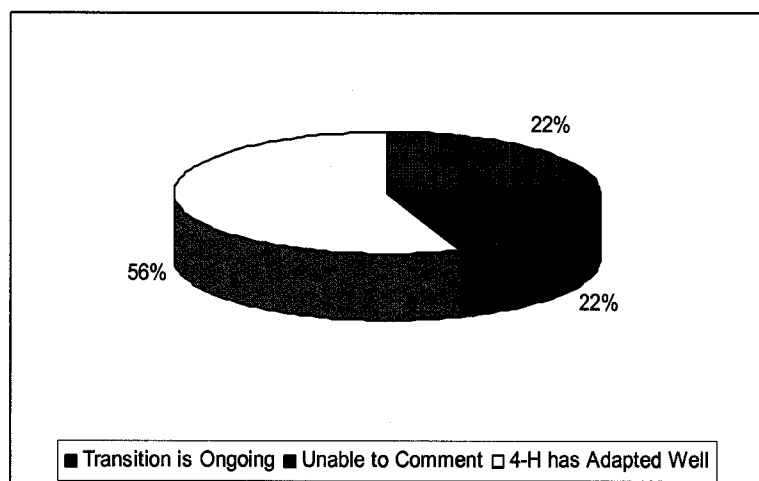
A number of administrative changes occurred in result of the independence process. Respondents indicated that the top five administrative changes experienced by 4-H Ontario were: 1) A new organizational structure had to be implemented; 2) Changes in staff; 3) New partnerships were formed; 4) Volunteer work increased; and 5) A membership fee had to be charged. Data is presented in Chart 5.4.

Chart 5.4- Administrative Changes Resulting from Transition



Respondents were also asked to state any positive or negative impacts the administrative changes have had on the organization. The top two positive impacts offered by those interviewed were: 1) 4-H Ontario owns the program now (ie: their decisions are their own); and 2) The program is more focused on the kids now. Conversely, the respondents stated that the top two negative impacts on the organization were: 1) Fundraising has become a bigger part of the organization; and 2) Increase in volunteer work. When asked if 4-H Ontario has adapted to these changes, the majority of participants stated that the organization has adapted well to the changes brought on by the transition. Two respondents stated that the transition is still ongoing and two others were unable to comment on this topic. See Chart 5.5.

Chart 5.5- Has 4-H Ontario Adapted to Administrative Changes?



4-H Ontario's transition process also had an impact on members, volunteers, and the organization as a whole. When surveyed, the majority of respondents stated that, most likely, members would not have even noticed a difference in the program. Other respondents said that members were impacted by the implementation of the membership fee and the lack of new clubs available. One respondent presented that member recruitment has become a major challenge for 4-H Ontario since gaining independence in 2000. This participant is quoted: "Recruitment of members is a major issue now because that was a role the government played. If there wasn't going to be a club in that area, the OMAFRA person would start phoning and try to find somebody."

The process to independence and the transition which followed also had an impact on 4-H Ontario volunteers. One-third of the respondents stated that the transition was felt the most by volunteers. Another third of participants said that since the independence in 2000, 4-H Ontario volunteers have had a major increase in taking on new roles and responsibilities. The last third of interviewees stated the local associations have been given more responsibility since the independence and throughout the transition. Only

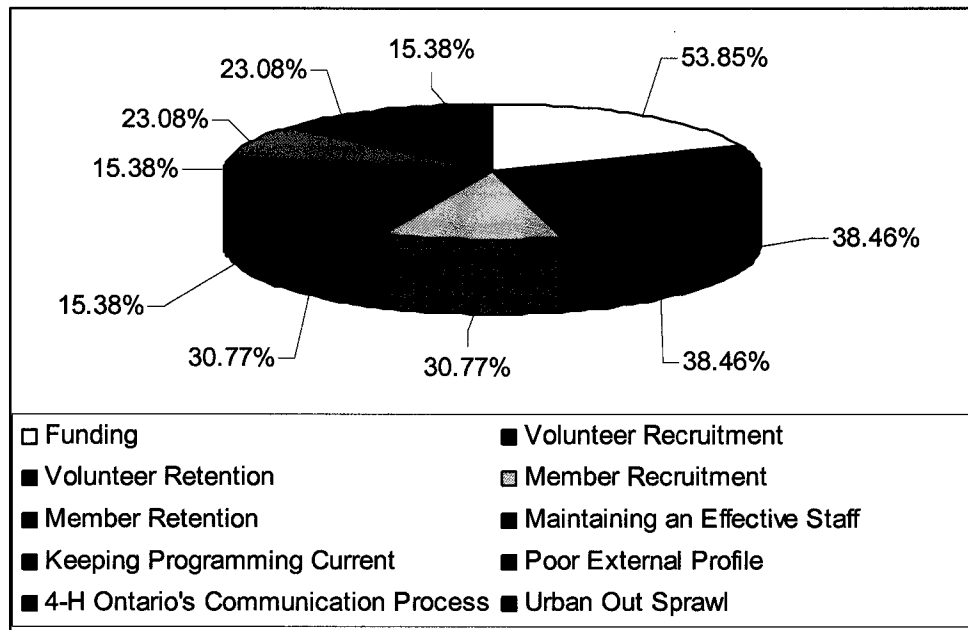
one respondent offered a positive statement: “There was a sense of empowerment in making their own decisions about the organization.”

5.5 4-H Ontario’s Organizational Capacity

Research participants were asked several questions surrounding 4-H Ontario’s organizational capacity. Interview participants felt that the top ten challenges facing 4-H Ontario, in order of importance, were: 1) Funding; 2) Volunteer Recruitment; 3) Volunteer Retention; 4) Member Recruitment; 5) Member Retention; 6) Maintaining an Effective Staff; 7) Keeping Programming Current; 8) Poor External Profile; 9) 4-H Ontario’s Communication Process and 10) Urban Out Sprawl.

One respondent felt strongly about 4-H Ontario’s communication skills: “The number one challenge is communication. Getting the message down from 4-H Ontario to the county contact, to the leaders doesn’t happen enough.” Another participant felt that recruiting volunteers was the organization’s number one challenge: “We always advertise to get new members, but from my experience, if you have the leaders then the members will follow so maybe we should be concentrating on recruiting leaders.” Another respondent felt that presenting 4-H Ontario’s true image to the public was a challenge: “The most challenging would be the profile from an external point of view- getting people outside to learn and understand that it’s not the ‘cows and cookies’ club.” Data is presented in Chart 5.6.

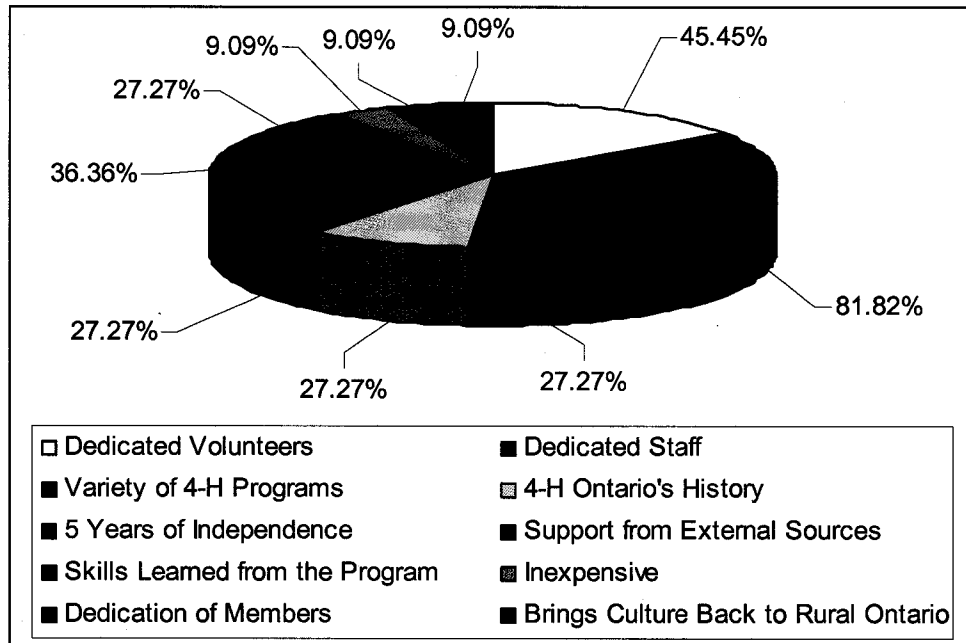
Chart 5.6- Top 10 Challenges Facing 4-H Ontario



In contrast to 4-H Ontario’s challenges, participants were also asked to discuss the organization’s strengths. The top 10 strengths presented by respondents were: 1) Dedicated staff; 2) Dedicated volunteers; 3) Support from external sources; 4) Variety of 4-H Ontario programs; 5) 4-H Ontario’s history; 6) 5 years independence; 7) Skills learned from the program; 8) Inexpensive; 9) Dedication of members; and 10) Brings culture back to rural Ontario. One 4-H Ontario staff stated: “Having the program in our hands is a big strength. We can develop partnerships with a variety of groups that we might not have been able to otherwise.” Another participant felt that dedication of 4-H Ontario volunteers, staff and members is a major strength, especially the dedication of members: “The dedication that comes from volunteers, staff and members is one of 4-H Ontario’s biggest strengths. The dedication from the members is the biggest; there is no program without those members.” Another respondent felt that the variety of programs

offered was also a strength for 4-H Ontario, stating that: “There’s always something for everybody to do within the 4-H program.” Data is presented in Chart 5.7.

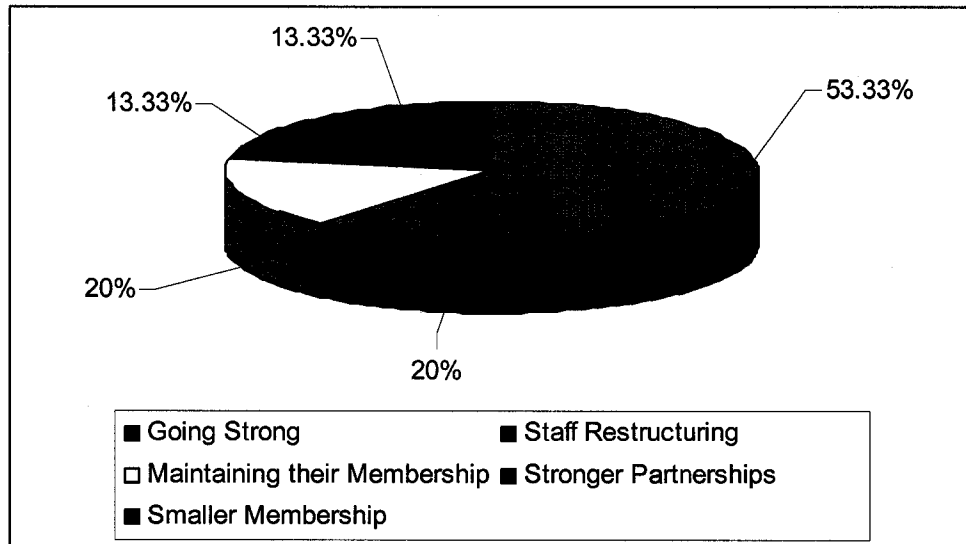
Chart 5.7- 4-H Ontario’s Strengths



4-H Ontario’s future was brought into question throughout the interview process. Respondents were asked where they thought 4-H Ontario would be in five years and also how they would make the organization better. In response to the first question, the majority of participants stated they see 4-H Ontario existing and going strong in five years. The top five responses for this question were: 1) 4-H Ontario will be going strong; 2) There will be staff restructuring; 3) They will be maintaining their membership; 4) Stronger partnerships will have developed; and 5) 4-H Ontario membership will be smaller. Highlighting response number five, one participant stated: “Unfortunately I see it smaller. I still see it being here in 5 years, but smaller probably.” While another respondent stated: “I think numbers will drop again and will continue to drop but I think

it will still be relevant and changing to meet the needs of the kids and volunteers at that time.” Data is presented in Chart 5.8.

Chart 5.8- Where do you see 4-H Ontario in Five Years?



To make 4-H Ontario a better organization, the number one answer given was 4-H Ontario should focus more on its volunteers. Support was suggested in various forms, such as, volunteer training, increased communication to local associations, and increasing volunteer recruitment. One 4-H Ontario staff member was quoted: “4-H Ontario needs to provide more support to volunteers and associations. I think if we found volunteers, we could find kids; we just have to find those volunteers.” Other responses are presented in Table 5.2.

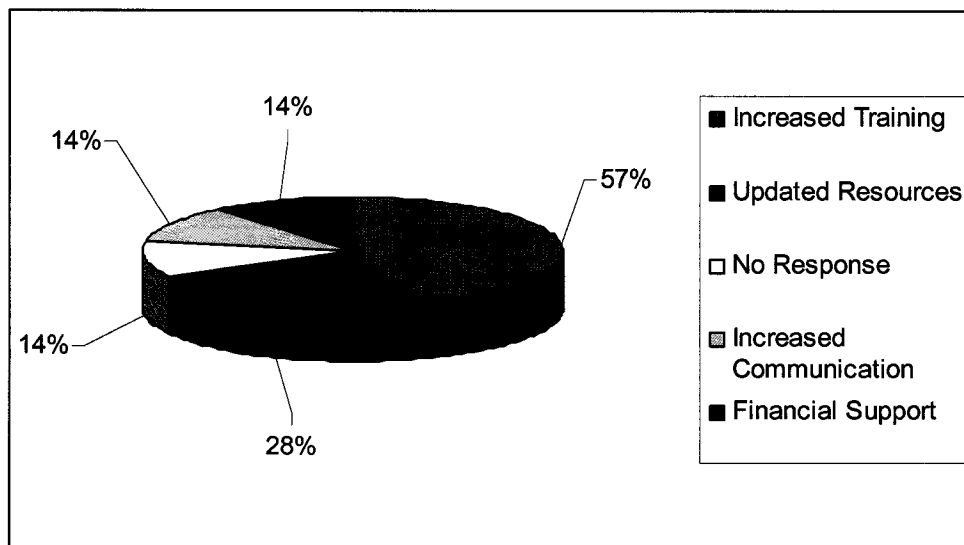
Table 5.2- To Make 4-H Ontario a Better Organization

-Recruit more staff.	-Obtain increased funding.
-Keep materials and resources updated.	-Increase marketing to urban youth.
-Get upper management out to the grass roots level.	-Allow youth to have a bigger role in program development.
-Recruit more members.	-Increase communication with local associations.

The final set of interview questions asked of participants dealt with 4-H Ontario's service delivery. Interviewees were asked if there were any services they would like to see the organization provide to its volunteers, members, and staff.

The number one service participants felt 4-H Ontario should offer its volunteers was training. Various types of training were suggested: personal development training, computer training, leadership training and computer training. 57% of participants stated that the number of training workshops needs to be increased across Ontario. However, one of these respondents pointed out "I've tried to do a few volunteer training workshops in my area over the past year and my problem is getting people to come out. The leaders will complain though because there's no training, so you can't win." 28% of interviewees stated that the number one thing to provide to volunteers was new or updated resources, especially manuals. Data for this question are presented in Chart 5.9.

Chart 5.9- Services for 4-H Ontario Volunteers



In regards to services delivered to members, participants stated that the number one service 4-H Ontario should provide its staff is increased training. One staff member stated: “The training that I received from the person I took over from was poor. What she told me I would be doing was very, very slim or minor to what I am actually doing. When new staff comes on they need to sit down with the person who actually had the job, not someone who oversees that job.” Other responses to this question include: 1) retirement package; 2) increased benefits package; 3) better salaries for staff (in comparison to other NGOs in the province); 4) more staff meetings and 5) improved communications between all staff members. One interviewee in particular answered this question by stating all of the services 4-H Ontario does provide to its staff. For example, this respondent stated that 4-H Ontario provides its employees with 1) a medical plan; 2) counseling support; 3) up-to-date technology and 4) an open door policy when it comes to communication.

The final question dealing with service delivery concerned services provided to 4-H Ontario members. The top two answers included: 1) increased leadership training and 2) new programming. In regards to these responses, two staff members were quoted: “I think leadership training always has to be the base. I think we’re going to have a huge deficit in rural leaders as youth get siphoned off into urban areas and so those that stay are going to have opportunities to be able to put a lot of leadership skills to power;” and, “I think that we need to look at new programs for members, and we’ve been talking about that because we’re getting a bit stale.” Improving communication to 4-H Ontario members was also mentioned by 43% of respondents. One participant stated that 4-H Ontario did not have to change their service delivery to members and was quoted: “I

think for the most part that we provide a pretty good overview of all aspects of life.”

Other answers are presented in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3- Services for 4-H Ontario Members

More scholarships
Decrease fundraising responsibilities
Connect members to their communities more
Provide experiences that are career building
Improve member recognition
More special events (ie: bus trips)
More support at the local level

5.6 4-H Ontario’s Funding

Interviewees were asked two major questions concerning 4-H Ontario’s funding structure. The first, do you believe 4-H Ontario can be more effective with its current funding? In response to this, half of the respondents stated that 4-H Ontario could *not* be more effective with its current funding. Two respondents indicated that 4-H Ontario could *not* be more effective with its current funding; however, there was room for improvement when it came to how funds were being spent. Four respondents stated that they did not know how 4-H Ontario spent their funds and one respondent did not answer this question. Only one respondent indicated that they felt 4-H Ontario *could* be more effective with its current funding, stating that: “there are so many activities going on that the funds are diluted to a point where, potentially, they may not be effective...it’s time to prioritize and focus.”

The second question referring to 4-H Ontario’s funding structure asked: “Do you believe that 4-H Ontario can be more effective with increased funding?” The majority of respondents stated that if 4-H Ontario were to obtain increased funding, they would be

able to offer more and better opportunities to members (ie: new programs; more scholarships; updated resource materials). One respondent said they would like to see more money given back to the local association. Two participants did not answer this question and two stated that they were unable to answer. One respondent indicated that if 4-H Ontario were to obtain increased funds, they would be spent more effectively now, as an NGO, as compared to when the organization was being run by the government. Lastly, one respondent stated “I think they’re well funded and I think they’re good at what they use their money on and how it is used.”

5.7 4-H Ontario’s Impact on Youth

The final category in which the data was separated into was ‘4-H Ontario’s Impact on Youth.’ Results from this section revealed why respondents felt 4-H Ontario was important to both rural and urban youth and whether or not participants felt 4-H Ontario should expand their focus on urban youth.

The majority of respondents stated that 4-H Ontario is important to rural youth because it enables members to develop practical leadership skills. Four respondents indicated that it is important because it offers rural youth opportunities such as scholarships, travel exchanges and educational opportunities that they may not find elsewhere. Four participants stated that 4-H Ontario connects rural youth to agriculture and offers opportunities and skills that focus on this area. These respondents also indicated that this was a direct benefit to the future and sustainability of rural Ontario. Four respondents also stated that 4-H Ontario was important to rural youth because of the social and personal skills it instills in its members. Finally, two respondents said that 4-H

Ontario was important to rural youth because it allows members to get involved with their rural communities. The top five reasons why 4-H Ontario is important to rural youth, from the perspective of its stakeholders, are presented in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4- Top Five Reasons Why 4-H Ontario is Important to Rural Youth

1. Enables members to develop practical leadership skills.
2. Offers rural youth opportunities (scholarships, travel exchanges and educational).
3. Connects rural youth to agriculture.
4. Teaches important personal and social skills to members.
5. Allows members to get involved in their rural community.

In response to why 4-H Ontario is important to urban youth, every respondent but one stated that 4-H Ontario would be important for urban youth. Seven participants indicated that 4-H Ontario is important to urban youth because it would offer them a skill set that wasn't available elsewhere (ie: lifeskills). Two of these respondents stated that it would teach urban youth about agriculture, which would be a beneficial to both the agriculture industry and the urban members. Three respondents stated that you could have a 4-H club anywhere in the province, urban or rural, it was not a matter of obtaining members, but rather it was a case of getting volunteers. One of these respondents stated: "I think if you have leaders, you'll have the kids. So I think if you have a leader for a 4-H club in downtown Toronto, you'd soon have kids." Finally, three respondents said that although 4-H Ontario may be important for urban youth, the organization just did not have the infrastructure or capacity to make this happen. One participant was quoted: "Yes it is important for urban youth, but presently we do not have the infrastructure to support clubs in large urban centres. We just don't have the infrastructure in downtown Toronto, Ottawa, Guelph or London and I don't think we ever will."

Only four interviewees spoke to the reality of 4-H Ontario expanding to urban areas. One of these four individuals stated: "I don't see the fit and I can see it as a whole lot of energy expended to little avail." Another respondent, in agreement with this first comment, indicated that it may just be too difficult to adapt the 4-H program in to large urban centres. This same respondent stated that if you were to attempt to "urbanize" 4-H Ontario, "You would need someone in the urban centre to be a contact and lead you." A third respondent said that yes, it would be realistic to expand 4-H Ontario to urban centres, but suggested that programming would have to be adjusted to meet the different needs of urban youth. The fourth participant also agreed that 4-H Ontario could realistically succeed in an urban centre and suggested that in order to obtain this success, the organization would benefit from partnering with other urban organizations that already exist (such as Girl Guides or Boy Scouts). This respondent also suggested lowering the entry age may increase the number of new members.

5.8 4-H Ontario Volunteers

Data from 4-H Ontario volunteers were received through the six page questionnaire mailed out to 700 randomly selected participants in November of 2004⁴. In total, 4-H Ontario has 1,600 adult volunteers. Between the months of November 2004 and January 2005, the researcher received 119 completed copies of the survey from 4-H Ontario volunteers (74 paper and 45 electronic). Results of the mail out/ Internet

⁴ The six page questionnaire was also posted on 4-H Ontario's website for those volunteers who wished to complete it online. Participants were encouraged to only complete either the electronic version or the paper version- not both.

questionnaire were very extensive and were separated into two different categories: 1) open ended responses and 2) closed ended responses.

5.9 Open Ended Survey Responses

Of the 24 questions on the mail out/ Internet survey, 8 were open ended⁵. Similar to all of the qualitative data in this project, the open ended responses were analyzed using open coding and categorization. The researcher separated the data by question, pulling specific themes from each of the questions.

Question six asked participants why they *continued* to volunteer with 4-H Ontario. Of the 119 responses, the top six answers included the following: 1) I enjoy working with youth; 2) 4-H Ontario is a valuable program (it offers skills that other programs do not); 3) because my children are involved; 4) there was a need and I was asked; 5) it is a way to give back to an organization that offered me so much; and 6) because of 4-H Ontario's agricultural focus. See Table 5.5.

Table 5.5- Top Six Reasons Respondents Continue to Volunteer for 4-H Ontario

1. I enjoy working with youth
2. 4-H Ontario is a valuable program (it offers skills that other programs do not).
3. Because my children are involved.
4. There was a need and I was asked.
5. It is a way to give back to an organization that offered me so much
6. Because of 4-H Ontario's agricultural focus.

⁵ Questions 6, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 19, 20 were open ended.

The next open ended question on the survey question eight, which asked respondents, “Under the current funding structure, do you think that 4-H Ontario is effective?” Only three of the 119 respondents simply stated “yes,” while the remaining answers were grouped into five major categories: 1) increased fees are making 4-H Ontario too expensive; 2) too much money stays at the provincial level; 3) local associations are lacking support from the provincial office; 4) Other; and 5) members are not getting anything “more” for their \$50 membership fee. As a continuation from question eight, question nine asked participants, “do you believe the 4-H Ontario could be more effective with increased funding?” Three main answers stemmed from this question: 1) yes; 2) depends on how the money is administered; and 3) do not increase membership fees, they are already too high.

Those who responded “yes” to question nine were asked their opinion on how 4-H Ontario could be more effective with increased funding. The majority of respondents answered this question by stating that 4-H Ontario would be most effective by putting increased funding towards program delivery and new opportunities for members and volunteers. Other suggestions on how 4-H Ontario could be more effective with increased funding included: provide more money to local associations; address increasing membership fees; increase the number of 4-H Ontario staff; and provide more support to local associations.

Question 16 asked survey respondents to discuss their opinion on the impact experienced by 4-H Ontario following its independence from OMAFRA in 2000. In response to question 16, 22.7% of respondents stated that the number one impact experienced by 4-H Ontario following its independence from OMAFRA was “increased

fees,” while another 22.7% stated that the number one impact experienced was a “negative impact on program delivery.” Other major answers included: a negative impact on the level of support to the local associations, as well as increased work for 4-H Ontario volunteers. Only three out of the 119 respondents stated that the process to independence had no impact on 4-H Ontario whatsoever.

In question 17 of the survey, participants were asked if there was any type of support or information that they would like to receive from 4-H Ontario that they currently were not receiving. Similar to question 16, there was a tie for the number one response: 20.2% of respondents stated they would like further information regarding the organizational structure of 4-H Ontario (ie: any important changes occurring within the organization) and the same percentage of respondents stated that they would benefit from updated resources concerning 4-H Ontario clubs and programs (ie: volunteer manuals). Increased support to local associations, and further volunteer training were two other major responses given for this question.

Question 19 focused specifically on volunteer training, asking survey respondents: “As a volunteer, is there any type of support or information that you would like to receive from 4-H Ontario that you do not currently receive?” Two major responses stemmed from this question. Half of the respondents stated that they would like further training on a local association level, highlighting the importance of new leader training. These respondents also indicated that it would be a good idea for 4-H Ontario to make this training mandatory. The other half of survey respondents stated they would benefit from further 4-H Ontario workshops. Some of the topics that they suggested should be covered in these workshops included: how to be an effective 4-H

Ontario leader; workshops specific to running different 4-H clubs; how to work with 4-H Ontario resources; and how to handle conflict within a 4-H meeting (either with a disruptive member or parent). It was suggested that workshops be mandatory as well in order to ensure attendance.

A number of respondents indicated that with further volunteer training, new and/or updated resources are a must. One individual response that perhaps would benefit both 4-H Ontario and its volunteers suggested that resource manuals be made available online. What is interesting about the responses to question 19 is that in one way or another, all respondents said that they would benefit from further or increased volunteer training. Table 5.6 presents some of the topics suggested for future 4-H Ontario workshops.

Table 5.6- Suggestions Concerning 4-H Ontario Workshops

Workshops should be held locally.	Workshops should be made mandatory to ensure attendance.
The workshop at the annual meeting needs to be more exciting, especially for experienced leaders.	Workshops for specific types of clubs (ie: field crops).
Workshops with leaders of similar clubs from other counties to share ideas.	Workshops at least twice a year.
Workshops where experienced leaders mentor new leaders.	More workshops for different clubs (new ideas or support).
Workshops on being an effective leader.	Workshop on conflict management (how to handle a disruptive member or parent).
I enjoy volunteer workshops that are one day.	Send new volunteers to workshops- not the same volunteer each time.

The final open ended question of the survey asked volunteers to state any further comments they had regarding their volunteering experience with 4-H Ontario or about the organization in general. Most of these comments were very general; however, a few themes could be pulled from the data. For example, two major groups of responses that were apparent were: 1) those respondents who felt their experience volunteering with 4-

H Ontario was extremely positive; and 2) those respondents who felt their experience volunteering with 4-H Ontario was extremely negative. As a percentage, 33.6% of respondents commented on whether their experience volunteering with 4-H Ontario was either positive or negative. Of those respondents, 72.5% stated that their experience was positive, while 27.5% of respondents indicated that they had had a negative experience volunteering with 4-H Ontario.

5.10 Closed Ended Survey Responses

The closed ended responses represented the majority of the questions on the survey and gathered the quantitative data set of the study. As discussed in the research methods chapter, statistical analysis on the quantitative data was kept to range/median/averages expressed as percentages and was completed using Excel. Of the total 24 questions on the survey, 16 were closed ended.⁶ The closed ended responses were separated into four major categories: 1) characteristics of the respondents; 2) the volunteer's experience with 4-H Ontario; 3) the volunteer's perspective on 4-H Ontario's transition; and 4) the volunteer's perspective on 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity.

5.11 Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Only four questions in the survey dealt with the respondents' personal characteristics, however, the researcher felt that they were of importance to obtain an understanding of the participating demographic. The researcher also felt that this

⁶ Questions 1-5, 7, 11-15, 18, and 21-24 were closed ended.

information would be of interest to 4-H Ontario. Participants were asked the following questions regarding their personal characteristics:

<p><u>About You</u></p> <p>21) Municipality of Residence: _____</p> <p>22) Male: _____ Female: _____ Year of Birth: _____</p> <p>23) In which area do you live? Rural (population >5000) _____ Urban _____</p> <p>24A) Were you a member of 4-H in the past? Yes _____ No _____</p> <p>B) If so, for how many years?</p> <p>1 year _____ 2 years _____ 3 years _____ 4 years _____ + 5 years _____</p>
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In regards to Question 21, 33 different municipalities across Ontario were listed. Table 5.7 lists the top 13 counties represented and the number of participants from each area, as well as each county's percentage of the total.

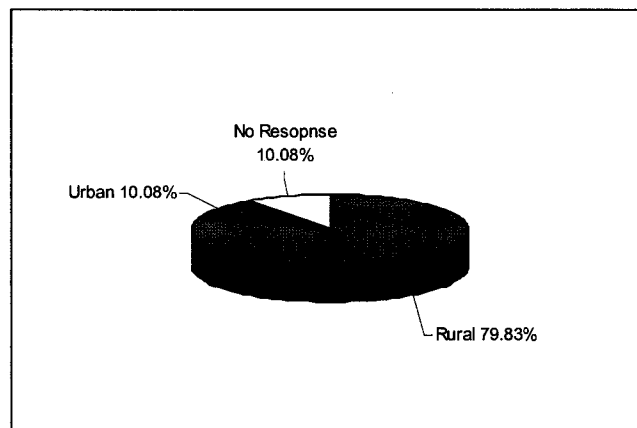
Table 5.7- Municipalities of Participants

Municipality	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Total
Middlesex County	16	13.5%
Bruce County/ Essex County	7	5.9%
Elgin County/ Oxford County	6	5.0%
Northumberland County/ Wellington County	5	4.2%
Durham Regional Municipality/ Huron County	4	3.4%
Chatham-Kent Division Greater/ Sudbury Division Grey County/ Haldimand-Norfolk Regional Municipality/ Renfrew County	3	2.5%

Participants were also questioned on their gender and age. The majority of the survey participants were female, 76 respondents or 63.9%. Male respondents made up 17.7% of the total, or 21 participants. The remaining 22 respondents, or 18.5%, chose not to answer this question. Of the 76 females who answered, 12 chose not to disclose their age, while 19 of the 21 males stated their age. The average age of female respondents was 47.4 years with a range of 25 years to 80. The average age of male respondents was 49.2 with a range of 27 to 73 years of age and a median of 10 years.

Question 23 asked respondents to indicate which type of area, rural or urban; they resided in (see Chart 5.10). For purposes of the survey, the researcher stated that a rural area was to be defined as any area with a population under 5,000 residents. Rural residents made up 79.8% of the total respondents, while urban residents represented 10.1% (the remaining 10.1% was made up of participants who chose not to answer this question).

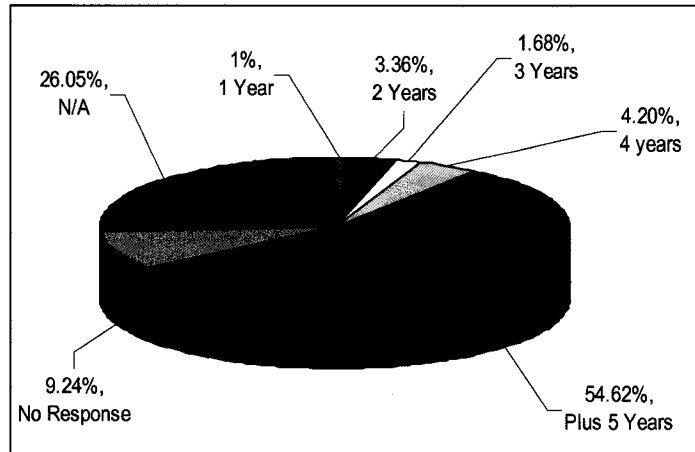
Chart 5.10- Rural vs. Urban Participants



The final question concerning the respondent's characteristics was two-part and asked participants if they were ever a member of 4-H, and if so, for how long. Of those who responded, the majority, 64.7% had been past youth members; 26.9% of respondents

had not been members, and 8.4% of those surveyed did not answer this question. Results of the second part of the question (if you were a member, for how long?) are revealed in Chart 5.11. As displayed in the chart, over half of the respondents who had been a member of 4-H, had done so for five years or more.

Chart 5.11- 4-H Ontario Member Tenure



5.12 The Volunteer's Experience with 4-H Ontario

The majority of the questions on the survey focused on the volunteer's experience with 4-H Ontario. Question One and Two A asked volunteers: 1) How long have you been a volunteer with 4-H Ontario; and 2A) what levels of 4-H Ontario events have you volunteered at? Results of these questions are displayed in Table 5.8 and 5.9.

Table 5.8- Tenure of 4-H Ontario Volunteers

Number of Years Volunteered	Percentage of Respondents
> 2 years	5.0%
2-4 years	21.9%
4-6 years	14.3%
6-8 years	5.0%
8-10 years	7.6%
Plus 10 years	44.5%
No Response	1.7%

Table 5.9- Level of Events 4-H Ontario Volunteers Participate In

Level of Event	Percentage of Respondents
Local	72.3%
Local and Provincial	16.0%
Local, Provincial and National	8.4%
Local and National	0.8%
Provincial	0.8%
National	0.8%
No Response	0.8%

The second part of Question 2 asked respondents to list up to five activities that they had volunteered at throughout their time with 4-H Ontario. Across the 119 participants, 421 activities were presented. The majority of respondents, 40.4%, listed five activities. The top five listed activities included: 1) acting as a club leader; 2) volunteering at a fair; 3) volunteering at a judging event; 4) volunteering at Go for the

Gold; and 5) volunteering with the Local Association. Table 5.10 presents the top ten events respondents have volunteered at.

Table 5.10- Top Ten Volunteered Events

Event	Number of Respondents
1. Club leader	97
2. Fair	39
3. Judging Event	37
4. Go for the Gold	34
5. Local Association	30
6. Awards Night	28
7. 4-H Ontario Fundraiser	21
8. 4-H Ontario Show	19
9. Chaperone	16
10. Local Event	9

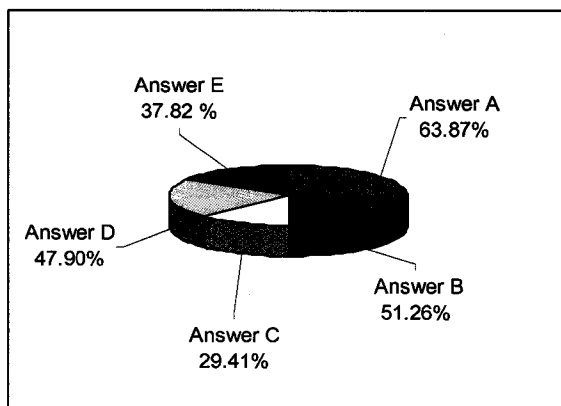
In addition to acting as a 4-H Ontario leader, volunteers can be associated with the organization through various roles. In Question 3, participants were asked: in addition to being a volunteer, do you have a particular position with 4-H Ontario (ie: Association Representative, board member, staff, etc.), and if so, what? Of those who responded, 42% said they did not have another position; 28.6% said they did have another position; and 39.4% did not answer this question. The top two listed positions were: 1) Volunteer with the local association; and 2) Board Member.

4-H Ontario has a number of clubs that are available for members and volunteers to be a part of. Question 4 asked respondents what clubs they volunteered with and asked them to list at least five responses. Across the 119 survey participants, the top five clubs listed, in chronological order from most to least, were: 1) Lifeskills and Dairy; 2) Horse; 3) Beef; 4) Crafts; and 5) Cooking.

Question five asked respondents ‘What affected your decision to volunteer with 4-H Ontario? (Check all that apply)’, with the following list of answers to choose from:

A) I enjoy working with youth; B) my child is a current member of 4-H Ontario; C) my child was a past member of 4-H Ontario; D) I was interested in what 4-H Ontario offered as an organization; and E) other (please state). Of the 119 respondents, 76 or 63.9% said they volunteered with 4-H Ontario because they enjoyed working with youth. 61 respondents or 51.3% stated that they were volunteers because their child was a current member and 35 respondents or 29.4% said it was because their child was a past member. 57 or 47.9% of respondents indicated that they volunteered with the organization because they were interested in what 4-H Ontario had to offer as an organization. And finally, 45 respondents or 37.8% stated they had another reason for joining the organization.

Chart 5.12- Why Volunteers Initially Volunteered with 4-H Ontario



- A) I enjoy working with youth.
- B) My child is a **current** member of 4-H Ontario.
- C) My child was a **past** member of 4-H Ontario.
- D) I was interested in what 4-H Ontario offered as an organization.
- E) Other (please state).

Two questions associated with the volunteer's experience with 4-H Ontario were asked in Question 14, which was presented to respondents in a *Likert* Scale format. Questions 14.11 and 14.12 asked respondents to comment on the following statements: 14.11) I have found volunteering for 4-H Ontario to be a positive experience; and 14.12) I will continue to volunteer for 4-H Ontario in the near future. Results to these questions are presented in Table 5.11.

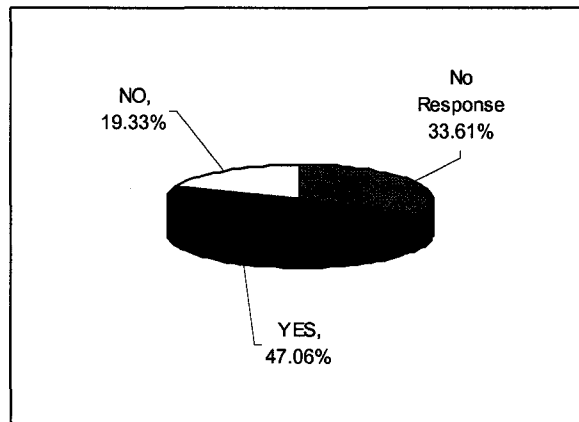
Table 5.11- Perspectives of Past and Present Volunteer Experience

I have found volunteering for 4-H Ontario to be a positive experience.		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	57	47.9%
Agree	51	42.9%
Don't Know	2	1.7%
Disagree	5	4.2%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.8%
No Response	3	2.5%
I will continue to volunteer for 4-H Ontario in the near future.		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	48	40.3%
Agree	51	42.9%
Don't Know	14	11.8%
Disagree	2	1.7%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.7%
No Response	2	1.7%

Volunteer training is an important component to a successful NGO. In the final closed-ended question focusing on the volunteer's experience with 4-H Ontario (Question 18), respondents were asked to give their opinion on 4-H Ontario's volunteer training. The question stated: as a volunteer do you feel that there is enough training given to you to support and to guide you through your role (please check yes or no)?⁷ Results are presented in Chart 5.13.

⁷ Following up with Question 18, Question 19 asks those volunteers who indicated that they were not receiving enough training to suggest what could be done to improve the situation. Results for Question 19 are presented in Section 5.4.1.

Chart 5.13- Volunteer Training Satisfaction



5.13 The Volunteer's Perspective on 4-H Ontario's Transition

As part of meeting the project's first objective, the researcher felt it was important to survey volunteers on the transitional period 4-H Ontario experienced following their independence in 2000.⁸ Therefore, the researcher asked survey respondents a number of questions regarding this topic. Completed in the *Likert* Scale format, Questions 14.5-14.8 questioned participants on their opinion of the five year period following the organization's process to independence. Results of these questions are presented in Table 5.12. The majority answers are highlighted.

⁸ To analyze and document the transitional process 4-H Ontario has taken since gaining independence from OMAF in April 2000

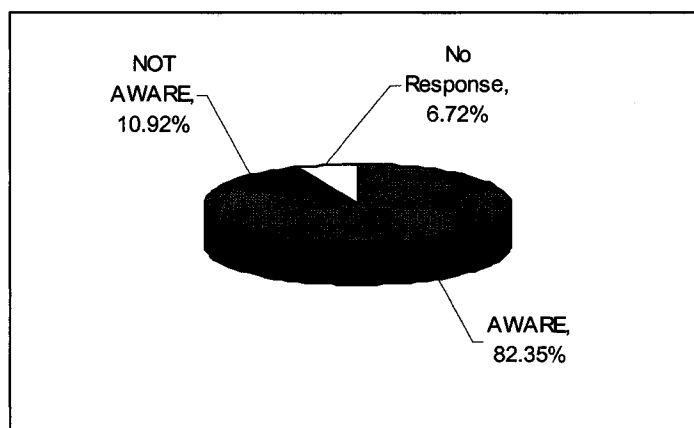
Table 5.12- Volunteers' Perspectives on Information Delivery, Communication Awareness, and Activity Level for Volunteers and Members throughout the Transition

4-H Ontario has kept me informed through the transition process to the new delivery model		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	7	5.9%
Agree	48	40.3%
Don't Know	33	27.7%
Disagree	18	15.1%
Strongly Disagree	8	6.7%
No Response	5	4.2%
Since 2000, I have noticed an increase in communications and awareness support as a 4-H Ontario volunteer		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	8	6.7%
Agree	38	31.9%
Don't Know	35	29.4%
Disagree	27	22.7%
Strongly Disagree	6	5.0%
No Response	5	4.2%
Since 2000, I have noticed an increase in activities for 4-H Ontario volunteers		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	4	3.4%
Agree	46	38.7%
Don't Know	37	31.1%
Disagree	20	16.8%
Strongly Disagree	6	5.0%
No Response	6	5.0%
Since 2000, I have noticed an increase in activities for 4-H Ontario members		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	9	7.6%
Agree	54	45.4%
Don't Know	27	22.7%
Disagree	18	15.1%
Strongly Disagree	5	4.2%
No Response	6	5.0%

Question 15 also surveyed respondents on 4-H Ontario's transitional period. It stated: Are you aware that in 2000 4-H Ontario underwent a change in delivery during the transition from being a government run program to becoming an independent organization? Respondents were given the option of choosing 'yes' or 'no' for this question. Results were quite one-sided, indicating that 82.4% of participants were aware

of the change; 10.9% were not aware; and 6.7% of respondents did not answer this question. Results are presented in Chart 5.14.

Chart 5.14- Volunteer's Awareness of 4-H Ontario's Organizational Change



5.14 The Volunteer's Perspective on 4-H Ontario's Organizational Capacity

The final set of quantitative data was obtained from questions surrounding the volunteer's perspective of 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity. These questions not only went towards meeting the project's second and third objective, but also worked in coordination with meeting the study's research goal.⁹

Question seven asked respondents to list the skills that 4-H Ontario develops effectively in its members/volunteers (with the option of providing up to eight skills). In total, 592 skills were presented, with 26.9% of respondents listing all eight. The top five answers included: 1) Leadership; 2) Self-Confidence; 3) Team Work; 4) Public Speaking; and 5) Practical Skills. Table 5.13 presents the top ten responses for Question seven, the number of times they were listed by participants.

⁹ See Section 1.4 in Chapter One for the Research Goal and Objectives 2 and 3.

Table 5.13- Top 10 Skills Effectively Developed by 4-H Ontario

Skill	Number of Times Listed
1. Leadership	54
2. Team Work	42
3. Self-Confidence	41
4. Public Speaking	38
5. Practical Skills	24
6. Organizational Skills	19
6. Friendship	19
7. Responsibility	16
7. Learning	16
8. Parliamentary Procedure	15
9. Cooperation	13
10. Self- Esteem	12

Question 11 and 12 of the survey focused on the challenges facing 4-H Ontario. Respondents were asked: What do you think are some of the challenges facing 4-H Ontario? Participants were presented with a list of seven challenges and were asked to check all that applied (with the option of stating two of their own challenges). The seven challenges included: 1) funding; 2) too few staff; 3) volunteer burnout; 4) rural youth out migration; 5) competition from other clubs/ sports; 6) finding volunteers; and 7) dedication of 4-H Ontario staff. In total, 458 challenges were checked. The distribution of these answers is presented in Table 5.14. As a follow up to question 11, question 12 asked respondents: of the above challenges, what are the two most important? These results are presented in Table 5.15.

Table 5.14- Distribution of Challenges Facing 4-H Ontario

Challenge	Number of Times Listed
Finding volunteers	94
Volunteer burnout	88
Competition from other clubs/ sports	79
Funding	77
Other	41
Rural youth out migration	41
Too few staff	21
Dedication of staff	10
No Response	7

Table 5.15- Number One and Two Challenges Facing 4-H Ontario

#1 Challenge		#2 Challenge	
Challenge	Number of Times Listed	Challenge	Number of Times Listed
Funding	28	Finding volunteers	34
Volunteer burnout	26	Competition from other clubs/ sports	23
Finding volunteers	17	Volunteer burnout	17
Other	14	Other	15
Competition from other clubs/ sports	8	Funding	9
Rural youth out migration	7	Rural youth out migration	7
Dedication of 4-H Ontario staff	3	Too few staff	1
Too few staff	3	Dedication of 4-H Ontario staff	0

In a more positive light, question 13 asked participants to list what they believe 4-H Ontario's strengths to be (with room available for eight responses). In total, respondents stated 346 strengths. The top five strengths included: 1) the variety of clubs offered; 2) 4-H Ontario volunteers; 3) the opportunities presented to members; 4) 4-H Ontario's history; and 5) 4-H Ontario staff. Table 5.16 presents the top ten responses regarding 4-H Ontario's strengths.

Table 5.16- 4-H Ontario's Top 10 Strengths

Strength	Number of Times Listed
Variety of clubs	34
4-H Ontario volunteers	31
Opportunities for members	21
4-H Ontario's history	19
4-H Ontario staff	16
A resource for rural youth	13
Networking opportunity for rural youth	10
Leadership skills	10
Agriculture education	8
Travel	7
It's fun	7
Conferences	7
Affordable	6

The final questions of the survey that focused on the volunteer's perspective of 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity were questions 14.1-14.4 and 14.9-14.10. All of these questions were presented to respondents in the *Likert* Scale format. Results of these questions are presented in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17- Volunteers' Perspectives of 4-H Ontario's Level of Volunteer Support, Information Delivery, Mission Statement and Role with Rural Youth

4-H Ontario provides sufficient support to its volunteers.		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	3	2.5%
Agree	49	24.4%
Don't Know	13	10.9%
Disagree	33	27.7%
Strongly Disagree	14	11.8%
No Response	7	5.9%
4-H Ontario delivers enough information to its volunteers about the organization.		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	9	7.6%
Agree	70	58.8%
Don't Know	5	4.2%
Disagree	21	17.7%
Strongly Disagree	8	6.7%
No Response	6	5.0%
4-H Ontario delivers enough information to its volunteers about upcoming events.		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	13	10.9%
Agree	65	54.6%
Don't Know	13	10.9%
Disagree	20	16.8%
Strongly Disagree	3	2.5%
No Response	5	4.2%
4-H Ontario meets its mission statement.		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	16	13.4%
Agree	69	58.0%
Don't Know	15	12.6%
Disagree	7	5.9%
Strongly Disagree	3	2.5%
No Response	9	7.6%
4-H Ontario plays an important role in the skills training of youth in Ontario.		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	45	37.8%
Agree	52	43.7%
Don't Know	12	10.1%
Disagree	4	3.4%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.8%

No Response	5	4.2%
4-H Ontario plays an important role in the leadership development of youth in Ontario		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	54	45.8%
Agree	51	42.9%
Don't Know	6	5.0%
Disagree	1	0.8%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.7%
No Response	5	4.2%

5.15 SPSS Statistical Analysis

As part of analyzing the quantitative data generated from the mail out/ Internet Survey, SPSS Statistical Analysis was run on the majority of questions presented in the questionnaire. The following analyses were run:

- A) Frequency tables for questions 1, 2A, 5, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 22, 23, and 24.
- B) Crosstabulations and Chi-Square analysis comparing Question 14 and gender.
- C) Crosstabulations and Chi-Square analysis comparing Question 14 and rural vs. urban.
- D) Crosstabulations and Chi-Square analysis comparing Question 14 and whether or not respondents were members of 4-H in the past.
- E) Crosstabulations and Chi-Square Analysis for Question 14 and age.

The researcher also calculated the Standard Error of the sample participating in this research. The results of these statistical analyses are presented below.

5.16 Frequencies

Frequency tables for survey questions 1, 2A, 5, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 22, 23, and 24 were created¹⁰. Key frequency differences were found for the Question 1) how long have

¹⁰ A full copy of the mail out/ Internet survey is presented in Appendix M.

you been a volunteer with 4-H Ontario? The number one response for this question was 10 + years, representing a large majority. Another key frequency difference was found in Question 2A) at what levels of 4-H events have you volunteered? The number one response was local events, representing 25.3% of the total responses. The second most frequent answer was provincial events, representing a significantly smaller 5.6%. Question 15 asked participants if they were aware that 4-H Ontario underwent a change in delivery when becoming a NGO. There was a large difference between the two answers offered for this question, 28.8% of respondents stated they were aware of the changes, while 3.8% stated they were unaware. A major difference between responses was also found for Question 22, which asked participants to state their gender. Results showed that 76 of those participants who responded were female, whereas 21 were male. Finally, the difference between rural participants and urban participants was notable. Results revealed that 96 of those who responded were from a rural area, while 13 participants were from an urban area.

5.17 Chi-Square Analysis

Chi-Square Analysis was run on the quantitative data generated through the 700 completed mail out/ Internet Surveys. This analysis compared the answers of Question 14 to gender, age, rural vs. urban, and past 4-H membership. Due to the small sample size, N = 119, the selections offered in Question 14 (strongly disagree, disagree, I don't know, agree, and strongly agree) were combined into two main categories: agree and disagree.

5.18 Chi-Square Analysis- Age

4-H Ontario volunteers who participated in the survey ranged from 25 years old to 80 years old. When completing the Chi-Square analysis, age was separated into two categories, 25 – 49 years and 50 – 80 years. Results of the Chi-square analysis indicated that there was a significant difference in the way younger and older volunteers responded to Question 14.1, which asked participants to agree or disagree with the following statement: 4-H Ontario provides sufficient support to its volunteers. The results of this analysis were $\chi^2 = 4.35$; $N = 119$; $P = \leq 0.03$. Therefore, these results show that the majority of volunteers aged 25 – 49 feel that the support offered to volunteers from 4-H Ontario is sufficient, while the majority of volunteers aged 50 -80 feel that the support offered is insufficient. Results of the cross-tabulation for Question 14.1 and age are presented in Table 5.18.

Table 5.18 – Whether Participants Felt 4-H Ontario Provides Sufficient Support to its Volunteers by Age

		N14.1		Total
		Disagree	Agree	
25 – 49 years	Count	13	25	38
	% within age	34.2%	65.8%	100.0%
	% within 14.1	27.7%	48.1%	38.4%
50 – 80 years	Count	34	27	61
	% within age	55.7%	44.3%	100.0%
	% within 14.1	72.3%	51.9%	61.6%
Total	Count	47	52	99
	% within age	47.5%	52.5%	100.0%
	% within 14.1	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

5.19 Chi-Square Analysis- Gender

Analysis of data from female and male research participants did not find any significant differences.

5.20 Chi-Square Analysis- Rural vs. Urban

Analysis of data from rural and urban based participants did not find any significant differences.

5.21 Chi-Square Analysis- Past 4-H Membership

Analysis of data from 4-H Ontario past-members and 4-H Ontario non-past-members did not find any significant differences.

5.22 Standard Error of Measurement

4-H Ontario's volunteer base is made up of 1,600 individuals. The mail out/ Internet Survey questioned 700 of the total volunteer base and returned 119 completed questionnaires. Therefore, based on a program developed by John Fitzsimons, the Standard Error of Measurement for this study was calculated as just over +/- 8%.

5.23 The Youth Perspective

4-H Ontario youth members were the final group of stakeholders the researcher included in this study. 4-H Ontario youth members are boys and girls from the age of 10

years to 21. Due to the technicalities of involving minors (those under the age of 18 years) in the project, the researcher chose to only directly speak to youth members who were 18 years of age or older. 4-H Ontario youth members who were under the age of 18 also participated in the project; however, there was no direct communication between the researcher and this group of individuals. Two data collection processes were utilized to work with the youth members: 1) a focus group; and 2) a direct observation activity.

5.24 4-H Ontario Members' Focus Group

As revealed in Chapter Three, one focus group interview was hosted by the researcher at the University of Guelph on November 16th, 2004. Six individuals, two male and four female, from five different counties across Ontario¹¹ participated in the focus group. In an open forum setting, the researcher asked each of the participants to discuss and respond to three main questions: 1) discuss your experience as a 4-H Ontario member; 2) discuss how would you make 4-H Ontario a better organization; and 3) where do you see 4-H Ontario in five years?

Results from question one indicated that the majority of the group joined 4-H Ontario because it sounded interesting and fun. Although, one member stated that she was “forced to join” by her parents and because of this she did not enjoy her experience and quit shortly after joining. Two of the respondents joined because a friend or a neighbour asked them too. Three of the six participants indicated that they had siblings who were also members. And one participant indicated that her parents were members

¹¹ Ontario counties represented included: Kent, Lambton, Leeds, Bruce, and Peterborough.

growing up and were now active volunteers with the organization, which played a hand in getting them enrolled as a member.

As part of question one, participants were also asked to discuss some of their positive and negative experiences as 4-H Ontario youth members. Five of the six participants revealed that the best thing about belonging to 4-H Ontario was “meeting people.” One of the individuals stated that she met some of her best friends in 4-H Ontario and that these individuals were people who understood the life of farming. Four of the participants indicated that learning various leadership skills was very positive, while two of these individuals stated that they enjoyed getting the opportunity to act as a youth leader in their later years of belonging to 4-H Ontario. Some of the negative experiences mentioned were:

- a lack of information flow from 4-H Ontario headquarters to associations in Eastern Ontario;
- volunteer burnout;
- too many “politics” between volunteers and members’ parents;
- the dissolution of the plaque reward system²;
- volunteers who do not do a good job leading a club;
- volunteers who do all of the work for the kids;
- volunteers who are not open to the changes that resulted from 4-H Ontario’s independence from OMAFRA in 2000.

One participant stated that one of the most negative experiences of belonging to 4-H Ontario was that some of the local associations allow professional cattle fitters to work on member’s livestock in preparation for the bigger cattle shows. They even indicated that one member who was upset about this wrote a letter to the local association regarding the issue, but never received any response and the next year the same situation occurred.

² 4-H Ontario used to give each youth member a plaque when joining and rewarded members for each club completed. Now, 4-H Ontario provides each member with a paper certificate for completing clubs.

From the general discussion surrounding question one, all six of the participants stated that they would like to volunteer for 4-H Ontario in the future. One participant indicated that he would like to volunteer as a dairy club leader and another said he would like to be a future beef club leader. One participant stated that the reason he would like to be volunteer was that it would be unfair to criticize the organization and not do anything about it. Finally, one participant stated that she would certainly love to volunteer for 4-H Ontario in the future, however, she had concerns that the organization would no longer be in existence in coming years.

Question two asked the focus group participants how they would make 4-H Ontario a better organization. Responses from this question fell into three main categories: 1) how they would make the organization better for 4-H Ontario members; 2) suggestions to improve 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity; and 3) general comments.

To make the organization better for members, participants said:

- increase travel opportunities for members.
- increase communication regarding what 4-H Ontario is really all about ("people don't know unless their already members").
- ensure that programs and clubs are up to date so members don't get bored.
- keep things exciting and interesting for senior members ("older members get bored doing the meetings over and over").
- encourage current members to tell their friends.

In response to 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity, participants offered the following:

- 4-H Ontario should actively recruit new volunteers and members (perhaps this could be a group of volunteers' main role).
- 4-H Ontario should seek out volunteers around the age of 25. Let past members walk away from the organization for a few years and then get them back in while they are still young.
- Continue to develop online programs.
- Build an infrastructure. Do not solely focus on the financial aspect of the organization- a strong set of resources is valuable as well.

And finally, some general comments that came from the discussion surrounding question two included such remarks as: “4-H Ontario does have great resources- they just need to distribute them better;” and “because of insurance issues, older members are not permitted to drive younger members- this is not very practical in certain circumstances.” Three of the six participants presented comments regarding the age difference between 4-H Ontario junior and senior members³. They stated that “4-H Ontario needs to strengthen the upper end of the program- keeping senior members is hard and even if they don’t leave, they aren’t very involved;” “perhaps 4-H Ontario needs to shrink on both ends- start at 12 years old and finish at 19;” and “21 may be too old. It’s hard to put a 21 year old on the same level as a 10 year old.”

Question three surveyed participants regarding the future of 4-H Ontario, specifically, where they saw the organization in the next five years. Two of the participants said they can see membership numbers decreasing and membership costs increasing. On a more positive note, three participants responded to this by saying: some local associations fundraise to reduce membership costs; within the next few years new members will not complain about the membership fee as much because they will not have been involved when it was free to join (so they will not know the difference); and one participant suggested that the membership fee be waived for the first year (hoping that this would increase membership numbers).

Participants also discussed 4-H Ontario’s presence within urban settings. The majority of participants stated that they feel it would be a good idea to promote 4-H

³ 4-H Ontario is open to youth aged 10 to 21 years.

Ontario to urban youth. One participant stated that 4-H Ontario “has to [involve urban youth] because there are fewer and fewer farm kids.”

Future funding was also a concern for some of the participants. Three of the six participants said they fully believe that it is only a matter of time before 4-H Ontario loses their government funding. Whereas one participant was not aware that OMAFRA continued to offer support to the organization. One participant felt that “4-H Ontario shapes future agricultural leaders and by dropping the program completely,” OMAFRA would be making a huge mistake. They stated that if this were to happen they “would no longer have much faith” in the provincial ministry of agriculture.

5.25 Direct Observation of 4-H Ontario Members

The direct observation activity took place on October 16th and 17th, 2004 in Acton, Ontario at 4-H Ontario’s leadership camp “Future Talk.” Over the span of two mornings, the researcher observed approximately 10 hours of activity. The researcher did not interact with any of the 4-H Ontario members, rather, her role was to mainly observe the interactions of the campers and take notes.

Due to the fact that the researcher did not have any direct communication with the participants, the resulting data was basically her interpretation of the day’s events. One of the first things noted at the camp was that there were more female members in attendance than male. The room was laid out in an open forum concept, with all participants sitting in a circle taking direction from the camp leader. Each member was presented with a question and asked to speak for a few minutes, unrehearsed or unprepared. After each member took their time to speak, discussion would commence,

critiquing the young adult's presentation skills and content. What was noted during this activity was the positive way in which both the members and camp leader critiqued the speaker in question. Although most comments were commending the verbal presentation, some were constructive; emphasizing what the individual should have done or could do better in the future. However, each time, the constructive criticism was presented in a positive and helpful way. Clapping ensued after each member took their opportunity to speak.

One of the other major observations made by the researcher was the way in which the camp leader consistently encouraged and supported the young members presenting. Each time any of the members made a negative comment in regards to themselves, the camp leader responded directly to them with a counteracting positive comment. The researcher concluded that this constant support would be very beneficial to the young members and would have a positive affect on their self-esteem and confidence levels.

Another noted observation at the Future Talk Camp was that the majority, if not all, of the 4-H Ontario members appeared to be having fun. Members were smiling, laughing, and joking around but in a controlled manner. A very positive group atmosphere was present and at throughout the observation it did not appear that there was any animosity between members. The researcher noted the constant level of support that was offered continuously between the members. There was a high level of team playing that flowed throughout the course of the day's events.

Finally the researcher took note of the valuable skills that were being taught throughout the day. Skills such as public speaking, speech writing, working as a team, presentation, leadership and debate were all a part of the camp's activities. All of these

skills will be of use to the members as they continue their education and eventually join the workforce. The researcher was impressed on how 4-H Ontario embraced these skills and presented them to the members in a way that proved effective. The members were enjoying themselves, while simultaneously retaining irreplaceable skills.

5.26 Summary

Chapter Five presented results from the second part of the research data set. The data revealed focused on 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity and the transitional period experienced by the NGO following its independence from OMAFRA in 2000. The chapter saw a presentation of the internal and external stakeholders' perspectives on this transition, as well as their thoughts concerning 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity. Internal and external stakeholders included 4-H Ontario staff, board members, volunteers, and youth members. Perspectives of 4-H Ontario's staff and board members were presented in the data from the one-on-one personal interviews, whereas, perspectives from 4-H Ontario volunteers were presented from the data drawn from the questionnaire. Finally, data from 4-H Ontario members was presented by highlighting trends revealed in the focus group and the direct observation activity. Various charts were used to summarize this data and highlight some of the major findings.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

To gain a deeper understanding of this study, Chapter Six will present a discussion of the major research findings in reference to the concepts and theories presented in the literature review (Chapter Two). Through this discussion, the researcher will reveal the significance of the project's results, as well as their connection to the literature, highlighting the importance of the study's findings in relation to the body of work on organizational capacity development in the non-profit sector. The chapter will exhibit where and when the findings agree or disagree with the literature and also where the findings fill a gap in the current literature on organizational capacity development. Chapter Six will present a discussion of the results centring on six main topics: 1) the 4-H Ontario Stakeholder; 2) rural youth and their organization; 3) the 4-H Ontario volunteer; 4) organizational restructuring; 5) 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity; and 6) a conceptual framework for 4-H Ontario.

6.2 The 4-H Ontario Stakeholder

Much of the literature reviewed on 4-H Ontario is from a historical perspective, written by those who have been closely involved in the organization either as employees, volunteers or founders (4-H Ontario, 1998). Documentation of opinions and perspectives of the organization's stakeholders has been shortcoming. As previously stated, this project placed the 4-H Ontario stakeholder into two main groupings: 1) internal

stakeholders (individuals who work within the organization ie: paid staff) and 2) external stakeholders (individuals who are closely associated with 4-H Ontario, but are not paid employees ie: OMAFRA representatives and 4-H Ontario board members and sponsors). The literature review did not present any information on the current 4-H Ontario stakeholder; therefore, this study majorly meets the need for up to date information on this topic. Results concerning 4-H Ontario stakeholders are presented in full in Chapter Four.

6.3 Organizational Restructuring

Historical data is written on the 4-H program in Ontario and across the country (4-H Ontario, 1998; 4-H Ontario 2002; Lee, 1995). The early days of the Ontario program are not as detailed as those of the beginnings of 4-H in Canada, however, there is body of literature that follows the organization throughout the years (4-H Ontario, 1998; 4-H Ontario 2002; Lee, 1995). The first evidence of 4-H in Ontario was a mixed livestock club in Waterloo County in 1915 (4-H Ontario, 2002). Starting out as part of the management function of provincial ministry of agriculture, the initial goal of 4-H in Ontario was to provide education and training to Agriculture Extension Officers throughout the province (Lee, 1995). It was not until 1952 when this organization officially adopted the name 4-H Ontario, and since this time the organization has seen many changes and structural re-organizations.

4-H Ontario is currently transitioning out of a major structural re-organization, stemming from the process of independence the organization experienced starting in April 2000 when it took over the development and delivery of the program from

OMAFRA. This transitional period can be looked at as a major moment in the history of 4-H Ontario. This information on 4-H Ontario's current transitional period has never been documented. The researcher, working in coordination with 4-H Ontario staff, purposely chose this topic of study for that reason. 4-H Ontario desired information on the process of independence in order to take stock in the recent organizational changes, receive feedback from their stakeholders and volunteers and plan for a sustainable future. When future research is completed on 4-H Ontario, the results of this study will add to the body of literature on the organization, especially concerning this crucial time for the organization. Results concerning 4-H Ontario's process to independence are presented in full in Chapter Four.

6.4 Rural Youth and their Organization

Almost 7,000 young people across the province of Ontario enrol and participate in 4-H each year (Canadian 4-H Council, 2004). These individuals range between the ages of 10 to 21 years and are, in most cases, residents of rural areas (Canadian 4-H Council, 2004). 4-H Ontario youth members were involved in this project in two distinct ways: 1) as active or observed participants; and 2) as a topic of discussion throughout the interviewing and surveying process.

A major shortcoming in the literature reviewed was the lack of up-to-date information specifically regarding 4-H Ontario members. Although this topic was not directly addressed in the literature review, information on provincial organizations and programs that represent Canadian rural youth was examined. The literature discussed various programs offered to Canadian rural youth, including those that are community

based and also those that are government initiated and developed. According to this literature, one of the main similarities between all of the programs is that they focus on bettering the livelihoods of rural youth and the rural communities in which they live. Results of this study support this statement. Of the top five reasons why respondents felt 4-H Ontario was important to rural youth, two of the reasons support this statement [(#3) connects rural youth to agriculture and (#5) allows members to get involved in their rural communities]. Four participants stated that 4-H Ontario connects rural youth to agriculture and offers opportunities and skills that focus on this area. These same four respondents also indicated that this was a direct benefit to the future and sustainability of rural Ontario. Two respondents indicated that 4-H Ontario was important to rural youth because it connects young people to the rural communities in which they live.

The literature also addressed the fact that while there are numerous organizations across the province that are available to both rural and urban youth, there are only a handful that had an absolute focus on agriculture or rural issues- 4-H Ontario being one of these organizations. Research results offered support to this statement as well. When 4-H Ontario volunteers were asked why they continue to volunteer with the organization, the number two answer was because “4-H Ontario is a valuable program (it offers skills that other programs do not).” The number six response to the same question was “I volunteer with 4-H Ontario because of its agricultural focus.” Out of a list of 4-H Ontario’s top ten strengths, the number six strength was listed as “it is a valuable resource for rural youth.”

As revealed in the literature, in one way or the other, all of the programs focusing on Canadian rural youth state that the personal growth and development of leadership

skills is one of their main priorities. Results of this study showed that 4-H Ontario's stakeholders firmly agree with this statement. When asked to list the skills that 4-H Ontario effectively develops in its members, the number one answer was leadership skills. Many respondents highlighted that the leadership building component of 4-H Ontario was one of the organization's most important qualities. When asked what services 4-H Ontario should be providing to its members, the number one response was "increased leadership training." One respondent spoke to this, saying "I think leadership training always has to be the base. I think we're going to have a huge deficit in rural leaders as youth get siphoned off into urban areas and so those that stay are going to have opportunities to be able to put a lot of leadership skills to power."

One of the rural organizations addressed in the literature was Town Youth Participation Strategies, or TYPS. As described in Chapter Two, TYPS recognizes youth as citizens with rights and responsibilities who are able to make contributions through active community involvement, participation, partnerships and meaningful decision-making (TYPS, 2005). This mandate relates to the results of this study in that respondents felt 4-H Ontario members should be allocated increased responsibility concerning program development and delivery. One respondent indicated that youth are an extremely important component to the 4-H Ontario program and therefore should be given the opportunity to lend their thoughts to the direction of the organization. This respondent also felt that, presently, 4-H Ontario does not give its members enough opportunity or responsibility in regards to program development.

6.5 The 4-H Ontario Volunteer

The role of adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector has been widely explored by various researchers (Anderson, 1981; Cook *et. al.*, 1986; Kaslon *et. al.*, 2005; Kiernan & Ott, 1986; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999; Rouse and Clawson, 1992; Snider, 1985; Stewart, 1996; and White and Arnold, 2003). Included in the reviewed body of literature are several projects highlighting 4-H in the US (Anderson, 1981; Cook *et. al.*, 1986; and White and Arnold, 2003) as well as a smaller set focusing on 4-H Ontario (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999; and Stewart, 1996).

Although there currently exists a wide body of literature on the topic of adult volunteers in NGOs, the literature has also shown that that there is a need for further information (Anderson, 1981). White and Arnold successfully illustrate this point when saying:

It becomes clear then that understanding the factors involved in becoming a 4-H volunteer, the experience of the person while serving as a volunteer, and the reasons for leaving the volunteer role can provide insights useful to the agent in managing the volunteer portion of the county 4-H program (2003).

This emphasizes yet another short coming in the body of literature regarding 4-H Ontario. This study responds to White and Arnold's recommendation of presenting new research focusing on the role of adult volunteers in the 4-H program. Also, especially in the light of the 4-H Ontario's recently experienced transition, there is undoubtedly a need for current information on the organization's volunteers, an issue this research addresses as well.

In general, when reviewing the topic of adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector, the literature has shown that it is important to consider factors like volunteer

recruitment, training, motivation, and defining roles and responsibilities (Stewart, 1996; Kiernan & Ott, 1986; White and Arnold, 2003; Anderson, 1981; Rouse and Clawson, 1992; Kaslon *et al.*, 2005; and Cook *et al.*, 1986). This conclusion was supported by the research results found in this study. 4-H Ontario stakeholders believed that factors like volunteer recruitment, training, and defining roles and responsibilities are issues that 4-H Ontario should pay increased attention to. The results of this study did not offer many suggestions towards the matter of volunteer motivation, as there were minimal responses related to this subject.

The research did, however, introduce an important new data set to the body of literature on 4-H Ontario. Section 5.11 of Chapter Five, Characteristics of Survey Respondents, reveals to 4-H Ontario an updated account of the characteristics of their adult volunteers. Topics such as volunteer tenure, demographics across the province and type of clubs adults volunteer with are presented in this section.

6.6 Volunteer Recruitment

Stewart's 1996 study on 4-H Ontario concluded that effective volunteer recruitment is vital to any organization that relies upon the contribution of external, unpaid staff. This conclusion is in accordance with the results found in this study. Many respondents indicated that 4-H Ontario must make volunteer recruitment an organizational focus, if they want to remain sustainable. For example, results of the interviewing process presented that volunteer recruitment was the second biggest challenge facing the organization (funding was declared the number one challenge). One participant in particular noted "we [4-H Ontario] always advertise to get new members,

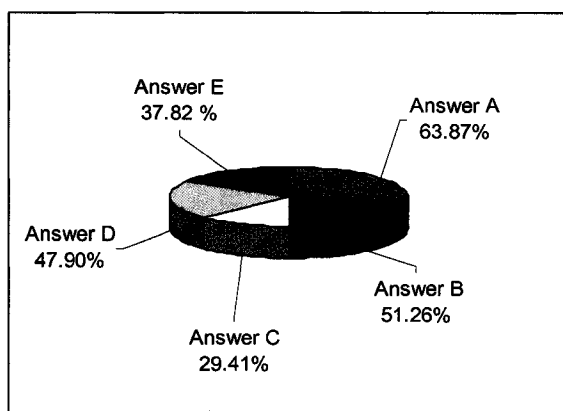
but from my experience, if you have the leaders then the members will follow- so maybe we should be concentrating on recruiting leaders.” Similar to the interviewee’s perspectives, results of the questionnaire showed that the majority of respondents felt that the number one challenge facing 4-H Ontario was volunteer recruitment.

On a constructive note, the literature designated that there are a number of steps a NGO can take to strengthen and maintain a successful volunteer base (Anderson, 1981; Cook *et. al.*, 1986; Rouse and Clawson, 1992; Stewart, 1996; White and Arnold, 2003). Generally stated, the overall literature encouraged providing volunteers with a specific role and designated tasks as a key factor in strengthening the recruitment process (Stewart, 1996; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999; Cook *et. al.*, 1986). PricewaterhouseCoopers’ 1999 organizational plan for the soon to be independent 4-H Ontario stated that “volunteers need to be recruited on the basis of specific tasks” (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999:7). Stewart’s 1996 study of 4-H Ontario’s organizational effectiveness indicated that volunteer management was a concern for the organization and suggested that recruiting volunteers based on roles and responsibilities is one option towards improving the process. A parallel can be seen between the current literature on 4-H Ontario’s volunteer recruitment and the results found in this study. The similarity in research results across time signifies the importance of a strong volunteer recruitment strategy, one which focuses on specific tasks and designated roles. Three separate projects on 4-H Ontario, across a span of ten years all draw the same conclusion.

The literature also presented other suggestions to improve a NGO’s volunteer recruitment strategy. As advised by White and Arnold, one of the first steps in effective volunteer recruitment may be to investigate why individuals decide to volunteer with an

organization in the first place (2003). Questions asked to participants in the mail out/ Internet survey followed this advice put forth by White and Arnold. Results of this study found that the top five reasons why adult volunteers initially devoted their time to 4-H Ontario were: A) I enjoy working with youth (63.87%); B) my child is a current member of 4-H Ontario (51.26%); C) my child was a past member of 4-H Ontario (29.41%); D) I was interested in what 4-H Ontario offered as an organization (47.90%); and E) Other (37.82%). See Chart 5.12.

Chart 5.12- Why Volunteers Initially Volunteered with 4-H Ontario



- F) I enjoy working with youth.
- G) My child is a **current** member of 4-H Ontario.
- H) My child was a **past** member of 4-H Ontario.
- I) I was interested in what 4-H Ontario offered as an organization.
- J) Other (please state).

When comparing the results of this study to the results found by White and Arnold, similarities can be seen (2003). White and Arnold surveyed 4-H volunteer leaders in order to discover why volunteers offered their time to the organization (2003). Their results revealed that the top two reasons adults volunteered with their local 4-H organization were 1) to make a difference in the lives of youth; and 2) to receive satisfaction through helping others (White and Arnold, 2003). As mentioned above, the top two reasons adults initially volunteered with 4-H Ontario are 1) I enjoy working with youth; and 2) my child is a current member of 4-H Ontario. In both studies, respondents

indicated that their involvement in the lives of the youth members was the number one reason they dedicated their time to the local 4-H Organization.

The results of this study took White and Arnold’s suggestion one step further by answering other questions related to the motives of 4-H Ontario volunteers, presenting new information to the body of literature on 4-H Ontario. Survey respondents were asked why they *continue* to volunteer with 4-H Ontario. Of the 119 responses, the top six answers included the following: 1) I enjoy working with youth; 2) 4-H Ontario is a valuable program [it offers skills that other programs do not]; 3) because my children are involved; 4) it is a way to give back to an organization that offered me so much; and 6) because of 4-H Ontario’s agricultural focus. Participants were also asked if they will continue to volunteer with 4-H Ontario in the near future. In a *Likert* style format, results indicated that the majority of participants “agreed” that they will volunteer with the organization in the near future¹². See Table 5.19.

Table 5.19- Decision to Volunteer with 4-H Ontario in the Near Future

I will continue to volunteer for 4-H Ontario in the near future.		
Response	Number of Responses	Percentage of Total
Strongly Agree	48	40.34%
Agree	51	42.86%
Don't Know	14	11.76%
Disagree	2	1.68%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.68%
No Response	2	1.68%

White and Arnold state that the implications of knowing why volunteers are volunteering are critical when considering volunteer recruitment for the 4-H organization (2003). They state that “organizations may want to emphasize that those who desire to

¹² Participants could choose from strongly agree, agree, I don't know, disagree, and strongly disagree.

make a difference, whether or not they have 4-H children, can fill the role of a 4-H volunteer” (White and Arnold, 2003:26). The results of this study agree with White and Arnold’s findings and therefore offer 4-H Ontario some direction concerning the selection of a successful volunteer recruitment strategy.

6.7 Volunteer Training

The body of literature reviewed revealed a positive relationship between training and orientation and the perpetuation of a NGO and its volunteers (Stewart, 1996). In other words, when NGOs train their volunteers, they tend to be more committed and stay with the organization for a longer period of time. One major similarity between all of the studies reviewed is that they highlight the importance of volunteer training and pointed to the major impact this act can have on the future of the organization (Anderson, 1981; Cook *et. al.*, 1986; Rouse and Clawson, 1992; Snider, 1985; Stewart, 1996; and White and Arnold, 2003). Stewart’s 1996 study on 4-H Ontario concluded that “volunteer training was a concern for the organization” suggesting that there is a need for further attention and research on this topic where the provincial organization is concerned (1996:28). The results of this study meet Stewart’s suggestion for further research, adding to the literature on 4-H Ontario’s volunteer training capacity.

Rouse and Clawson’s study on older adult volunteers revealed that volunteer training is a desired part of the volunteering process with youth development programs and adult organizations (1992). Participants of their study indicated that they were not receiving adequate training for their volunteer position, requesting that potential volunteers be assured of adequate training as part of the organization’s recruitment

process (Rouse and Clawson, 1992). Cook *et. al.* also found that there was a desire for training among volunteers in their study of over 2,400 4-H USA volunteers (1986). Results of this research indicated that 79.9% to 95.5% of 4-H volunteers desired more training (Cook *et. al.*, 1986).

The conclusions made in the Cook *et. al.* and Rouse and Clawson studies can be compared to the results found in this project. When interview respondents were questioned about services 4-H Ontario should be providing to its volunteers, 57% felt that increased volunteer training was the most important service 4-H Ontario could offer. Personal development, leadership and computer training were among the various types of training suggested by participants. Survey participants were also questioned about services they feel 4-H Ontario should be providing to its volunteers. Half of those who answered stated that they would like further training on a local association level, highlighting the importance of *new leader training*.

Satisfaction in 4-H Ontario volunteer training was also addressed in the study. Questionnaire participants were asked if they felt the training already provided by 4-H Ontario was sufficient to support and guide them through their role as a volunteer. Almost half (47.06%) of the respondents declared yes, 4-H Ontario's volunteer training was sufficient whereas about 20% of respondents stated that 4-H Ontario's training was not sufficient.

These results would suggest to 4-H Ontario that the organization must continuously make volunteer training a priority, placing a strong emphasis on new volunteer training and training at the local association level. However, a statement made by an interview participant indicates that the 4-H Ontario volunteer must make training a

priority as well. This respondent is quoted: “I’ve tried to do a few volunteer training workshops in my area over the past year and my problem is getting people to come out. The leaders will complain though because there’s no training, so you can’t win.”

6.8 Volunteer Motivation

The literature reviewed presented results regarding what motivates volunteers and a number of conclusions have been obtained (Anderson, 1981; Cook *et. al.*, 1986; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999; Rouse and Clawson, 1992; Stewart, 1996; and White and Arnold, 2003). White and Arnold found that volunteers are mainly motivated by the desire to feel good about themselves rather than by external benefits (2003). Rouse and Clawson found that adults were motivated to volunteer because it brought a sense of affiliation into their lives, a feeling which they state is highly important to most human beings (1992). Stewart’s 4-H Ontario study affirmed Rouse and Clawson’s desire for affiliation in regards to why adults volunteer in the non-governmental sector (1996). As previously mentioned, the results of this study showed that the number one reason adults volunteered with 4-H Ontario was because they enjoyed working with youth. The number two reason was because volunteers had children in the 4-H program. There was no mention of the desire for affiliation in the results of this study. The results do however agree with the conclusions made by Stewart who found that motivating factors for 4-H Ontario volunteers include having children in the 4-H program, enjoying working with youth and children, and wanting the opportunity for achievement and new challenges.

Cook *et. al.*’s study revealed that 4-H volunteers have a tendency to drop out within the first five years of their volunteering experience. Their results showed that

once the five year mark had passed, the level of volunteer drop out decreased. In response to this, they suggest that 4-H volunteer tenure could be increased by placing a strong emphasis on volunteer motivation in the first five years, improving the chances of the volunteer making it past the five year mark and lowering their risk of dropping out (1986). Results of this study did not present a significant amount of data concerning motivation of the 4-H Ontario volunteer. However, they did present information on 4-H Ontario volunteer tenure. Results showed that the majority (44.54%) of survey respondents had been volunteering with the organization for plus 10 years, with the second highest number of respondents (14.29%) volunteering for 2-4 years. Data on 4-H Ontario volunteer tenure is presented in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8- Tenure of 4-H Ontario Volunteers

Number of Years Volunteered	Percentage of Respondents
> 2 years	5.04%
2-4 years	21.85%
4-6 years	14.29%
6-8 years	5.04%
8-10 years	7.56%
Plus 10 years	44.54%
No Response	1.68%

6.9 Defining Roles and Responsibilities for Volunteers

The literature has shown that volunteers feel more attached to an organization if they feel they are in charge of a specific task and are less likely to quit if they feel as though they are responsible for a specific activity (Cook *et. al.*, 1986). Cook *et. al.*'s study found that definable roles and laid out responsibilities were factors that were of importance to adult volunteers in the non-governmental sector. Stewart's study on 4-H Ontario also revealed the importance of having unified, clearly defined roles and

associated responsibilities (1996). He concluded that there is a major need for further investigation and involvement concerning this topic, specifically pertaining to training and orientation within 4-H Ontario. This research further increases the body of research concerning defining roles and responsibilities for 4-H Ontario volunteers. It will provide the organization with a current set of data that they will be able to apply to decisions concerning the direction of their organization.

The results of this study did not delve deeply into the relationship between roles and responsibilities and organizational sustainability. However, there was some discussion surrounding the transitional period following the independence process and its impact on the 4-H Ontario volunteer. Results indicated that since the independence process in April 2000, the number two negative impact on the organization was that there has been an increase in volunteer work. When questioned about the transition experienced by 4-H Ontario, one-third of respondents stated that the transition was felt most by volunteers. Another third of participants revealed that volunteers have had a major increase in taking on new roles and responsibilities. And finally, the last third of participants felt that local associations have been give more responsibility since the independence and throughout the transition.

Following this, respondents were then questioned on the services 4-H Ontario provides to its volunteers. As previously stated, the number one service participants felt 4-H Ontario could offer its volunteers was increased training. Half of survey respondents stated that they would benefit from further 4-H Ontario workshops focusing on various topics. One of the suggested topics for a workshop was “how to be an effective 4-H Ontario leader.” This is an indication that some respondents are feeling a need for more

detailed direction and guidance as a volunteer. As part of these workshops, 4-H Ontario could incorporate the suggestions from the literature reviewed, presenting the importance of defining roles and responsibilities and distributing specific tasks and goals to its volunteers. Other topics for workshops are presented in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6- Suggestions Concerning 4-H Ontario Workshops

Workshops should be held locally.	Workshops should be made mandatory to ensure attendance.
The workshop at the annual meeting needs to be more exciting, especially for experienced leaders.	Workshops for specific types of clubs (ie: field crops).
Workshops with leaders of similar clubs from other counties to share ideas.	Workshops at least twice a year.
Workshops where experienced leaders mentor new leaders.	More workshops for different clubs (new ideas or support).
Workshops on being an effective leader.	Workshop on conflict management (how to handle a disruptive member or parent).
I enjoy volunteer workshops that are one day.	Send new volunteers to workshops- not the same volunteer each time.

PricewaterhouseCoopers presented a significant body of literature on the issue of volunteer burnout within the 4-H Ontario organization (1999). The study completed by PricewaterhouseCoopers on 4-H Ontario's process to independence found that the issue of roles and responsibilities is undoubtedly important to the maintenance and sustainability of a reliable volunteer base. They state that defining roles and responsibilities is also important for easing some of the negative impact organizations receive from volunteer burnout. PricewaterhouseCoopers concluded that when it comes to the reality of volunteer burnout, it is not so much the definition and clarification of roles and responsibilities as it is the delegation and distribution of who takes on these roles. They also concluded that if the distribution of roles and responsibilities within the 4-H association were changed, volunteer burnout could be reduced. These conclusions are very applicable to the results found in this study. The majority of surveyed volunteers

feel that there has been a noticeable increase in activities for 4-H Ontario volunteers since the independence in 2000. The majority of surveyed volunteers also stated that 4-H Ontario does not provide enough support to its volunteers. These same individuals also felt the number two challenge facing 4-H Ontario is volunteer burnout. Seven years following the PricewaterhouseCoopers study, it is obvious that 4-H Ontario volunteers remain concerned about the issue of volunteer burnout and the level of support they are receiving from their organization

6.10 Volunteering and Age

Results of the Chi-Square analysis showed that level of support required by adult volunteers depends on age. Analysis revealed that the majority of younger (25 – 49 years) volunteers feel that the support offered by 4-H Ontario is sufficient, while the majority of older (50 – 80 years) volunteers feel that this support is not enough. Results of this study revealed that the majority of participating volunteers fall under the 25 – 49 category, however, the difference between the two age groups is quite small. 11.7% of surveyed volunteers were between the ages 25 – 49, whereas 10.8% were between the ages 50 – 80 years. The literature has shown that volunteer burnout is an issue that faces most NGOs, and as volunteers get older there is potential for the rate of burnout to both increase and accelerate (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1999; Rouse and Clawson, 1992). At the time of this study, 4-H Ontario committed itself to working through the issue of volunteer burnout, making it a focus in their key strategic direction. Results of this study further enforce the importance of focusing on volunteer burnout and suggest that taking the volunteer's age into consideration may be an important part of the process.

6.11 4-H Ontario's Organizational Capacity

The literature reviewed revealed the significance of capacity development in local organizations (Bolger, J., 2000; CIDA, 2005; Chaskin, R., 2001; Horton *et al.*, 2003; Kaplan, A., 2000; Morgan, 1997). Much of the literature on capacity development is drawn from an international context on a macro level scale. The literature states that information on this subject in a Canadian context at a *micro* level scale is not only necessary, but something that will positively benefit local NGOs (Bossuyt, 1994; Schacter, 2000). The research presented here meets this need for micro level information on capacity development in a Canadian context, especially pertaining to rural youth organizations.

The literature has shown that evaluating important organizational life lines, especially in NGOs, such as funding resources, staff motivation, program development, volunteer availability and future partnerships, is essential to the sustainability of the organization (Horton *et al.*, 2003). The research presented here investigated 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity development by looking at impacting factors such as organizational strengths, challenges, funding, direction and opportunities. Topics such as those suggested by Horton *et al.* were examined throughout this investigation.

Participants were questioned on 4-H Ontario's organizational strengths and challenges. 4-H Ontario's stakeholders felt that the organization's top 10 strengths were:

1. Dedicated staff	6. Five years of independence
2. Dedicated volunteers	7. Skills learned from the program
3. Support from external sources	8. Affordable cost
4. Variety of programs	9. Dedication of members
5. The organization's history	10. Brings culture back to rural Ontario

Whereas 4-H Ontario's volunteers offered the following top 10 strengths:

1. Variety of clubs	6. A resource for rural youth
2. 4-H Ontario volunteers	7. Networking opportunity for rural youth
3. Opportunities for members	8. Leadership skills
4. 4-H Ontario's history	9. Agriculture education
5. 4-H Ontario staff	10. Travel

4-H Ontario stakeholders felt that the top 10 challenges facing the organization were:

1. Funding	6. Maintaining an effective staff
2. Volunteer recruitment	7. Keeping programming current
3. Volunteer retention	8. Poor external profile
4. Member recruitment	9. 4-H Ontario's communication process
5. Member retention	10. Urban out sprawl

Finally, 4-H Ontario volunteers stated the following top nine challenges:

1. Volunteer recruitment	6. Rural youth out migration
2. Volunteer burnout	7. Too few staff
3. Competition from other clubs/ sports	8. Dedication of staff
4. Funding	9. No Response
5. Other	

Research respondents were also asked to comment on the future direction of 4-H Ontario, specifically highlighting where they saw the organization in five years. Results of the study indicated that the majority of participants felt that 4-H Ontario would be going strong in the next five years. Other responses to this question included 1) experiencing continued staff restructuring; 2) maintaining their membership; 3) developing stronger partnerships; and 4) with a smaller membership base. Participants were also asked how they would make 4-H Ontario a better organization. Responses to this answer were varied, however, the number one answer given was 4-H Ontario should focus more on its volunteers. See Table 5.2 for other answers to this question.

Table 5.2- To Make 4-H Ontario a Better Organization

-Recruit more staff.	-Obtain increased funding.
-Keep materials and resources updated.	-Increase marketing to urban youth.
-Get upper management out to the grass roots level.	-Allow youth to have a bigger role in program development.
-Recruit more members.	-Increase communication with local associations.

Results of this research highlighted the importance of 4-H Ontario creating new opportunities and partnerships. Participants were asked to state any administrative changes 4-H Ontario experienced in light of its independence process. The number three response stated by 18.2% of participants was new partnerships have been formed. Throughout the interviewing process, a number of respondents stated that 4-H Ontario has been able to form new partnerships as an NGO, partnerships that would never have been possible as a government agency. For example, one of the organization's most promising new partnerships is the agreement made with the Ontario Horse Racing Industry Association to act as a major sponsor of the 4-H Ontario horse clubs.

Questions on funding were kept to a minimal in this study, however, half of those surveyed felt that 4-H Ontario could not be more effective with further funding. A small number of participants agreed with this statement, however, they added that this is an area where 4-H Ontario should strive to improve. Only one interviewee stated that the organization could in fact be more effective with its current funding. The majority of respondents believed that if 4-H Ontario were to obtain increased funding, they would be able to offer more opportunities, better opportunities, to its members.

The literature suggests that capacities may need to be strengthened at a number of levels including individual, work groups, entire organizations, and organizational

arrangements such as partnerships (Horton *et. al.*, 2003; Bolger, J., 2000). Lusthaus *et. al.* view organizational capacity development as a specialized approach pulled from the more general concept of capacity development. They believe that the organizational approach to capacity development focuses on the capacities of organizations, looking from the inside out, identifying the elements or components of capacity within the organization (1999). The research presented here meets Lusthaus *et. al.*'s definition of capacity development. The study offers a presentation of the perceptions of 4-H Ontario's internal stakeholders, those on the inside of the organization, including staff and board members. Going further than Lusthaus *et. al.*'s definition, the research also obtained input from 4-H Ontario's external stakeholders, as well as its volunteer base.

6.12 Conceptual Framework for 4-H Ontario

As part of meeting the research objective to strengthen 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity development, a conceptual framework for 4-H Ontario was developed. The framework was inspired by Lusthaus *et. al.*'s work with the International Development Research Centre (1999) but was adapted to meet the needs of a local Canadian NGO working with rural youth- the first of its kind in the body of literature on Canadian organizational capacity.

The framework presented here connects four separate concepts, creating a conceptual union that works as one to strengthen the overall capacity, and thus sustainability, of the organization. These four individual concepts include 1) capacity development; 2) rural youth organizations; 3) 4-H as a global organization; and 4) the

role of adult volunteers, and are considered to be the foundation of the organization's performance.

The literature reveals that organizational performance is connected to organizational capacity development (Grindle & Hilderbrand, 1994). Research has shown that if you strengthen an organization's capacity, you in turn improve its performance, making it a more productive and positive environment in which to work (Grindle & Hilderbrand, 1994). According to Horton *et. al.*, every evaluation of a capacity development effort should itself contribute to the capacity development effort and also the overall performance of the organization. The conceptual framework presented here reinforces the conclusions made by Grindle & Hilderbrand, as well as Horton *et. al.*. The framework highlights the importance of continuous consideration, review and evaluation of the organization's capacity development strategy (made up of the four interconnecting concepts) in order to strengthen organization's capacity itself. The model suggests that in order to develop and maintain a strong organizational capacity, capacity development should be a never ending progression. The process of developing capacity is not stagnant; rather it is a constantly moving force that is continuous throughout the life of the organization.

Results of this study indicate that there are a number of respondents who support the notion of continuous evaluation and investigation into 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity. When questioned about the future direction of 4-H Ontario, a number of participants stated that they felt it was time 4-H Ontario conducted an evaluation to follow up on the major study completed by PricewaterhouseCoopers in 1999. They stated that it was time to re-evaluate the work completed by PricewaterhouseCoopers,

arguing that it was important to calculate the process and progress, or lack there of, of the newly independent organization. This is yet another statement reinforcing the need for the research completed in this study.

6.13 Summary

This chapter presented a discussion on the results found in this research study in relation to the literature reviewed on organizational capacity development. Six major areas were addressed: 1) the 4-H Ontario Stakeholder; 2) rural youth and their organization; 3) the 4-H Ontario volunteer; 4) organizational restructuring; 5) 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity; and 6) a conceptual framework for 4-H Ontario. The researcher presented the importance of the research findings and emphasized areas where the results of the study agreed, disagreed or filled a gap in the current literature on organizational capacity development. The researcher also discussed certain pieces of literature that were not addressed in this research study, offering areas for further investigation.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The final chapter of this paper summarizes the results of the study and discusses the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the research findings. Firstly, a summary of the major research findings that were presented in chapters four and five will be offered. This summary will highlight the key points found in the results and make reference to the study's conceptual framework. Secondly, the conclusions provided by the research will be presented by returning to the original research objectives. And thirdly, on the basis of the project's conclusions, recommendations will be offered. These recommendations will be discussed on three different levels: 1) policy; 2) organizational; and 3) areas for further research.

7.2 Summary of Results

Due to the large data set resulting from this study, research results were presented in two separate chapters and broken down into two major categories. Chapter Four was a presentation of the results focusing on 4-H Ontario's organizational context, while Chapter Five presented results on 4-H Ontario's transition and organizational capacity. The summary of the results from Chapter Four focuses 4-H Ontario's organizational context as seen from its internal and external stakeholders. The summary of results from Chapter Five highlights the major results found in the 16 one-on-one personal interviews and the mail out/ Internet survey. Results from the interviews focus on: 1) 4-H Ontario's

transitional period; 2) 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity; 3) funding; and 4) 4-H Ontario's impact on youth. Survey results are broken down into open ended responses and closed ended responses. With a return rate of 17%, the researcher sent out 700 surveys, receiving in return 74 completed paper copies and 45 online versions (total = 119).

7.3 4-H Ontario's Organizational Context

Data on 4-H Ontario's organizational context was taken from the organization's internal and external stakeholders. The data was collected from 16 one-on-one personal interviews conducted by the researcher in the fall of 2004. In total, seven internal stakeholders, all 4-H Ontario staff, and nine external stakeholders participated. Five representatives from the provincial ministry of agriculture, two 4-H Ontario board members and two 4-H Ontario corporate sponsors made up the external stakeholder group.

7.4 Summary of Interview Results- 4-H Ontario's Internal Stakeholders

Data from internal stakeholders presented new information regarding the organizational context of 4-H Ontario. Results from the interviews with 4-H Ontario's internal stakeholders can be summarized as follows. Unanimous answers provided by 4-H Ontario employees included all employees were members of the organization growing up and all employees agreed that 4-H Ontario was a "very pleasant" place to work. The average length of time an employee had worked for 4-H Ontario was 3.36 years, with the

range of employment being nine months to five years. Three of the seven participants had experience working with 4-H prior to its independence from OMAFRA.

7.5 Summary of Interview Results- 4-H Ontario's External Stakeholders

Data from external stakeholders also presented new information on 4-H Ontario's organizational context. Results are summarized as follows. Each of the board members interviewed stated that their time on the board had been "very pleasant," however; one board member indicated that further board training would be beneficial. Representatives from OMAFRA believed that their main role was to act as 4-H Ontario's primary funding partner. And finally, both corporate sponsors interviewed stated that they would continue to partner with 4-H Ontario in the future.

7.6 4-H Ontario's Transition and Organizational Capacity

The data set presented on 4-H Ontario's transition and organizational capacity was gathered from 4-H Ontario's stakeholders, both internal and external¹³. Respondents included 16 interview participants, 119 4-H Ontario volunteers, and 6 4-H Ontario members¹⁴. Results were organized into five main categories: 1) 4-H Ontario's transitional period; 2) 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity; 3) funding; 4) 4-H Ontario's impact on youth; and 5) information on the interview respondent (data from this section was presented in Chapter Four).

¹³ Data collection techniques included one-on-one personal interviews, a six page mail out/ Internet survey, a focus group and a direct observation activity.

¹⁴ Approximately 30 4-H Ontario members were observed as part of the direct observation activity.

7.7 Summary of Interview Results- 4-H Ontario's Transition

Results on 4-H Ontario's transitional period were taken from the personal one-on-one interviews. Results are summarized as follows. The majority of respondents felt that the reason OMAFRA transferred responsibility of 4-H program to the Ontario 4-H Council was due to government cutbacks. The majority of respondents also felt that the move to independence was a positive step for both 4-H Ontario and OMAFRA, now and at the time of the decision. These same people indicated that 4-H Ontario dealt with the transitional process following its independence in a positive way. The top two positive impacts resulting from the independence process were stated as follows: 1) 4-H Ontario owns the program now; and 2) the program is more focused on the kids. Conversely, the top two negative impacts experienced by 4-H Ontario were 1) fundraising has become a bigger part of the organization; and 2) an increase in volunteer work.

7.8 Summary of Interview Results- 4-H Ontario's Organizational Capacity

Results on 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity development were drawn from the one-on-one personal interview data. Results are summarized as follows. The top 10 challenges facing 4-H Ontario, in order of importance were stated as: 1) funding, 2) volunteer recruitment, 3) volunteer retention, 4) member recruitment, 5) member retention, 6) maintaining an effective staff, 7) keeping programming current, 8) poor external profile, 9) 4-H Ontario's communication process and 10) urban out sprawl. On the contrary, the top 10 strengths facing 4-H Ontario were stated as: 1) dedicated staff, 2) dedicated volunteers, 3) support from external sources, 4) variety of 4-H Ontario programs, 5) 4-H Ontario's history, 6) five years independence, 7) skills learned from the

program, 8) inexpensive, 9) dedication of members, and 10) brings culture back to rural Ontario.

Respondents stated that the number one service 4-H Ontario should offer its staff was increased training. Other responses to this question included 1) retirement package, 2) increased benefits package, 3) better salaries for staff (in comparison to other NGOs in the province), 4) more staff meetings and 5) improved communications between all staff members. The top two services interviewees felt 4-H Ontario should offer its members was 1) increased leadership training and 2) new programming.

7.9 Summary of Interview Results- Funding

Interview participants also commented on 4-H Ontario's funding structure. A summary of these results reveals that half of those interviewed felt that 4-H Ontario could not be more effective with increased funding. While the majority of respondents stated that if 4-H Ontario were to obtain increased funding, the organization would be able to offer more and better opportunities to members.

7.10 Summary of Interview Results- 4-H Ontario's Impact on Youth

Interview participants stated that the top five reasons why 4-H Ontario is important to rural youth were: 1) it enables members to develop practical leadership skills, 2) it offers rural youth opportunities (scholarships, travel, exchanges and educational), 3) it connects rural youth to agriculture, 4) it teaches important personal and social skills to members, and 5) it allows members to get involved in their rural

community. The majority of respondents felt that 4-H Ontario would be important to urban youth as well as rural youth.

7.11 Summary of Survey Results

Of the 700 surveys that were sent out to 4-H Ontario volunteers, 119 completed surveys were returned to the researcher. As results of the survey were quite lengthy, only major points are highlighted in this summary. A detailed presentation of all survey answers can be found in Chapter Five. Results of the open ended survey questions are summarized as follows.

The majority of participants felt that the top six reasons why volunteers continue to volunteer with 4-H Ontario included 1) I enjoy working with youth, 2) 4-H Ontario is a valuable program (it offers skills that other programs do not), 3) because my children are involved, 4) there was a need and I was asked, 5) it is a way to give back to an organization that offered me so much, and 6) because of 4-H Ontario's agricultural focus.

Half of volunteers surveyed requested further information regarding 4-H Ontario's organizational structure, specifically focusing on any important changes occurring within the organization. These same people requested updated resources concerning 4-H Ontario clubs and programs, especially new volunteer manuals. Half of respondents also stated that they would like further training on a local association level, particularly in the area of new leader training.

Results of the closed ended survey questions are summarized as follows. The majority of survey respondents were female and resided in Middlesex County. The average age of female respondents was 47.4 years, while the average age of male

respondents was 49.2 years. The majority of participants were from a rural area and had been belonged to 4-H Ontario growing up. Most respondents had been volunteering with 4-H Ontario for ten years or more at local level events. They stated that they volunteered with 4-H Ontario because 1) they enjoyed working with youth and 2) because their children were current members.

The majority of respondents agreed that their volunteer experience with 4-H Ontario had been positive and therefore would continue to do so in the future. They felt that the top five skills effectively developed by 4-H Ontario were listed as: 1) leadership, 2) self-confidence, 3) team work, 4) public speaking and 5) practical skills. They also felt that the 4-H Ontario's top five strengths were: 1) the variety of clubs offered, 2) 4-H Ontario volunteers, 3) the opportunities presented to members, 4) 4-H Ontario's history, and 5) 4-H Ontario staff.

As previously stated, the results of the Chi-Square analysis revealed that there was a significant difference in the way younger and older volunteers feel about the level of volunteer support offered by 4-H Ontario. Results of the Chi-Square Analysis showed that $\chi^2 = 4.35$; $N = 119$; $P = \leq 0.03$, indicating that the majority of volunteers aged 25 – 49 feel that the support offered to volunteers from 4-H Ontario is sufficient, while the majority of volunteers aged 50 -80 feel that the support offered is insufficient. Analysis of data from rural/ urban participants, past members/ non-past members, and female/ male participants did not find any significant differences.

7.12 Summary of Focus Group Results

Results from 4-H Ontario youth members were drawn from the focus group activity and the direct observation. Results from the focus group activity are summarized as follows. The majority of youth members stated that the number one reason they joined 4-H Ontario was because it sounded fun and interesting. They felt that the most positive aspect of joining 4-H Ontario was meeting people, while the most negative aspect was the lack of information flow from 4-H Ontario headquarters to local associations. The majority of focus group participants stated that they would like to volunteer for 4-H Ontario in the future. The majority of members also said 4-H Ontario could improve both its programming and organizational capacity if it offered more travel opportunities and focused on recruiting new volunteers and members respectively. Half of the participants felt that it is only a matter of time before 4-H Ontario loses its government funding.

7.13 Summary of Direct Observation Activity Results

Results from 4-H Ontario youth members were also taken from the direct observation activity held at the 4-H Ontario Future Talk Camp. Results were presented in the form of general observations and are summarized as follows. The majority of campers at the Future Talk Camp were female. The camp leader consistently encouraged and supported the members presenting, who all appeared to be having a pleasant time throughout the course of the day. Valuable skills such as public speaking, speech writing, working as a team, presentation, leadership and debate were all part of the camp's activities.

7.14 Conclusion

The goal of this research study was to improve existing opportunities for capacity development for rural youth and their representative organization, specifically 4-H Ontario. To complete this, the research investigated the impact of 4-H Ontario's transitional period following its independence from the OMAFRA in 2000.

The central problem statement of this project declared: as within the context of transforming from a public agency to a NGO and the transitional period which follows, how does a NGO continue to build upon and maintain capacity development for rural youth? As previously noted, this problem was the basis of the case study portion of the project, in which the researcher focused on the organizational changes experienced by 4-H Ontario throughout its journey from government agency to NGO.

The hypothesis of the research was that despite the loss of government funding and support, 4-H Ontario has successfully restructured its organization, maintaining its volunteer base and internal administrative functions, while continuing to provide quality support to its stakeholders. According to the results of this study, and in reference to the literature reviewed on organizational capacity development, it is concluded that this hypothesis holds true. Findings prove that 4-H Ontario, to the best of their ability, and with the resources available to them, have successfully restructured its organization while simultaneously developing new partnerships with external organizations.

Referring back to the original objectives of the study, conclusions responding to each of the three research objectives are highlighted below.

Objective 1: To analyze and document the transitional process 4-H Ontario has taken since gaining independence from OMAFRA in April 2000.

Analysis of 4-H Ontario's transitional period from government agency to NGO was accomplished through the completion of 16 one-on-one personal interviews with 4-H Ontario internal and external stakeholders, as well as through the completion of the mail out/ Internet survey sent to 700 4-H Ontario volunteers. The transitional period was also briefly discussed in the focus group with 4-H Ontario members. Documentation of this transition was completed in chapters four and five, where the perspectives of 4-H Ontario's stakeholders are presented. Highlighted in these results are the transition's impact on 4-H Ontario's stakeholders and organizational structure. Further analysis on the organization's transition was conducted in Chapter Six, where the research findings are connected to the literature reviewed for this study.

In regards to staff, all participating 4-H Ontario employees stated that 4-H Ontario was a very positive environment to work in. There was literally no mention of unhappy employees or internal conflict within the research findings. Current sponsorship was also an issue addressed throughout the research. Sponsors were questioned about their present and future involvement with 4-H Ontario and both indicated that they would continue to support the organization in the future. Both sponsoring organizations offered reasons why 4-H Ontario is valuable for rural youth in Ontario. Results also showed that 4-H Ontario is building new partnerships with external organizations in order to obtain future funding. A good example of this is the funding agreement between 4-H Ontario and the Ontario Horse Racing Industry Association (OHRIA), an agreement that will provide substantial and consistent funding to 4-H Ontario horse clubs. The majority of volunteers surveyed felt that 4-H Ontario's transitional period has been positive thus far. The majority of volunteers also felt that at the time of the independence, and currently,

gaining independence from OMAFRA has been and continues to be a positive move for 4-H Ontario. And finally, over half of volunteers surveyed stated that in the next five years they see 4-H Ontario “going strong.”

The results of this study clearly show that 4-H Ontario has maintained a high level of employee satisfaction, is building new partnerships and continues to receive a high level of support from its volunteers. Therefore it can be concluded that in general, 4-H Ontario has successfully maintained its organization throughout its five year transitional period, especially in the areas of staff, current sponsorship, future funding and volunteers.

Objective 2: To gain an understanding of how 4-H Ontario dealt with new organizational responsibilities and challenges that resulted from becoming an independent organization.

An understanding of how 4-H Ontario dealt with new organizational responsibilities and challenges that resulted from becoming an independent organization was achieved by consulting with 4-H Ontario staff and representatives from OMAFRA. These research participants offered invaluable data concerning the process in which 4-H Ontario prepared for its independence, as well on how the organization dealt with the impacts which resulted. 4-H Ontario volunteers and members were also surveyed on their opinions concerning how the organization handled its new found responsibilities and associated challenges. These results present more of a subjective data set, but still lend to the completion of objective two.

4-H Ontario prepared for its move to independence by contracting PricewaterhouseCoopers to complete a major consultation regarding the organization's independence process. Through this consultation, PricewaterhouseCoopers recommended that 4-H Ontario adopts an organizational model known as the 'New Delivery Model' (NDM), a move accepted and implemented by the organization. At the time of the study, the NDM continues to act as 4-H Ontario's main organizational model. Results of this study indicate that the majority of 4-H Ontario volunteers felt that the adoption of the NDM was a positive move at the time (in 2000) and remains to be a positive move today.

4-H Ontario followed up on the process of transition. The fact that 4-H Ontario consulted with the researcher on this project is an indication that the organization is concerned about the opinions and thoughts of its major stakeholders. This concern and the research which stems from it is yet another way 4-H Ontario dealt with its transition in a positive and constructive way. Not only did the organization have consultation with PricewaterhouseCoopers prior to its independence, it also sought evaluation following its first five years as a NGO. The results of this study will provide 4-H Ontario with valuable information from its main stakeholders- staff, board members, volunteers, youth members, and sponsors- regarding this transitional period. 4-H Ontario will gain a further understanding of what works for the organization, from the eyes of its stakeholders, and what this group feels should change. The results will possibly invoke change within the organization, and connect the organization with its internal and external stakeholders.

The top ten challenges facing 4-H Ontario, as seen by its volunteers, included: 1) funding, 2) volunteer recruitment, 3) volunteer retention, 4) member recruitment, 5) member retention, 6) maintaining an effective staff, 7) keeping programming current, 8) poor external profile, 9) 4-H Ontario's communication process and 10) urban out sprawl. Results of PricewaterhouseCoopers' 1999 and Stewart's 1996 also study found that issues such as volunteer management and recruitment were concerns for the organization. Both studies suggested that 4-H Ontario focus on these issues and develop a formalized action plan in response. The challenges found in this study are similar to the results presented by PricewaterhouseCoopers and Stewart. Seeing as 4-H Ontario is in its 90th decade, it seems that it is not a question of maintaining sustainability when considering 4-H Ontario's challenges, the organization has shown great resiliency, especially throughout the five year transitional period. Rather it is a question of gaining strength as a newly independent organization, especially concerning the areas of its major challenges.

As previously noted, two of 4-H Ontario's top five challenges concerned the organization's volunteer base. As the literature showed, volunteers are an invaluable component to a NGO and must be heavily supported and encouraged on a continuous basis. The results of this study also revealed that the number one service 4-H Ontario volunteers requested was increased training, or more specifically new leader training. Results of this project indicated that almost half (44.5%) of all participating volunteers had volunteered with the organization for ten years or more. This statistic means that a large number of 4-H Ontario's current volunteers were involved with the organization prior to its independence from OMAFRA. In light of this, a large number of 4-H

Ontario's present volunteers remember the organization as it once was, heavily funded and supported by the provincial government. This may lead to the explanation of why the majority of 4-H Ontario volunteers aged 50- 80 feel that the level of support 4-H Ontario offers to its volunteers is insufficient.

Results revealed that 4-H Ontario not only positioned itself to be prepared for its independence (by working with PricewaterhouseCoopers), but continues to evaluate its organizational process through the research presented here. Due to this, 4-H Ontario is currently able to remain functional and sustainable as an independent unit. Results of this study offer the conclusion that 4-H Ontario has dealt with the organizational responsibilities and challenges stemming from its independence from OMAFRA in a variety of positive and constructive ways. However, it is also concluded that 4-H Ontario needs to place increased focus on the major challenges it currently faces (especially in the areas of volunteer recruitment and management) in order to grow and strengthen its organization.

Objective 3: To determine how the organizational change experienced by 4-H Ontario has affected its ability to provide capacity development for rural youth in Ontario.

To determine how the organizational change experienced by 4-H Ontario has affected its ability to provide capacity development for rural youth in Ontario, the researcher conducted and documented a detailed literature review focusing on organizational capacity development. This review was the first step in understanding the extensive topic of organizational capacity development. Secondly, the researcher

consulted 4-H Ontario's stakeholders, documenting their thoughts and opinions on 4-H Ontario's ability to provide capacity development for the province's rural youth.

Results from the study indicated that the top five changes resulting from 4-H Ontario's process to independence were 1) a new organizational structure, 2) changes in staff, 3) new partnerships, 4) increase in volunteer work, and 5) membership fee. When asked to present the top two positive and negative impacts resulting from these changes were, 4-H Ontario volunteers stated that 4-H Ontario owns the program now and the program is more focused on the kids (positive); fundraising has become a bigger part of the organization and there has been an increase in volunteers work (negative). However, in response to this, the research also found that over half of 4-H Ontario volunteers felt that the organization has adapted well to the changes resulting from its independence from OMAFRA.

When questioned by the researcher, the majority of 4-H Ontario youth members felt that, even after all of the changes experienced by the organization in recent years, 4-H Ontario remains important to rural youth. Half of those questioned stated that 4-H Ontario connects rural youth to agriculture and offers opportunities and skills that focus on this area, which in turn is a direct benefit to the future and sustainability of rural Ontario. 4-H Ontario volunteers also felt that the organization continues to deliver valuable skills and lessons to its members, even throughout its independence process from OMAFRA. The top five reasons why 4-H Ontario is important to rural youth were offered by 4-H Ontario volunteers. These included 1) enables members to develop practical leadership skills, 2) offers rural youth opportunities, 3) connects rural youth to

agriculture, 4) teaches important personal and social skills to members, and 5) allows members to get involved in their rural community.

Results have clearly shown that factors such as gender and age play an important role in the organization's ability to provide capacity for rural youth. These factors should be taken into consideration when developing a strategic plan for the future capacity development of rural youth, where 4-H Ontario is concerned. Taken from the above noted results, it is concluded that the organizational change experienced by 4-H Ontario has had an impact on the organization's ability to offer capacity development; however, it has not specifically been a negative impact. Despite all of the change, 4-H Ontario stakeholders still feel that the organization is important for rural youth and continues to offer valuable skills and lessons to its members.

7.15 Recommendations

Despite the successes and positive steps 4-H Ontario has accomplished, the organization has also faced a number challenges throughout the five year transition period reviewed in this study. In light of these challenges, the researcher offers the following recommendations to 4-H Ontario. Recommendations are presented on three different levels- policy, organizational and areas for further research. A threefold set of recommendations offers 4-H Ontario a well rounded series of information to utilize to improve capacity development for both its organization and rural youth members. Based on the literature review, research findings and analysis, the following recommendations are offered to representatives from OMAFRA, researchers, 4-H Ontario and other NGOs working with rural youth in Ontario.

7.16 Policy Recommendations

Results of the research indicate that there is a growing concern on behalf of 4-H Ontario stakeholders regarding the future relationship between the organization and OMAFRA. Numerous respondents across 4-H Ontario staff, sponsors, members and volunteers revealed their worry concerning a future without OMAFRA's support. From these results, it is recommended to OMAFRA that the provincial ministry continues to offer support to 4-H Ontario in the future on the basis of the following reasons.

This research has concluded that 4-H Ontario provides a unique service to rural youth across the province, one that is not matched by any other organization in Ontario. As seen through various testimonies, the skills and education offered by 4-H Ontario do in fact improve capacity development for rural youth across the province. As presented in the research results, the education provided to 4-H Ontario members has the potential to give rural youth the skills to eventually act as leaders and representatives of their community. The rural demographic is changing, especially where its relationship with urban communities is concerned. And as seen in the research findings, ensuring the sustainability of an organization like 4-H Ontario can potentially guarantee the development of strong rural leaders and supporters, trained individuals who understand the unique industry of agriculture and the valuable need for a healthy relationship between rural and urban. Therefore, a continued working relationship between 4-H Ontario and OMAFRA is strongly recommended for the future sustainability of the organization and also for the future of the rural community in Ontario.

7.17 Organizational Recommendations

Transforming from government agency to NGO, 4-H Ontario has recently experienced a major organizational restructuring. The results of this research revealed that in light of major organizational change and a decrease in government funding, 4-H Ontario has successfully restructured its organization, maintaining its volunteer base and internal administrative functions, while continuing to provide quality support to its stakeholders. However, this provision of quality support is not without challenges. The following recommendations are offered to 4-H Ontario regarding their organizational structure and future sustainability.

- Results of this study showed that the number one service 4-H Ontario stakeholders would like provided to its members is “increased leadership training.” One respondent indicated that “I think leadership training always has to be the base. I think we are going to have a huge deficit in rural leaders as youth get siphoned off into urban areas and so those that stay are going to have opportunities to be able to put a lot of leadership skills to power.” Due to these results, it is recommended that 4-H Ontario continuously focus on leadership training as its programming evolves to meet the needs of today’s youth. Leadership training needs to remain the base of the 4-H Ontario program. The leadership training in coordination with the practical skills taught by 4-H Ontario is one of the characteristics which makes the program unique and unlike other organizations offered to rural youth across the province.
- Referring back to the conceptual framework developed for this study, it is recommended that when it comes to its volunteer base, 4-H Ontario should

remain current and knowledgeable in the following areas: recruitment, training, motivation and defining clear roles. The conceptual framework suggests that in order to maintain a strong level of organizational capacity development, an organization must consistently perform checks and balances on its volunteer base. This process must not be stagnant; rather it should be performed on a continual basis throughout the life of the organization. The literature showed that understanding the factors involved in becoming a 4-H volunteer, the experience of the volunteer, and the reasons behind leaving the role can provide insights useful in managing the volunteer portion of the 4-H program (White and Arnold, 2003). In light of the literature reviewed in this study and the design of the conceptual framework, it is recommended that in order to sustain a strong volunteer base, 4-H Ontario needs to continuously assess the needs and wants of its volunteers. The assessment must also include investigating such factors as those listed above (recruitment, training, motivation and defining clear roles) in order to gain a full understanding of the role of the adult volunteer in the non-governmental sector.

- The body of literature revealed that when NGOs train their volunteers, they tend to be more committed to the organization and therefore offer their services for a longer period of time (Stewart, 1996). The results of this study offered a new data set on 4-H Ontario's training capabilities and the perspectives of its stakeholders concerning this matter. Although, at times respondents indicated that training provided by 4-H Ontario was sufficient, at other times, they stated that the organization needs to improve both the quality and quantity of their training services. Regardless of these minor inconsistencies in the data, it is recommended

that 4-H Ontario conduct further investigation concerning the topic of volunteer training. Stewart's 1996 study on 4-H Ontario indicated that volunteer training was a concern for the organization. Ten years later, the results of this study lean towards this conclusion as well. Stewart recommended that 4-H Ontario place further attention and research on the topic of volunteer training, a recommendation that this study continues to support. The working base of any NGO is its volunteers. Individuals who donate their time and efforts to the organization with no request of financial retribution. Due to the data found in this study, and taking into account research performed in the past on 4-H Ontario, it is recommended that 4-H Ontario conduct further research on volunteer training. This research should canvass the needs and wants of the volunteers themselves and cite examples from other Canadian NGOs who have documented both their successes and challenges in reference to this topic.

- Results of this study indicated that there is a divide between 4-H Ontario headquarters and local associations across the province. Numerous respondents throughout the various data collection techniques indicated that although the communication flow from the head office to the local associations seems to be effective, communication from association level to volunteers needs to be improved. Taking these results into account, it is recommended that 4-H Ontario conduct further research into this statement. It is vital that frontline volunteers are kept well informed and educated on the on-goings of 4-H Ontario. If further investigation proves a challenge does exist concerning the communication flow

between local associations and volunteers, 4-H Ontario could seek out ways to improve this. Increased volunteer training may be one solution.

- Due to the loss of government funding, the relationship between 4-H Ontario and its sponsors is important now more than it has ever been in the history of the organization. With uncertainties surrounding a future relationship with OMAFRA, it is recommended that 4-H Ontario continues to make obtaining new partnerships a priority. 4-H Ontario should consult with current sponsors on a consistent basis, strengthening the relationship between the two organizations. In regards to obtaining new sponsorship, 4-H Ontario should think big. It is recommended that 4-H Ontario considers building relationships with multi-national companies, especially those in the agricultural sector, requesting financial backing for the services the organization provides to rural youth. Multi-national companies are more likely to have larger revenues and profits to play with, potentially increasing their ability to offer 4-H Ontario support. 4-H Ontario should develop various resources to provide to these organizations, offering a presentation of what 4-H Ontario could do with the sponsorship money and showing how their support of the organization will strengthen the rural sector in Ontario.
- In regards to the uncertainties surrounding the financial future of 4-H Ontario and taking into consideration the data found in this study concerning funding, it is recommended that 4-H Ontario seek out different groups of sponsors. As mentioned in the previous section, 4-H Ontario could benefit from partnering with multi-national organizations, but this is just one form of sponsorship the

organization could look into. Another form of sponsorship that 4-H Ontario could potentially gain from would be partnering with different government agencies. 4-H Ontario should investigate partnering with various ministries. Two such ministries 4-H Ontario could partner with are the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, presenting to these agencies the importance of the non-formal education 4-H Ontario provides to youth across the province. 4-H Ontario could also investigate partnering with provincial ministries of education or training across the country.

- The future financial sustainability of 4-H Ontario is a concern to its stakeholders as well. As noted in the results of this study, the majority of interview participants felt the number one challenge facing the organization was funding. One of the various methods 4-H Ontario uses to maintain financial sustainability is the membership fee. Due to this concern about 4-H Ontario's financial future, it is recommended that 4-H Ontario not do away with the membership fee. If the organization has not already done so, 4-H Ontario should research other programs across Ontario and Canada, seeking out how much these groups charge members to belong. 4-H Ontario is quite aware of the resistance some of its stakeholders place on the concept of a membership fee; however, in the reality of today's society, nothing is free anymore. And in comparison to other organizations and activities (such as youth sports), 4-H Ontario is quite affordable.
- The results of the research indicate that the majority of 4-H Ontario's stakeholders feel that the organization is a valuable and irreplaceable service for rural youth across the province. However, the price charged to members to belong to the

organization is quite low. In light of this statement, the following question is proposed: if 4-H Ontario's stakeholders believe so much in the organization, why is it that there is such a high level of resistance to charge members a relative fee to belong? 4-H Ontario needs to remain firm on the topic of increased membership fees and keep the communication lines open regarding this issue. In response to the backlash the organization may receive, or is currently receiving, 4-H Ontario should present to its stakeholders a breakdown of exactly what their membership fee goes to. The following suggestions were presented in the research regarding 4-H Ontario's membership fee: 1) 4-H Ontario could subsidize membership fees for families who may not be able to afford the cost, and 2) 4-H Ontario could offer families with more than one joining member a reduced fee to belong.

7.18 Recommendations for Areas for Further Research

As noted throughout this study, the majority of literature on 4-H Ontario stems from documents drafted by the organization itself. Most of the literature reviewed was in the form of handbooks, guidebooks, annual reports, newsletters, and information from 4-H Ontario's website. There is a minimal amount of literature on the history of the organization in Ontario, but what is available offers a snapshot of the early beginnings and evolution of the organization. The two main bodies of research focusing on 4-H Ontario that were referenced in this study were Stewart's 1996 research on 4-H Ontario's organizational effectiveness and PricewaterhouseCoopers' 1999 study on the development of the organization's New Delivery Model. Due to the light body of

literature on 4-H Ontario, it is recommended that the organization investigate the below mentioned areas for research.

- The literature review did not present any information on the current 4-H Ontario stakeholder. If the organization is not already doing so, it is recommended that 4-H Ontario keeps current and up-to-date data on each of the following groups: 4-H Ontario volunteers, members, sponsors, and staff. This information should be documented and made available to the general public. Obviously stipulations of the province's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act need to be upheld by 4-H Ontario, but gathering and documenting general statistics on its stakeholders should become a priority for the organization.
- Sparking the research presented in this thesis, 4-H Ontario desired information on its process of independence in order to take stock of recent organizational changes experienced by the NGO. It is recommended that 4-H Ontario remain proactive in gathering current information on its organizational structure, citing any major changes, challenges and successes. Working with the researcher on this project, documenting the organization's first five years of independence, was a beneficial first step. Consistently gathering research on 4-H Ontario's organizational structure and evolution will add value not only to the organization itself but will also provide important literature for researchers and other NGOs throughout Canada.
- The literature has shown a deficit in micro-level research concerning the concept of organizational capacity development in Canadian NGOs. In light of this, it is recommended that 4-H Ontario reference the conceptual framework presented in

this study and apply its suggested process to its organization. Through this application of the conceptual framework, 4-H Ontario should consistently gather research on the four main factors (capacity development, rural youth organizations, 4-H as a global organization and the role of the adult volunteer in the non-governmental sector).

7.19 Final Remarks

In one form or another, the 4-H organization in Ontario has been servicing rural youth throughout the province for close to 100 years. 4-H Ontario has shown that it is a resilient organization, one that continues to handle change and challenges head on as they are encountered. This research has presented a snapshot of an evolution recently experienced by 4-H Ontario, as it transformed itself from a government agency to a NGO in April 2000.

From the research performed in this study, it was revealed that the majority of 4-H Ontario members, either past or present, have a strong emotional attachment to the organization. Comments like “4-H got me to where I am today,” “if it weren’t for 4-H, I wouldn’t be in the career I am in,” and “belonging to 4-H changed my life” were not uncommon. Many participants in this study stated that they felt a great amount of devotion and gratitude to 4-H, revealing an emotion that is not often associated with many organizations. This sense of emotional attachment or loyalty to 4-H Ontario is a strong factor that makes the organization unique and different from other youth programs in today’s society.

The research has shown that the work 4-H Ontario completes with young boys and girls across the province is both irreplaceable and important to its stakeholders. Results of this research conclude that 4-H Ontario provides a service to rural youth that is unparalleled in any other youth program available in the province. The uniqueness of 4-H Ontario does not stem from one characteristic in particular; rather it is a combination of skills and lessons taught throughout the subjects of its clubs. Topics such as leadership, public speaking, agriculture, hands-on livestock training, presentation and self-confidence are just a sample of what 4-H Ontario has to offer. The results, conclusions and recommendations presented in this thesis are intended to assist 4-H Ontario in strengthening its organizational capacity development, which in turn will lend to the overall development of capacity for rural youth in Ontario.

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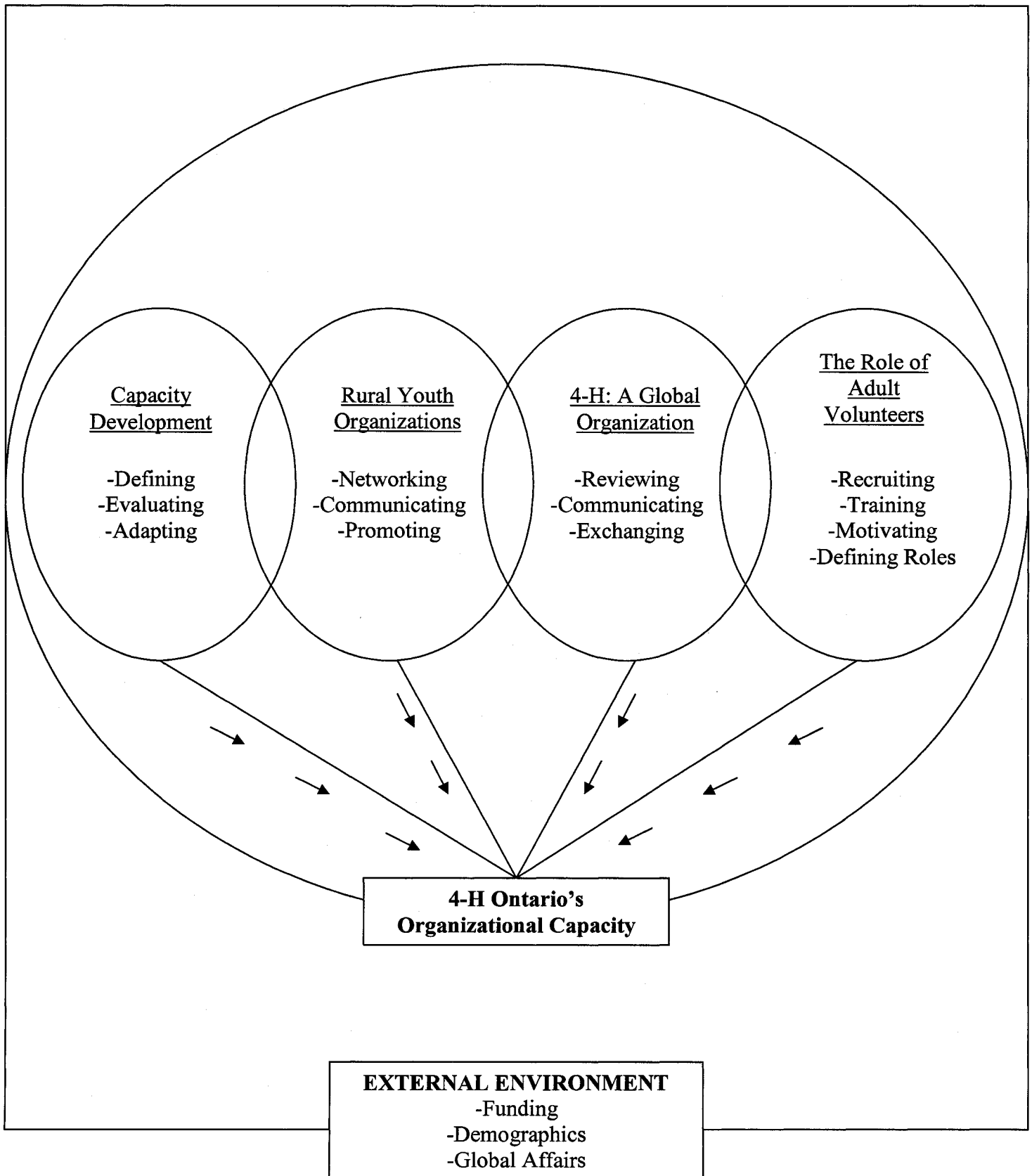
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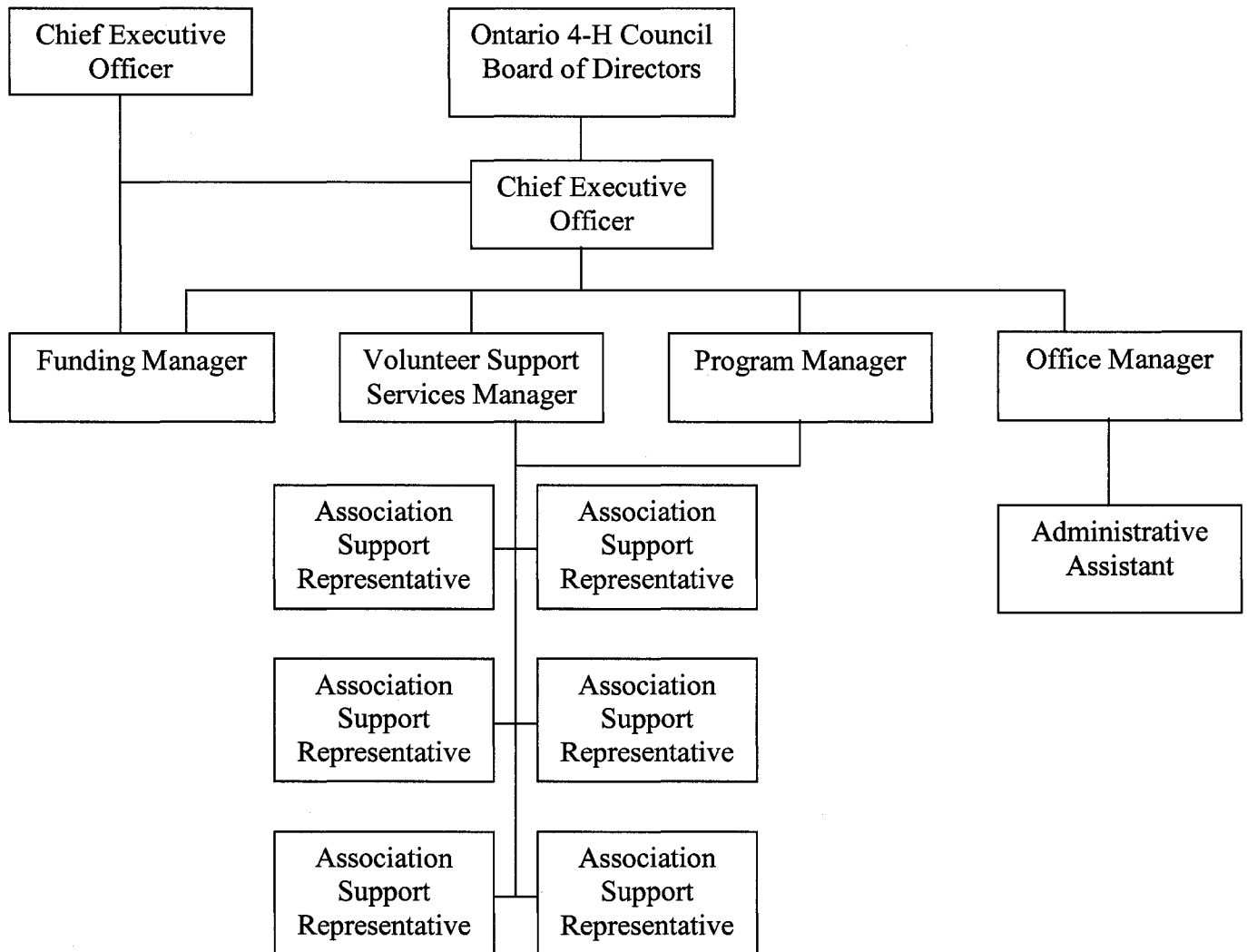
APPENDIX A

FIGURE 2.1- CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



APPENDIX B

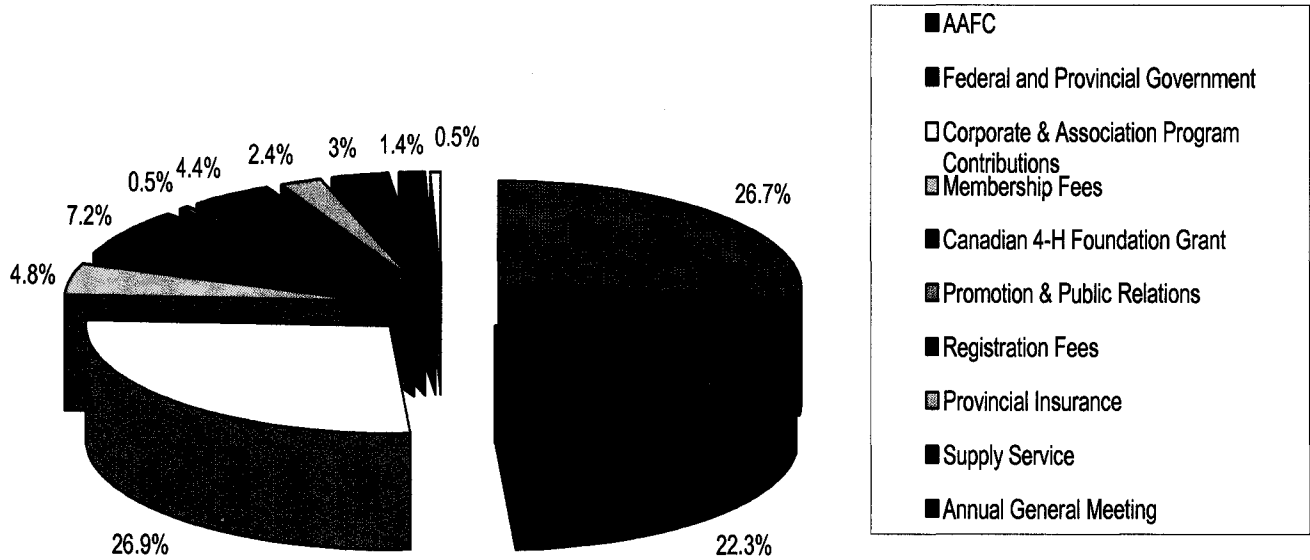
FIGURE 2.2- ONTARIO 4-H COUNCIL STAFFING STRUCTURE



Source: Stewart, 1996.

APPENDIX C

FIGURE 2.3- CANADIAN 4-H COUNCIL 2004/05 REVENUES



APPENDIX D

TABLE 2.1- 4-H AROUND THE WORLD

4-H USA	
Motto	“To Make the Best Better”
Funding	Public and private funds at the county, state and national levels
Established	1902
Members	7 million across theUSA
Age	5 to 19 in most states
Values	Leadership, Citizenship, and Lifeskills
4-H Finland	
Motto	“Learn by Doing”
Funding	European Union funding
Established	1928
Members	70,000 members in 3000 clubs
Age	8 to 28
Values	Enterprising through 4-H activities
4-H Canada	
Motto	“Learn to do by Doing”
Funding	Public and private funds at the national and provincial level
Established	1913
Members	30, 276
Age	8 to 21 (varies by province)
Values	Developing well rounded, responsible, and independent citizens
4-H Ontario	
Motto	“Learn to do by Doing”
Funding	OMAF, private sponsors, and county level fundraising
Established	1915
Members	7000 +
Age	10 to 21
Values	Opportunities, personal development, making friends, and having fun

APPENDIX E

TABLE 2.2-

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL 4-H CLUBS IN CANADA

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Canadian 4-H Council</u></p> <p>The objective of the Canadian 4-H Council is to provide relevant programs and services which are consistent with the 4-H philosophy and which serve to enhance the provincial 4-H programs. The Council organizes and coordinates national and international conferences, exchanges and scholarships which focus on citizenship, leadership, development, career choices, technology transfer and other pressing issues being faced by today's rural communities. The council was founded in 1933 and is a not-for-profit, non-governmental agency governed by a group of member representatives.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Provincial 4-H Agencies</u></p> <p>The provincial 4-H agencies operate autonomously and are generally jointly coordinated by a provincial ministry and a Provincial 4-H Council. As a partnership they are responsible for overseeing the administration of 4-H in the province, including determination of age requirements, membership fees, project materials, achievement requirements, and operation of fundraising and other provincial and regional activities.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Local 4-H Clubs</u></p> <p>4-H Clubs take direction from their provincial agency and are responsible for conducting meetings and organizing local activities, including social, fundraising and community events. Club members have the opportunity to take part in local, regional, provincial and national 4-H programs and events.</p>
<p>Source: Creating Youth Leaders: 2004/2005 Annual Report, Canadian 4-H Council and Canadian 4-H Foundation</p>

APPENDIX F

TABLE 2.3- CORE VALUES OF 4-H ONTARIO

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>CORE VALUES</u></p> <p>The VALUE STATEMENT of 4-H Ontario is:</p>	<p>"As values within 4-H Ontario, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Display respect, integrity and ethical conduct in all aspects and activities;• Encourage and support members and volunteers in helping them grow and develop;• Encourage 4-H members and volunteers to 'learn to do by doing';• Recognize, value and appreciate the commitment of volunteers;• Encourage a balanced lifestyle-head, heart, hands, health (intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual);• Provide safe, enjoyable, positive and high quality learning environments;• Provide interactive learning environments with youth/ adult interaction; and• Appreciate the importance of community and people/ mentor relationships.• This, ultimately, will have a positive impact in communities across Ontario, by developing youth, volunteers, and the leadership capacity of the future."
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APPENDIX G

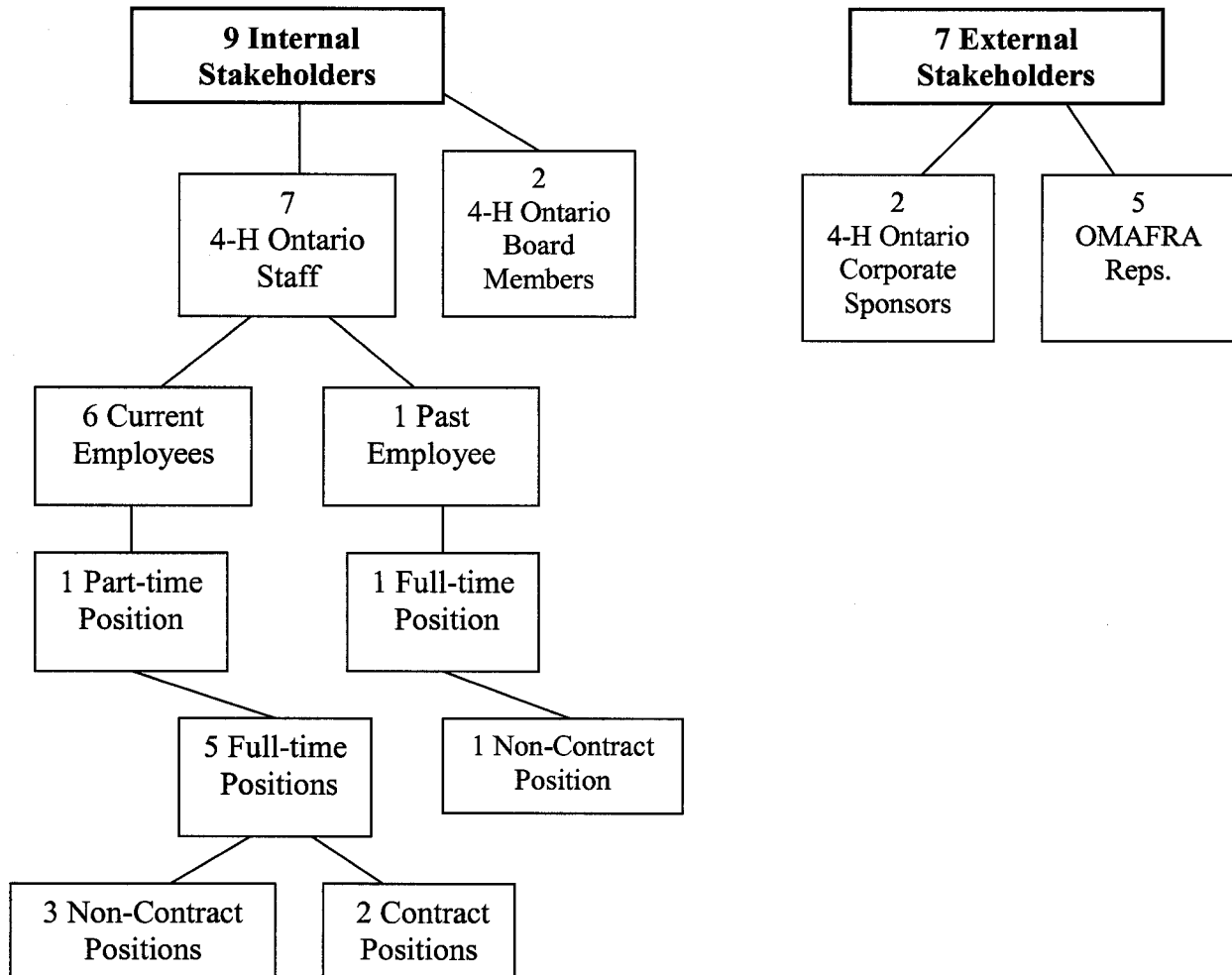
TABLE 2.4 ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH METHODS

Data Collection Method	Advantages	Limitations
Mail Out/ Internet Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You can cover a large area for a low cost. ▪ Good way to get a heterogeneous sample. ▪ Anonymity is maximized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Usually low return rate. ▪ Researcher cannot clarify ambiguities or misinterpretations. ▪ Reminder mailings will add to postage cost.
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Versatility- you can interview about anything. ▪ Information is obtained from participants' view. ▪ Produce detailed field notes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is bias on behalf of the researcher and the interviewee. ▪ No interaction to observe.
Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allows the researcher to observe interaction. ▪ Allows the researcher to access substantive content of verbally expressed views, opinions, experiences and attitudes. ▪ Cost-effective way to get a group opinion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus group data tends to be more extreme. ▪ Limited by the fact that the bulk of the behaviour is verbal. ▪ Produce less data than one-on one interviewing.
Direct Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By not participating in the event, the researcher can just observe the event as it occurs. ▪ The researcher can observe interaction. ▪ Involve minors in the study without personally interviewing them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Researcher's presence may cause reactivity amongst participants. ▪ By not speaking with the participants, researcher may misinterpret their behaviour.

**Sources:* Berg, 2001; Palys, 2003; and Roper, 2001.

APPENDIX H

TABLE 2.5- 4-H ONTARIO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS



APPENDIX I

TABLE 2.6- POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES OF 4-H ONTARIO VOLUNTEERS

Negative Experience with 4-H Ontario	Positive Experience with 4-H Ontario
All of the volunteers around me are getting fed up with the way things are going and quitting.	4-H is a terrific program, and volunteering with the program gives me a great sense of satisfaction.
4-H Ontario has given us more than our share of problems. Especially when it comes to awards and # of club tallies for our members. At year end a lot of information we receive back is wrong and the members (who work so hard) have to suffer.	It is a wonderful experience where I hope my children will be able to continue to learn from!
On an organization level it was nothing but arguing, fighting, disagreements and a major headache. As a parent, a volunteer and a previous county director, I have walked away from the county level of 4-H because of all the problems.	Every thing has been very positive for me but I do see volunteers becoming tired, burnt out, very busy people, we need to educate public more and get more volunteers interested in 4-H. We have the members just need good leaders.
It is sad that after 15 years as a volunteer we can't have an annual supper because of lack of funds. Each year we are asked for more because we only have one member become a 4-H leader in 15 years.	Working as a leader takes time and effort but when you see the members grow and develop it makes it all worthwhile. I hope the program can continue without being to <u>costly</u> for the members.
After leading a Beef Club for many years, I left because the animal was becoming much more important than the member. The member was a vehicle for the advancement of the calf rather than the other way around. More friendships have been destroyed over calf choices for regional, etc., shows than anything else.	What matters most to me is the interaction I have with my members inside my county. As long as we have fun and learn one or two "hard and soft skills" then I'll keep doing what I'm doing! When that loud boisterous kid is elected President to everyone's dismay and at the end of the club he realizes he did a good job - that's what makes it happen!
Desperately need to improve the lifeskills area. The attitude of some directors leaves a lot to be desired. 4-H is not just livestock clubs. Parents and members are requesting these clubs- cooking, sewing, etc. and need to do more promotion and advertising.	4-H is such a significant part of youths lives both rural and urban. The positive experiences gained by both members and volunteers. I think there are enough alumni and agricultural industry partners of 4-H that it will not disappear as long as membership is maintained.
Very surprised at the amount of drinking that happens at the Royal, where is the policy of this problem. My son was first time and I couldn't believe that he was offered alcohol at 14. I find at the county level no one wants to be the bad guy to report things to head office because they'll get a bad name.	It's been good and I continue to volunteer. I appreciate the staff that have assisted me anytime I've needed help. I appreciate the assistance of our ASR and I appreciate all of the good things that are going on in 4-H and hope to see more tangible opportunities in the North.
Rather overwhelmed year after year! Leading clubs is fun but sometimes doing all is no longer fun.	I think 4-H is great! I wish more youth would take advantage of the opportunities (camps/ exchanges) available to them. Also, Dairy members and leaders need to realize there is more to 4-H than just shaving a calf.

APPENDIX J

LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

As one of Ontario's oldest and largest rural youth organizations, 4-H Ontario plays a vital role in the personal development of rural youth and capacity building across the province. In order to fulfill its role as a leading non-profit organization, 4-H Ontario relies on support and funding from numerous outside sources including government departments like the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF). Like so many non-profit organizations, 4-H Ontario has had recent experience with reductions in both governmental support and funding. In April, 2000 4-H Ontario became 100% accountable for the development and delivery of its program, taking over this responsibility from OMAF. To successfully handle this transition, the Ontario 4-H Council accepted responsibility to provide direction and vision to the organization on behalf of its many participants.

This study will consist of the researcher working closely with 4-H Ontario to complete a full review and critique of the organization's process since April, 2000. 4-H Ontario has offered the researcher full participation in the project and shares a great sense of enthusiasm for the valuable data that will undoubtedly surface throughout the research course. The hypothesis of the research is that despite the reduction of government support and funding, 4-H Ontario has successfully restructured its organization, maintaining its volunteer base and internal administration functions while continuing to provide indispensable service to its members, volunteers, and supporters.

The study will be mainly qualitative in nature but will also include certain quantitative data and analytical techniques to produce results that are practical and constructive for 4-H Ontario. The research will be strengthened and validated through the use of triangulation of methods that include:

- Focus groups with 4-H Ontario senior members (18-21 years).
- Participant observation through attending 4-H activities.
- Semi-structured personal one-on-one interviews with 4-H Ontario staff, board members, and sponsors, as well as OMAF staff.
- A mail survey to be distributed to a random sample of 700 of the 1600 volunteers that work with 4-H Ontario.

The major findings of the study will be extremely valuable to those closely associated with 4-H Ontario as well as other non-profit rural organizations that will use the report as a guide to follow in future decision making. The findings will also promote change and action within 4-H Ontario and will provide the organization with an up-to-date, detailed, and practical document to be consulted as future needs arise. A summary of the research results will be posted on 4-H Ontario's website and can also be sent to you by requesting a copy from 4-H Ontario.

The experiences and choices made by young people can have a direct and significant impact on the community that surrounds them. Organizations like 4-H Ontario offer a community and its citizens a fundamental resource that facilitates the journey from young person to adult, while at the same time teaching practical skills to all its members. Up to date and reliable research is needed to provide 4-H Ontario an opportunity to improve on its existing capacity development for rural youth and the organization itself.

APPENDIX K

LETTERS OF CONSENT

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERVIEW

You are invited to participate in the research study 'Meeting Challenges in the Face of Change: 4-H Ontario in the OMAF Post-Detached Era' conducted by Courtney Denard from the department of Rural Extension Studies at the University of Guelph. This study has been approved by the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board and results will contribute to the researcher's MSc thesis requirements. A copy of this thesis can be made available to you.

The purpose of this study is to gather information from those associated with 4-H Ontario in regards to their attitudes and perceptions on the quality of service provided by 4-H Ontario since April 2000.

Your participation is voluntary and your comments and the information about you will be kept strictly confidential.

The amount of time required from the participant to complete the interview is approximately 1 hour. At any time in the interview you can request that certain information not be used in the research project and you have the right to omit any questions you do not feel comfortable answering, with no penalties or negative consequences. The information you provide will help 4-H Ontario and other rural youth organizations improve the quality of support provided to their members and volunteers and will offer helpful suggestions to better improve their services.

By signing this consent form, the participant is fully aware of the conditions discussed above and that information discussed will be analyzed and reported in the research project, and distributed to a variety of sources. The participant gives the researcher full permission to use this information and present the results in any format seen fit by the researcher.

The participant is also aware that at any time throughout the interview they have the right to end the interview. At this time, the researcher will discontinue the interview and will not use any further information provided in the research results.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the faculty advisor of this project, Dr. Helen Hambly Odame of the Department of Rural Extension Studies at the University of Guelph at 519-824-4120 ext. 53408. You can also contact Sandy Auld, Research Ethics Officer at the Office of Research at the University of Guelph to answer any questions you may have.

This project would not be possible without the involvement of 4-H Ontario, who has provided both financial and logistical support towards the study.

Thank you for your participation and your valued assistance.

Courtney Denard
MSc Candidate
Rural Extension Studies

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Witness: _____

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN FOCUS GROUP

You are invited to participate in the research study 'Meeting Challenges in the Face of Change - How the Newly Independent 4-H Ontario is learning to do by Doing.' conducted by Courtney Denard from the department of Rural Extension Studies at the University of Guelph. This study has been approved by the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board and results will contribute to the researcher's MSc thesis requirements. A copy of this thesis can be made available to you.

The purpose of this study is to gather information from those associated with 4-H Ontario in regards to their attitudes and perceptions on the quality of service provided by 4-H Ontario since April 2000.

Your participation is voluntary and the amount of time required from the participant to complete the focus group activity is approximately 2 hours.

At any time throughout the focus group you can request that certain information not be used in the research project. You do not have to participate in any part of the discussion that you may feel uncomfortable about, with no penalties or negative consequences. The information you provide will help 4-H Ontario improve the quality of support provided to their members and volunteers and will offer helpful suggestions to better improve their services. The information presented in the focus group will remain confidential, however, due to the open forum concept of this activity anonymity cannot be provided. The researcher requests that any information discussed throughout the focus group remain within the confines of the activity.

By signing this consent form, the participant is fully aware of the conditions discussed above and the information presented will be analyzed and reported in the research project, and distributed to a variety of sources. The participant gives the researcher full permission to use this information and present the results in any format seen fit by the researcher.

The participant is also aware that at any time throughout the focus group they have the right to end their involvement. At this time, the researcher will discontinue the interview and will not use any further information provided in the research results.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the faculty advisor of this project, Dr. Helen Hambly Odame of the Department of Rural Extension Studies at the University of Guelph at 519-824-4120 ext. 53408. You can also contact Sandy Auld, Research Ethics Officer at the Office of Research at the University of Guelph to answer any questions you may have.

This project would not be possible without the involvement of 4-H Ontario, who has provided both financial and logistical support towards the study.

Thank you for your participation and your valued assistance.

Courtney Denard
MSc Candidate
Rural Extension Studies

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Witness: _____

APPENDIX L

LETTER OF INFORMATION TO SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Dear 4-H Ontario Volunteer:

The purpose of this survey is to gather information from 4-H Ontario volunteers with regards to their attitudes and perceptions on the quality of service provided by 4-H Ontario. In order to receive information from a cross-section of 4-H Ontario volunteers, participants have been randomly selected from 4-H Ontario's volunteer data base and invited on behalf of 4-H Ontario to participate in this research.

This survey is also posted on the 4-H Ontario website and we are encouraging participants to complete the online version. This can be found by logging on to www.4-hontario.ca and clicking on the 'Volunteer Survey' link. **PLEASE ONLY COMPLETE ONE SURVEY.**

Your participation is of course voluntary and the results will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. The information you provide will help 4-H Ontario improve the quality of support provided to 4-H Ontario volunteers and offer 4-H Ontario helpful suggestions to better improve its services. A summary of the research results will be posted on 4-H Ontario's website and will also be made available to you by contacting 4H-Ontario.

Please place the survey in the postmarked envelope that has been provided to you and return it by DECEMBER 31st, 2004. Or complete the online version of the survey by this same date. By completing the survey, you will be giving your full consent to participate in the study giving the researcher full permission to use the provided information and present the results in any format she sees fit.

If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please contact Courtney Denard via phone at (519) 822-2555. You can also contact Courtney with any questions or concerns through e-mail at cdenard@uoguelph.ca.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the faculty advisor for this project, Dr. Helen Hambly Odame of the Department of Rural Extension Studies at the University of Guelph at (519) 824-4120 ext. 53408. You can also contact Sandy Auld, Research Ethics Officer at the Office of Research at the University of Guelph to answer any questions you may have.

If you have any questions about 4-H Ontario's involvement in this study, please contact Rob Black or Tammy Dallyn at 4-H Ontario at 1-877-410-6748 or fax (519) 824-8759. 4-H Ontario can also be contacted by writing 4-H Ontario, Hwy. # 6 North, R. R. # 5 Guelph, Ontario, N1H 6J2.

Thank you for your participation and your valued assistance.

Sincerely,

Courtney Denard
Masters of Science Candidate
Rural Extension Studies
University of Guelph

APPENDIX M

MAIL OUT/ INTERNET SURVEY

**“Meeting Challenges in the Face of Change - How the Newly
Independent 4-H Ontario is Learning to Do by Doing”**



This survey is available for completion online at www.4-hontario.ca (look for the Volunteer Survey) and is meant for people who are PRESENTLY volunteers with 4-H Ontario.

Please complete this survey by **DECEMBER 31st, 2004.**

1) How long have you been a volunteer with 4-H Ontario?

Less than 2 years ___ 2-4 years ___ 4-6 years ___ 6-8 years ___ 8-10 years ___ +10 years ___

2A) At what levels of 4-H events have you volunteered? (Select all that apply)

- Local
- Provincial
- National

2B) List up to five activities at which you have volunteered.

_____	_____
_____	_____

3) In addition to being a volunteer, do you have a particular position with 4-H Ontario (ie: Association Representative, board member, staff, etc.) If so what? _____

4) What club(s) do you volunteer with (ie: Beef Club, Breadventure, Horse Club, etc)?

5) What affected your decision to volunteer with 4-H Ontario? (Check all that apply)

- I was a past member
- My child is a **current** member of 4-H Ontario
- My child was a **past** member of 4-H Ontario
- I was interested in what 4-H Ontario offered as an organization
- Other (please state)

6) Why do you continue to volunteer with 4-H Ontario? _____

7) Please list the skills that 4-H Ontario develops effectively in its

members/volunteers. Please rank these in order of importance: 1 (most important) to 8

(least important).

1 _____	5 _____
2 _____	6 _____
3 _____	7 _____
4 _____	8 _____

8) Under the current funding structure, do you think 4-H Ontario is effective? Yes _____ No _____

(Please explain your answer)

9) Do you believe that 4-H Ontario can be more effective with increased funding? Yes _____ No _____

10) If you said yes to question 10, in your opinion how could 4-H Ontario be more effective with more funding?

11) What do you think are some of the challenges facing 4-H Ontario? (check all that apply)

Funding _____	Dedication of 4-H staff _____
Too few staff _____	Other _____
Volunteer burnout _____	Other _____
Rural youth out migration _____	
Competition from other clubs/sports _____	
Finding volunteers _____	

12) Of the above challenges, what are the two most important? (1 = most important)

1 _____

2 _____

13) What are the strengths of the 4-H Ontario program?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

14) To what extent, if any, do you agree with the following statements? *(Please circle the appropriate number for each)*

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
[14.1] 4-H Ontario provides sufficient support to its volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
[14.2] 4-H Ontario delivers enough information to its volunteers about the organization	1	2	3	4	5
[14.3] 4-H Ontario delivers enough information to its volunteers about upcoming events	1	2	3	4	5
[14.4] 4-H Ontario meets its mission statement (see page 6 for 4-H Ontario's mission statement)	1	2	3	4	5
[14.5] 4-H Ontario has kept me informed through the transition process to the new delivery model	1	2	3	4	5
[14.6] Since 2000, I have noticed an increase in communications and awareness support as a 4-H Ontario volunteer	1	2	3	4	5
[14.7] Since 2000, I have noticed an increase in activities for 4-H Ontario volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
[14.8] Since 2000, I have noticed an increase in activities for 4-H Ontario members	1	2	3	4	5
[14.9] 4-H Ontario plays an important role in the skills training of youth in Ontario	1	2	3	4	5
[14.10] 4-H Ontario plays an important role in the leadership development of youth in Ontario	1	2	3	4	5
[14.11] I have found volunteering for 4-H Ontario to be a positive experience	1	2	3	4	5
[14.12] I will continue to volunteer for 4-H Ontario in the near future	1	2	3	4	5

15) Are you aware that in 2000 4-H Ontario underwent a change in delivery during the transition from being a government run program to becoming an independent organization? Yes ___ No ___

16) What impact do you think this change has had on 4-H Ontario? _____

17) As a volunteer, is there any type of support or information that you would like to receive from 4-H Ontario that you do not currently receive? _____

18) As a volunteer do you feel that there is enough training given to you to support and to guide you through your role? Yes _____ No _____

19) If not, what would you suggest could be done or improved to help?

20) Do you have any further comments about your volunteering experience with 4-H Ontario or the organization in general?

About You

21) Municipality of Residence: _____

22) Male: _____ Female: _____ Year of Birth: _____

23) In which area do you live? Rural (population >5000) _____ Urban _____

24A) Were you a member of 4-H in the past? Yes _____ No _____

B) If so, for how many years?

1 year _____ 2 years _____ 3 years _____ 4 years _____ + 5 years _____

Your participation is important to the success of this work and is greatly appreciated!

****Thank you for your time and effort****

A summary of this project's research results will be posted on 4-H Ontario's website and available by contacting 4-H Ontario.

4-H Ontario's MISSION STATEMENT: "4-H Ontario is dedicated to the personal development of youth while providing a positive impact on volunteers and communities in Ontario."

APPENDIX N

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions for 4-H Ontario Staff

- 1) Growing up were you a member of 4-H Ontario?
- 2) What is your current position at 4-H Ontario?
- 3) How long have you worked for 4-H Ontario?
- 4) Have you always worked the same position as you do now?
 - b. If no, what positions have you had at 4-H Ontario?
- 5) What responsibilities come with your current position at 4-H Ontario?
- 6) How did your working at 4-H Ontario come about?
- 7) Do you feel that 4-H Ontario is a pleasant place to work?
 - b. Why or why not?
- 8) In your opinion, how did 4-H Ontario deal with the process of detaching from OMAF?
- 9) In your opinion, how did 4-H Ontario deal with the transitional period that followed its detachment from OMAF?
- 10) What sort of administrative changes did 4-H Ontario experience as a result of its detachment from OMAF?
 - b. Did any of these changes have a positive impact on the administrative functions of the organization?
 - c. Did any of these changes have a negative impact on the administrative functions of the organization?
- 11) Has 4-H Ontario adapted to the administrative changes that resulted from its detachment from OMAF?
 - b. If so, how?
 - c. If not, why do you think 4-H Ontario has not adapted to these changes?
- 12) In your opinion, what kind of impact did 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF have on 4-H Ontario members?
- 13) In your opinion, what kind of impact did 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF have on 4-H Ontario volunteers?

- 14) Did your responsibilities at 4-H Ontario change as a result of its detachment from OMAF?
b. If so, was this a positive change?
- 15) In your opinion why did OMAF transfer full responsibility of the 4-H program to the Ontario 4-H Council?
- 16) Do you feel that 4-H Ontario's adoption of the New Delivery Model has been a successful process?
- 17) After almost five years under the New Delivery Model, do you believe that this is the best process for the organization?
b. Please explain your response.
- 18) Are there any services you would like to see 4-H Ontario provide to its staff that are not currently being offered?
- 19) Are there any services you would like to see 4-H Ontario provide to its volunteers that are not currently being offered?
- 20) Are there any services you would like to see 4-H Ontario provide to its members that are not currently being offered?
- 21) What do you think are the most important challenges to 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity?
- 22) In your opinion, what are 4-H Ontario's organizational strengths?
- 23) Do you believe that 4-H Ontario can be more effective with its current funding?
b. If so, how?
- 24) Do you believe that 4-H Ontario can be more effective with increased funding?
b. If so, how?
- 25) Do you think 4-H Ontario is an important organization for rural youth?
- 26) Do you think 4-H Ontario is important for urban youth?
- 27) In general, how would you make 4-H Ontario a better organization?
- 28) Where do you see 4-H Ontario in five years?

Questions for 4-H Ontario Board Members

- 1) Growing up were you a member of 4-H Ontario?
- 2) What is your current position on the 4-H Ontario?
- 3) Board of Directors?
- 4) How long have you been on the 4-H Ontario Board of Directors?
- 5) Have you always had the same position as you do now?
 - b. If no, what positions have you had on the board?
- 6) What responsibilities come with your current position on the board?
- 7) How did your working with 4-H Ontario come about?
- 8) Has your time with the board been a positive experience?
 - b. Why or why not?
- 9) In your opinion, how did 4-H Ontario deal with the process of detaching from OMAF?
- 10) In your opinion, how did 4-H Ontario deal with the transitional period that followed its detachment from OMAF?
- 11) What sort of administrative changes did 4-H Ontario experience as a result of its detachment from OMAF?
 - b. Did any of these changes have a positive impact on the administrative functions of the board?
 - c. Did any of these changes have a negative impact on the administrative functions of the board?
- 12) Has 4-H Ontario adapted to the administrative changes that resulted from its detachment from OMAF?
 - b. If so, how?
 - c. If not, why do you think 4-H Ontario has not adapted to these changes?
- 13) In your opinion, what kind of impact did 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF have on 4-H Ontario members?
- 14) In your opinion, what kind of impact did 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF have on 4-H Ontario volunteers?
- 15) Did your responsibilities at 4-H Ontario change as a result of its detachment from OMAF?
 - b. If so, was this a positive change?

- 16) In your opinion why did OMAF transfer full responsibility of the 4-H program to the Ontario 4-H Council?
- 17) Are you aware of the New Delivery Model adopted by 4-H Ontario at the time of its detachment from OMAF?
 - b. If so, do you feel that 4-H Ontario's adoption of the New Delivery Model has been a successful process?
 - c. If so, do you feel that after almost five years under the New Delivery Model, it is still the best process for the organization?
 - d. Please explain your response.
- 18) Are there any services you would like to see 4-H Ontario provide to its board members that are not currently being offered?
- 19) Are there any services you would like to see 4-H Ontario provide to its volunteers that are not currently being offered?
- 20) Are there any services you would like to see 4-H Ontario provide to its members that are not currently being offered?
- 21) What do you think are the most important challenges to 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity?
- 22) In your opinion, what are 4-H Ontario's organizational strengths?
- 23) Do you believe that 4-H Ontario can be more effective with its current funding?
 - b. If so, how?
- 24) Do you believe that 4-H Ontario can be more effective with increased funding?
 - a. If so, how?
- 25) Why do you think 4-H Ontario is an important organization for rural youth?
- 26) In general, how would you make 4-H Ontario a better organization?
- 27) Where do you see 4-H Ontario in five years?

Questions for 4-H Ontario Corporate Sponsors

- 1) Growing up were you a member of 4-H Ontario?
- 2) What is your current position at [ORGANIZATION]?
- 3) How long have you worked for [ORGANIZATION]?
- 4) Have you always worked the same position as you do now?
 - b. If no, what positions have you had at [ORGANIZATION]?
- 5) What responsibilities come with your current position at [ORGANIZATION]?
- 6) In your opinion, how did 4-H Ontario deal with the process of detaching from OMAF?
- 7) In your opinion, how did 4-H Ontario deal with the transitional period that followed its detachment from OMAF?
- 8) Are you aware of any administrative changes experienced by 4-H Ontario as a result of its detachment from OMAF?
 - b. If so, did any of these changes have a positive impact on the administrative functions of the organization?
 - c. If so, did any of these changes have a negative impact on the administrative functions of the organization?
- 9) Do you feel that 4-H Ontario has adapted to the administrative changes that resulted from its detachment from OMAF?
 - b. If so, how?
 - c. If not, why do you think 4-H Ontario has not adapted to these changes?
- 10) In your opinion, what kind of impact do you think 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF may have had on 4-H Ontario members?
- 11) In your opinion, what kind of impact did 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF have on 4-H Ontario volunteers?
- 12) Are there any services you would like to see 4-H Ontario provide that are not currently being offered?
- 13) What do you think are the most important challenges to 4-H Ontario's organizational capacity?
- 14) How long has your organization sponsored 4-H Ontario?
- 15) Why does your organization choose to sponsor 4-H Ontario?

- 16) Do you feel that the money you contribute to 4-H Ontario is going to good use?
Why or why not?
 - b. If not, how would you like to see your contribution used?
- 17) Do you believe that 4-H Ontario can be more effective with its current funding?
 - b. If so, how?
- 18) Do you believe that 4-H Ontario can be more effective with increased funding?
 - b. If so, how?
- 18) Will your organization continue to sponsor 4-H Ontario in the future?
- 19) Why do you think 4-H Ontario is an important organization for rural youth?
- 20) In your opinion, how would you make 4-H Ontario a better organization?
- 21) Where do you see 4-H Ontario in five years?

Questions for Representatives from OMAFRA

- 1) As an OMAF staff, what was your affiliation with 4-H Ontario?
 - a. How long did you hold that position?
- 2) Did you have any other connection to 4-H Ontario?
- 3) How is OMAF associated with 4-H Ontario today?
- 4) Do you continue to have a connection with 4-H Ontario today, outside of work?
- 5) In your opinion why did OMAF transfer full responsibility of the 4-H program to the Ontario 4-H Council?
 - b. At the time did you feel that this was a positive move for OMAF?
 - c. Presently do you feel that this was a positive move for OMAF?
 - d. At the time did you feel that this was a positive move for 4-H Ontario?
 - e. Presently do you feel that this was a positive move for 4-H Ontario?
- 6) In your opinion, what kind of impact do you think 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF had on 4-H Ontario members?
- 7) In your opinion, what kind of impact do you think 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF had on 4-H Ontario volunteers?
- 8) In your opinion, what kind of impact do you think 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF had on 4-H Ontario staff?
- 9) In your opinion, what kind of impact do you think 4-H Ontario's detachment from OMAF had on the organization as a whole?
- 10) Do you believe that 4-H Ontario could be more effective with its current funding?
 - b. If so, how?
- 11) Do you believe that 4-H Ontario can be more effective with increased funding?
 - b. If so, how?
- 12) Other than 4-H Ontario, what types of rural youth organizations does OMAF support?
- 13) Growing up were you a member of 4-H Ontario?
 - b. If so, did your experience with 4-H Ontario have an influence on your future career decisions?

- 14) Do you have children in 4-H Ontario?
- a. If so, why did you enroll them?
 - b. If not, do you think it is important for youth to be involved in 4-H Ontario?
 - c. If so, why?

APPENDIX O

FOCUS GROUP AGENDA

**‘Meeting Challenges in the Face of Change:
How the Newly Independent 4-H Ontario is Learning to do by Doing’
November 16th, 2004
5:00-7:00 pm**

AGENDA:

Introduce Myself- Courtney Denard, Undergraduate here at U of G in Rural Development Sociology. Started graduate school in 2003 and am working towards a Masters of Science in Rural Extension Studies. This program is a part of the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

Introduce Kim- 3rd year student in Agriculture. Kim comes from a dairy farm in Nova Scotia and has been a long time member of 4-H in N.S. Since she is a 4-H member in Nova Scotia she was not able to participate in the focus group tonight but agreed to be the note taker for the evening.

[5 minutes]

Food Break!

[15 minutes]

Introduce the Project- Approached 4-H Ontario in December of 2003 and proposed a partnership between myself and their organization.

- Decided to look at the process and transition 4-H Ontario has experienced since 2004 when at this time they became an independent organization, no longer running under the direction of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
- To date OMAF continues to fund 4-H Ontario with \$700,000 annually; however the delivery of 4-H Ontario is now under the direction of the Ontario 4-H Council.
- Project Methodology includes:
 - One-on-one interviews with 4-H Ontario staff, volunteers, OMAF staff
 - Participant observation with 4-H Ontario members
 - Focus group with 4-H Ontario members
 - Survey to 700 of the 1600 4-H Ontario volunteers
- Project results will be made available on the 4-H Ontario website, by contacting 4-H Ontario, or by contacting me.

[5 minutes]

Consent Form- Your participation is **voluntary** and the amount of time required from the participant to complete the focus group activity is approximately 2 hours.

- At any time you can request that certain **information not be used** in the research project.
- You do not have to participate in any part of the discussion that you may feel uncomfortable about.
- Information presented in the focus group will remain **confidential**, however, due to the open forum concept of this activity **anonymity cannot be provided**.
- The researcher requests that any information discussed throughout the focus group **remain within the confines of the activity**.
- By signing this consent form, the participant is **fully aware** of the conditions discussed above.
- The information presented will be **analyzed and reported** in the research project, and **distributed** to a variety of sources.
- The participant gives the researcher **full permission to use this information and present the results** in any format seen fit by the researcher.

-Are there any questions about this what so ever?

[10 minutes]

Introduce Participants- Name, program, hometown/ county, how long you have been in 4-H, and how many projects you have completed

[20 minutes]

Question # 1: My experience as a 4-H Ontario Member

Does anyone want to share some of their experiences as being a member of 4-H Ontario?

- For example:
- How and why did you become a member of 4-H Ontario?
 - What are some of the positive experiences you have had as a member?
 - What are some of the negative experiences you have had as a member?
 - Why did you choose to stop being a member of 4-H Ontario?
 - Out of the group, who here feels that in the future they will volunteer for 4-H Ontario as a leader or another position?

[20 minutes]

Question # 2: How would you make 4-H Ontario a better organization?

If you were given the opportunity, how would you as a young adult make 4-H Ontario better for present and future members?

- For example:
- How would you make 4-H Ontario better for members?
 - How would you make it better for volunteers?
 - As a member, if you had a 4-H Ontario “wish list” what would be on it?

[20 minutes]

Question # 3: Where do you see 4-H Ontario in the next 5 years?

In terms of membership enrollment, clubs available, resources available, variety of projects, 4-H Ontario in urban locations, relationship with OMAF, competition with other extra curricular activities, etc.

[20 minutes]

Closing Remarks

- Thank you for coming and for your participation!
- Results will be made available on the 4-H Ontario website, by contacting 4-H Ontario, or by contacting me. My e-mail address is cdenard@uoguelph.ca.
- If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to e-mail me as well.