Benefits of Service-learning in Tennessee 4-H Youth Development: A Delphi Study

Lori Jean Mantooth[1] and Carrie Ann Fritz[2]
College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996-4518

Abstract

Service-learning is growing in popularity as a methodology for teaching youth life skills and 4-H project knowledge. Through a modified Delphi technique, a panel comprised of 4-H'ers, volunteers, and agents in Tennessee identified and prioritized benefits of utilizing service-learning to fulfill the mission of the state's 4-H Youth Development program. The study found that primary benefits of conducting service-learning projects through 4-H Youth Development are getting kids involved in community service; teaching youth dependability, responsibility, and commitment; and developing citizenship skills/civic responsibility. There were some differences among the subpanels' lists and prioritization of the benefits. The study has implications for 4-H leaders, both youth and adult, who employ service-learning as a teaching tool, and for practitioners of the Delphi technique.

Introduction

Since its inception in 1902, the 4-H Youth Development program has outlined community service as one of its primary objectives. In October 2000, Tennessee 4-H Youth Development expanded that service commitment to include service-learning, a form of experiential education where youth apply knowledge, skills, critical thinking, and wise judgment to address genuine community needs (Toole and Toole, 1994). Service-learning is a growing methodology for fulfilling the 4-H mission of helping youth develop skills and attitudes they need to become successful adults. After receiving a 3-year grant from Learn and Serve America through the Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service, University of Tennessee Extension began a statewide initiative to infuse service-learning throughout the 4-H Youth Development program (Mantooth and Hamilton, 2004). The program provided training and resources for youth and adults, as well as opportunities for funding and recognition for projects. From October 2000 until December 2003, more than 182,000 4-H'ers partnered with 14,800 adults to conduct 5,300 service-learning projects, benefiting more than 901,000 people through 585,000 hours of service (Mantooth and Hamilton, 2004).

Nationally, service-learning can trace its theoretical roots to John Dewey, Alexis de Tocqueville, William James, and Thomas Jefferson, as well as historical movements such as the push for civil rights in the 1960s (Waterman, 1997a). Dewey is credited with conceptualizing ideas of experiential education and reflective thinking, both vital components of service-learning. Dewey's work also provided the foundation for key elements of service-learning, such as student involvement in developing learning objectives, working cooperatively on learning tasks, linking what is learned to personal experience, placing importance on social and not just intellectual development, and valuing actions for the welfare of others (Kraft, 1996).

In 1910, American philosopher William James called for a program of national service for youth that would serve as the moral equivalent of war, something that would speak to men's souls as universally as war did and yet be compatible with their spiritual selves (Waterman, 1997a). The Twentieth Century saw many large-scale efforts to engage youth in service, including the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Peace Corps, Volunteers in Service to America, the Youth Conservation Corps, and other organizations that sought to benefit the volunteers who were serving their communities (Corporation for National and Community Service, n.d.; Kraft, 1996; Pritchard, 2002; Waterman, 1997b).

Service-learning gained national attention with the passage of the National and Community Service Trust Acts of 1990, which authorized grants to support service-learning in schools and demonstration grants for national service programs to nonprofits and institutions of higher education (Corporation for National and Community Service, n.d.). The National and Community Service Trust Acts of 1993 established the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency that administers grants for both school-based and community-based service programs. School-based service-learning is organized as part of the academic curriculum of an elementary or secondary school or an institution of higher education, whereas community-based service-learning is organized through a community agency or youth-serving organization (National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993). While much attention has been given to school-based

---

[1]Graduate student, 325 Morgan Hall, 2621 Morgan Circle
[2]Assistant professor

service-learning, community-based efforts also have grown over the past 10 years. The CNCS has awarded more than $37 million to community-based organizations and state service commissions, and a substantial amount of community-based service-learning is occurring beyond what is funded through the CNCS (Bailis and Lewis, 2003).

The number of youth engaged in service is increasing. Skinner and Chapman (1999) determined that 64% of all public schools had students involved in service activities recognized and/or arranged through the school, and 32% of all public schools organized service-learning as part of their curriculum. Shumer and Cook (1999) reported that 6.1 million high school students were involved in service-related programs in 1997, and Safrit and Auck (2003) found that 98% of Ohio 4-H'ers had voluntarily helped others within the previous year.

The increasing number of youth involved in service-learning has sparked a growing field of research on the impact of service-learning. Because the youth engaged in service-learning are often outside the classroom, interacting with community members and organizations, impacts of service learning are not limited to youth. Indeed, researchers (Billig, 2000; Blyth et al., 1997; Eyler and Giles, 1999; Scales and Leffert, 1999; Melchior, 1999) have found an impact on youth, schools and community organizations through which the youth work, and communities the youth serve.

Youth participating in service-learning programs, both school-based and community-based, show increased self-esteem and problem-solving skills, more positive attitudes toward adults, and increased concern for others' welfare (Scales and Leffert, 1999). Service-learning also has a positive impact on students' civic attitudes and participation, particularly if students remain active in organized service activities (Melchior, 1999). Student outcomes are influenced by the level of youth leadership, hours spent in service, quality of service placement, structured reflection opportunities, the intensity of the service experience, program design, and implementation (Blyth et al., 1997; Eyler and Giles, 1999).

Communities, schools, and organizations also experience benefits from service-learning programs. Community members have more positive perceptions of schools and youth. Furthermore, schools report greater mutual respect between teachers and students, improvements in the overall school climate, and increased school cohesiveness (Billig, 2000b). Melchior (1999) reported that organizations utilizing service-learning improved services to clients and the community, increased capacity to take on new projects, and formed new relationships with public schools.

Service-learning has evolved from John Dewey and the Peace Corps to millions of school students and youth in community-based organizations. An increasing number of service-learning participants has been reflected in an ever-growing body of research. Despite the number of community-based organizations that are engaging in service-learning and the increasing amount of research in the field, "community-based service-learning is the least understood and least studied of the streams of service-learning" (Bailis and Lewis, 2003, p. 17). Therefore, understanding the benefits of service-learning in community-based organizations, particularly 4-H Youth Development, is a problem due to the lack of research on community-based service-learning.

Methods

The purpose of this study was to identify benefits of service-learning in Tennessee 4-H Youth Development. Furthermore, the researchers sought to describe perceived differences among three subgroups: 4-H members, volunteers, and Extension agents.

Researchers used the modified Delphi technique with a panel of experts to generate data for the study. The Delphi technique is a method of group communication that is effective in allowing a group of experts, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem (Linstone and Turoff, 1975). The technique uses sequential questionnaires developed through summarized information and feedback of opinions from earlier responses (Delbeq et al., 1975).

In general, researchers believe a Delphi study should contain a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 50 participants, with an ideal number between 20 and 30 (Critchner and Gladsone, 1998; Gibson and Miller, 1990). The researchers purposely selected 30 panel members from individuals who served as youth or adult leaders for ten service-learning projects funded by 4-H Seeds of Service mini-grants between April 2001 and October 2003. The researchers reviewed grant proposals, reports, and reflection activities for 100 grant-funded projects and selected for the panel those that best demonstrated youth leadership, intentional learning objectives, reflection activities, and projects that lasted longer than one week. The panel members were then divided into three subpanels: ten 4-H members, ten adult volunteer leaders, and ten 4-H agents from one urban county, three suburban counties, and six rural counties. The members represented the three regions of University of Tennessee Extension, providing statewide scope to the study. Youth, volunteers, and Extension agents comprised separate subpanels due to the groups' varying developmental level, focus, needs, and experience with service-learning.

The researchers administered a series of three questionnaires to participants. The first questionnaire consisted of an open-ended question: "The benefits of conducting service-learning projects through 4-H Youth Development are . . ." This generated a list of benefits of service-learning implemented through the 4-H Youth Development

program. The researchers summarized responses from the first questionnaire and eliminated any duplicate responses. Three, second-round questionnaires, one for each subpanel, were developed from the responses provided in round one. The second-round questionnaires asked participants to rate responses on a Likert-type scale of 1 (most important) to 9 (least important). The third round questionnaires ranked the responses to each question from most important to least important by arithmetic mean. Panel members were provided with the subgroup's mean and their own rating for each item. In addition, they were asked to explain why they disagreed with the rankings, if they did. A panel of experts, consisting of three faculty members and two 4-H Youth Development specialists, determined face validity for each instrument. The statements generated from the first round questionnaire were deemed trustworthy (reliable) because the researchers selected experts, consisting of youth and adults who served in leadership roles for 4-H Seeds of Service grant-funded projects, and utilized their exact statements to determine the benefits of service learning (Taylor and Bogden, 1998). Therefore, the benefit statements were deemed appropriate for this study.

First round questionnaires were mailed to participants. Participants had the option of responding through a paper copy or Web-based questionnaire. Subsequent questionnaires were distributed to panel members either through the mail or e-mail, based on respondents' preferred method of receiving correspondence as indicated through the first Web-based questionnaire.

In round one, 18 panel members responded through the on-line questionnaire and 7 mailed or faxed their questionnaires, providing an 83% (N = 25) response rate. The 4-H youth subpanel had a 60% (N = 6) response rate; the volunteer subpanel had a 90% (N = 9) response rate; and the Extension agent subpanel had a 100% (N = 10) response rate. For this, as well as subsequent rounds, non-respondents were contacted in an effort to achieve 100% response for each subpanel. Responses from the three subgroups were maintained separately. Data generated by youth panel members were not considered until signed informed consent statements were on file with the researchers.

In the first round, the 4-H youth subpanel (N = 6) generated 59 statements, which were summarized to 26 benefits. The volunteer subpanel (N = 9) generated 73 statements, which were summarized to 34 benefits. The Extension agent subpanel (N = 10) generated 95 statements, which were summarized to 30 benefits.

In round two, 21 panel members responded on-line, and 4 mailed or faxed their surveys, providing an 83% response rate. The 4-H youth subpanel had a 70% (N = 7) response rate; the volunteer subpanel had an 80% (N = 8) response rate; and the Extension

agent subpanel had a 100% (N = 10) response rate. As with the first questionnaire, responses from the subgroups were maintained separately.

The researchers calculated the arithmetic mean and standard deviation for each response (Ary et al., 1996). Mean scores of the round two questionnaires were used to determine importance of each statement. Responses were categorized as "important" (1 — 2.49), "slightly important" (2.5 — 4.99), "slightly unimportant" (5 — 7.49) or "unimportant" (≥ 7.5). Standard deviation of ≤ 1.5 indicated general consensus was reached within the subpanel. A (SD < 1.5) was arbitrarily selected because researchers utilized a nine-point scale.

These data were used to develop the third and final round of questionnaires.

Twenty-two panel members responded on-line, and three mailed the surveys, providing an 83% response rate to the third questionnaire. The 4-H youth subpanel had a 70% (N = 7) response rate; the volunteer subpanel had an 80% (N = 8) response rate; and the Extension agent subpanel had a 100% (N = 10) response rate. Responses from the subgroups were maintained separately.

Results

In this study, a purposefully selected panel of 4-H youth, volunteers, and Extension agents was utilized to generate and prioritize benefits of conducting service-learning projects in Tennessee 4-H Youth Development.

Benefits Identified by 4-H Youth Subpanel

The 4-H youth subpanel rated the importance of 26 benefits of conducting service-learning projects through 4-H Youth Development. The mean and standard deviation for each statement are presented in Table 1. The statements are prioritized in order of most important to least important by average arithmetic mean scores. The 4-H youth subpanel reached consensus on 13 of the 18 benefits ranked as "important." Some of these benefits include getting kids involved in community service (M = 1.00, SD = 0.00); helping others, making a difference, meeting community needs (M = 1.28, SD = 0.49); learning organization and responsibility (M = 1.57, SD = 0.53); and having fun (M = 2.14, SD = 0.69).

In round three, five 4-H youth subpanel members indicated disagreement with the ranking of a total of eight statements. Panel members responded in favor of higher importance for six benefits, including getting out of school, learning leadership skills, and meeting others and making friends. Panel members thought the ranking should be less important on the benefits of breaking down social barriers to unite and achieve a common goal and recognition for service. One benefit, publicity for 4-H (as a service organization, not just agriculture), received one response that it should be more important and two that it should be

less important. The panel members' explanations for their responses were based on their personal experiences with service-learning in their counties.

Table 1. Delphi Study Round Two: Prioritized List of Benefits Identified by 4-H Youth Subpanel (N = 7)

Benefit	M	SD
1. Getting kids involved in community service.	1.00	0.00[a]
2. Helping others, making a difference, meeting community needs.	1.28	0.49[a]
3. Giving youth the power to change something about their community.	1.43	0.79[a]
4. Learning organization and responsibility.	1.57	0.53[a]
5. Teamwork; collaborating with others.	1.57	0.79[a]
6. Helping youth develop people skills.	1.57	0.79[a]
7. Learning leadership skills.	1.57	0.79[a]
8. Teaching solid values.	1.85	1.57
9. Giving youth a chance to understand management of a group.	2.00	1.15[a]
10. Understanding and being a part of your community; building a sense of community.	2.00	1.15[a]
11. Having fun.	2.14	0.69[a]
12. Breaking down social barriers to unite and achieve a common goal.	2.14	1.57
13. Learning from the people you're helping and from other volunteers.	2.14	1.86
14. Raising awareness of the problems in your community.	2.14	2.19
15. That it benefits the organization being helped.	2.29	1.89
16. Personal rewards from helping others (feeling good, sense of worth).	2.43	1.13[a]
17. Meeting others; making friends.	2.43	1.27[a]
18. Having enough money to buy equipment needed to perform service projects.	2.43	1.40[a]
19. Publicity for 4-H (as a service organization, not just for agriculture).	2.71	1.60
20. Learning to work with other organizations within your community.	3.00	1.63
21. Using skills and creating a learning environment while having fun and helping others.	3.14	2.79
22. Working in a youth/adult partnership.	3.57	2.37
23. Having other opportunities arise.	3.86	1.68
24. Possible scholarship opportunities.	3.86	1.86
25. Recognition for service.	5.57	2.76
26. Getting out of school.	8.14	1.57

Note. Likert scale: 1 – 2.49 = Important; 2.5 – 4.99 = Slightly Important; 5 – 7.49 = Slightly Unimportant; ≥ 7.5 = Unimportant.
[a] Consensus of Group.

ments: children/teens learning self-esteem by making a difference in the community, teaching life skills and useful knowledge/experience, teaching youth that you have to work for what you want, developing record keeping and documentation skills, that it's a hands-on learning time, and recognition. Respondents thought these statements should be less important: keeping children/teens involved, keeping youth busy and out of trouble, seeing how supportive everyone was of the project, and youth getting to travel abroad. Two statements received mixed comments. For the benefit of learning to use new equipment, such as a sewing machine, one respondent commented that it should be more important, while another respondent had the opposite view. Similarly, the benefit of giving youth community service involvement that they can put on college scholarship applications received opposing comments from two panel members. The reasons given for disagreeing with each of these statements were based on panel members' personal experiences with service-learning.

Benefits Identified by Extension Agent Subpanel

The Extension agent subpanel rated the importance of 30 benefits of conducting service-learning projects through 4-H Youth Development. The mean and standard deviation for each statement are presented in Table 3. The statements are prioritized in order of most important to least important by average arithmetic mean scores. The Extension agent subpanel reached consensus on 18 of the 21 benefits ranked as "important." Some of these statements include developing citizenship skills/civic responsibility (M = 1.11, SD = 0.33); teaching youth about helping others and the importance of service (M = 1.22, SD = 0.44); developing leadership skills (M = 1.33, SD = 0.50); and promoting youth in a positive way (M = 1.33, SD = 0.50).

In round three, three Extension agent subpanel members indicated disagreement with the ranking of a total of seven statements. Panel members responded in favor of higher importance for the following benefits: promoting youth in a positive way, teaching youth life skills, developing decision making

Benefits Identified by Volunteer Subpanel

The volunteer subpanel rated the importance of 34 benefits of conducting service-learning projects through 4-H Youth Development. The mean and standard deviation for each statement are presented in Table 2. The statements are prioritized in order of most important to least important by average arithmetic mean scores. The volunteer subpanel reached consensus on 20 of the 21 benefits ranked as "important." Some of these statements include teaching youth dependability, responsibility, and commitment (M = 1.00, SD = 0.00); developing leadership skills (M = 1.14, SD = 0.38); helping youth see themselves as valuable and responsible community members (M = 1.14, SD = 0.38); and children/teens learning self-esteem by making a difference in the community (M = 1.28, SD = 0.49).

In round three, four volunteer subpanel members indicated disagreement with the ranking of a total of 12 statements. Panel members responded in favor of higher importance on the following state-

Table 2. Delphi Study Round Two: Prioritized List of Benefits Identified by Volunteer Subpanel (N = 8)

Benefit	M	SD
1. Teaching youth dependability, responsibility, and commitment.	1.00	0.00[a]
2. Developing leadership skills.	1.14	0.38[a]
3. Helping youth see themselves as valuable and responsible community members.	1.14	0.38[a]
4. Children/teens learning self-esteem by making a difference in the community.	1.28	0.49[a]
5. Developing teamwork skills.	1.29	0.49[a]
6. Teaching life skills and useful knowledge/experience.	1.29	0.49[a]
7. Helping others; improving the community; meeting community needs.	1.29	0.76[a]
8. Developing a lifetime habit of service; teaching youth compassion and to give back to the community.	1.43	0.79[a]
9. Learning to see a specific need and plan a project to help (conceive, plan, and accomplish a mission).	1.43	0.79[a]
10. Helping youth see what their talents are.	1.50	0.76[a]
11. Youth becoming more interested in the community and more aware of community needs.	1.57	0.79[a]
12. Teaching youth that you have to work for what you want.	1.57	1.13[a]
13. Having fun while learning and meeting a community need.	1.71	0.95[a]
14. Working in youth/adult partnerships.	1.71	1.11[a]
15. Keeping children/teens involved with adults, which creates a bond for a lifetime.	1.86	0.90[a]
16. Developing listening skills (how to follow instructions).	2.00	1.41[a]
17. Developing record keeping and documentation skills.	2.14	0.90[a]
18. 4-H promotion; community seeing 4-H as a service-oriented organization.	2.29	1.50[a]
19. Motivating the people in the community.	2.43	0.98[a]
20. Meeting others; forming bonds with youth and adults.	2.43	1.27[a]
21. Building relationships/networks in the community.	2.43	1.51
22. Acquiring a better knowledge of the . . .	2.5	1.31[a]
23. Learning to use new equipment, such as a sewing machine.	2.5	2.07
24. Personal/emotional rewards.	2.71	1.50[a]
25. Having access to expertise of 4-H/University staff where my knowledge is limited/lacking.	2.86	1.07[a]
26. Having funding for a needed project.	2.86	1.86
27. Keeping children/teens involved.	2.86	2.41
28. That it's a hands-on learning time.	2.88	2.10
29. Giving youth community service involvement that they can put on college scholarship applications.	3.00	2.20
30. Keeping youth busy and out of trouble.	3.25	2.31
31. Seeing how supportive everyone was of the project.	3.86	1.07[a]
32. Recognition.	4.43	2.51
33. Youth getting to travel abroad.	5.38	2.67
34. That prizes are offered.	6.25	2.05

Note. Likert scale: 1 − 2.49 = Important; 2.5 − 4.99 = Slightly Important; 5 − 7.49 = Slightly Unimportant; ≥ 7.5 = Unimportant.
[a] Consensus of Group.

in the community. The three subpanels generated several statements related to youth becoming more aware of community problems, developing civic responsibility, and feeling connected to the community. The three subpanels also generated several statements related to teaching skills such as record keeping, communication, and people skills.

Although the subpanels generated many of the same benefits of service-learning in 4-H, there were differences among the subpanels' lists and prioritization of benefits. For instance, the 4-H youth and volunteer subpanels agreed on the benefit of having fun. And the volunteer and Extension agent subpanels had similar views on the benefits of developing and working in youth-adult partnerships and publicity for 4-H as a service organization.

The 4-H youth subpanel identified one benefitgetting out of schoolthat the other subpanels did not. The volunteer subpanel had six statements that were unique from the benefits identified by the other subpanels. These included keeping youth busy and out of trouble, youth getting to travel abroad, and keeping children/teens involved. The Extension agent subpanel had two statements that were not also identified by the other subpanels. These benefits were that 4-H has a lot of good resources and that a little money given here can make a big difference in other countries.

Many of the benefits identified in this study, particularly those related to civic attitudes and skills, correspond to those revealed by Melchoir (1999) and Scales and Leffert (1999). However, this study also discovered several new benefits of community-based service-learning as it relates to 4-H Youth Development. Included are benefits identified by all three subpanels (learning leadership skills and working in youth/adult partnerships), as well as benefits identified by each subpanel: teaching solid

skills, recognition/community awareness of service activities, good publicity for 4-H, that 4-H has a lot of good resources, and securing new funding sources to acquire new educational materials and resources in the county. The panel did not recommend that any statements be ranked less important.

Summary

The three subpanels identified many statements with similar content. These benefits included getting kids involved in community service and developing a habit of service, helping others and meeting community needs, learning/teaching responsibility, developing leadership skills, and teamwork and networking

Based on the results of this study, recommendations can be made for the statewide 4-H Youth Development program in Tennessee. In order to help youth and adults develop a habit of service, meet community needs, learn skills, take an active role in their communities, and garner other benefits of service-learning, 4-H Youth Development should sustain and expand the existing service-learning initiative. To do this, state 4-H Youth Development staff could use the results of this and other studies as a basis to seek funding that would provide training, resources, and technical assistance to regional and county Extension staff, volunteers, and 4-H youth to assist them in planning and implementing effective service-learning projects. Resources would include printed and Web-based manuals on the basics of service-learning, tools for service-learning reflection, evaluation instruments to aid in program improvement, and a compilation of "best practices" from effective 4-H service-learning projects.

This study also has implications for local 4-H leaders, school teachers, community organizations and others who engage youth in service-learning. Service-learning programs should be structured to maximize the benefits indicated by the panel members in this study. To capitalize on the benefits indicated by the youth subpanel, for example, programs could intentionally include teambuilding activities, encourage youth to take leadership for organizing project logistics, provide recognition for service, and assist youth with keeping records of service to include on scholarship and college applications. To achieve some of the benefits identified by the volunteer subpanel, programs could strive to build equality between youth and adult members, involve youth in roles that utilize their talents, and selecting projects in which youth see an obvious impact on the community. For the benefits identified by the Extension agent subpanel, programs could design reflection

Table 3. Delphi Study Round Two: Prioritized List of Benefits Identified by Extension Agent Subpanel (N = 9)

Benefit	M	SD
1. Developing citizenship skills/civic responsibility.	1.11	0.33[a]
2. Teaching youth about helping others and the importance of service.	1.22	0.44[a]
3. Developing leadership skills.	1.33	0.50[a]
4. Promoting youth in a positive way.	1.33	0.50[a]
5. Helping others.	1.33	0.71[a]
6. Teaching youth life skills.	1.33	0.71[a]
7. Developing youth/adult partnerships.	1.44	0.53[a]
8. Youth learning the value of their service.	1.44	0.53[a]
9. Developing decision making skills.	1.44	0.73[a]
10. Teaching responsibility.	1.44	0.88[a]
11. Developing communication skills.	1.78	0.83[a]
12. Giving youth a feeling of competency.	1.78	0.83[a]
13. Developing organizational/planning skills.	1.89	0.99[a]
14. Allowing youth to work with other agencies; networking.	1.89	1.05[a]
15. Youth building self-esteem.	1.89	1.83
16. Learning about and feeling connected to the community.	2.00	0.87[a]
17. Incorporating many volunteers in community and networking capacity.	2.11	0.60[a]
18. Youth using school and 4-H knowledge to help others.	2.11	0.60[a]
19. Good publicity for 4-H.	2.44	1.33[a]
20. Creating new friendships among youth.	2.67	1.32[a]
21. Recognition/community awareness of service activities.	2.78	1.86
22. Having fun.	2.78	1.86
23. Personal/emotional rewards.	3.11	1.69
24. Teaching youth about evaluation and how it benefitted the community.	3.22	2.33
25. Learning how to help the environment and why it is important.	3.25	1.49[a]
26. Youth learning trade skills: painting, building, etc. (depending on project).	3.78	1.48[a]
27. Allowing senior 4-H'ers volunteer hours they need for scholarships and job applications.	4.00	2.24
28. That 4-H has a lot of good resources.	4.13	1.81
29. Securing new funding sources to acquire new educational materials and resources in the county.	4.56	2.83
30. That a little money given here can make a big difference in other countries.	4.56	2.92

Note. Likert scale: $1 - 2.49$ = Important; $2.5 - 4.99$ = Slightly Important; $5 - 7.49$ = Slightly Unimportant; ≥ 7.5 = Unimportant.
[a] Consensus of Group.

values (youth), helping youth see what their talents are (volunteers), and developing organizational/ planning skills (Extension agent). One may conclude that many of these benefits were identified because of the organization through which the service-learning occurred. As a community-based organization, 4-H engages youth in a variety of activities. Service-learning projects in 4-H can focus on developing life skills instead of enhancing academic material. In addition, the statewide 4-H program in Tennessee places strong emphasis on youth leadership and youth/adult partnerships that may not be part of a school atmosphere. Although the benefits of service-learning may be similar in both school-based and community-based efforts, participants in a community-based organization such as 4-H may place more importance on certain benefits than do school-based participants.

activities that focus on the civic skills the youth are developing, structure programs to help youth strengthen communication skills, and encourage youth to utilize decision-making skills. The three subpanels identified many of the same benefits. Programs can use the differences among the subpanels to design recruitment and training materials for different audiences, including students, volunteers, and staff.

To further understand the outcomes of service-learning in 4-H Youth Development, researchers should examine the effect that the certain factors may have on the benefits of service-learning for the youth, the community, and the 4-H Youth Development program. Questions for further study include:

1. What impact does location (i.e., rural, urban, limited resource community) have on the benefits of service-learning?

2. How does the length of a project affect the benefits of service-learning?

3. How do reflection activities included as integral part of projects impact the benefits of service-learning?

4. To what extent does the degree of youth leadership in a project affect the benefits of service-learning?

5. What impact does service learning have on other organizations such as schools, youth organizations and church groups?

Literature Cited

Ary, D., L. Jacobs and A. Razavieh. 1996. Introduction to research in education. 5th ed. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College.

Bailis, L. and B. Lewis. 2003. Overview of what is known about the scope of community-based service-learning in the United States. The Generator, 21(3): 17-19.

Billig, S. 2000. The effects of service-learning. School Administrator, 57(7): 14-19.

Blyth, D., R. Saito and T. Berkas. 1997. A quantitative study of the impact of service-learning programs. In: Waterman, A. (ed.). Service-learning: Applications from the research. Mahweh, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Corporation for National and Community Service. n.d. http://www.cns.gov. November 16, 2003.

Critcher, C. and M.M. Gladstone. 1998. Utilizing the Delphi technique in a policy discussion: A case study of a privatized utility in Britain. Public Administration, 76, 431-449.

Delbeq, A., A. Van de Ven and D. Gustafson. 1975. Group techniques for program planning: A guide to nominal group and Delphi processes. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company.

Eyler, J. and D. Giles. 1999. Where's the learning in service-learning? San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gibson, L.J. and M.M. Miller. 1990. A Delphi model for planning "pre-emptive" regional economic diversification. Economic Development Review, 35-41.

Kraft, R. 1996. Service learning: An introduction to its theory, practice and effects. Education and Urban Society, 28(2): 131-159.

Linstone, H. and M. Turoff (eds.). 1975. The Delphi method: Techniques and applications. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Mantooth, L. and P. Hamilton. 2004. 4-H service learning standard and best practice guide. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee.

Melchior, A. 1999. Summary report: National evaluation of Learn and Serve America. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University.

National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, 42 U.S.C. § 12541 et seq (CNCS, 1993).

Ogden, C. 2002. Making an ImPACT: The power of community-based service learning. CYD Anthology 2002: 132-138.

Pritchard, I. (2002). Community service and service-learning in America: The state of the art. In Furco, A. and S. Billig (eds.). Service-learning: The essence of the pedagogy. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Safrit R. and A. Auck. 2003. Volunteerism, community service, and service-learning in Ohio 4-H'ers in grades 4-12. http://www.joe.org. Journal of Extension, 41(4). October 15, 2003.

Scales, P. and N. Leffert. 1999. Developmental assets: A synthesis of the scientific research on adolescent development. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

Shumer, R. and C. Cook. 1999. The status of service-learning in the United States: Some facts and figures. http://www.servicelearning.org. National Service-Learning Clearinghouse. November 2, 2003.

Skinner, R. and C. Chapman. 1999. Service-learning and community service in K-12 public schools. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education National Center for Educational Statistics.

Taylor, S. and R. Bogden. 1998. Introduction to qualitative research methods. 3rd edition. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Toole, J. and P. Toole. 1994. Compass Institute training materials. Saint Paul, MN: Authors.

Wade, R. 1997. Teachers of service-learning. In: Waterman, A. (ed.). Service-learning: Applications from the research. Mahweh, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Waterman, A. 1997a. An overview of service-learning and the role of research and evaluation in service-learning programs. In: Waterman, A. (ed.). Service-learning: Applications from the research. Mahweh, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Waterman, A. 1997b. The role of student characteristics in service-learning. In: Waterman, A. (ed.). Service-learning: Applications from the research. Mahweh, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.