

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE FINNISH 4-H ORGANIZATION
AND THE WISCONSIN 4-H ORGANIZATION

by

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ABSTRACT

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The education of today's youth, tomorrow's future, is the focus of the 4-H organization. The aim of the 4-H program is to develop life skills in youth using hands-on learning. 4-H began in the heartland of America in the early 1900's and soon stretched around the globe. 4-H or a partner organization of 4-H can be found in over 63 countries in the world (V. Gobeli, personal communication, February 25, 2002). The programming, structure, and principles of 4-H programs around the world are all based on the program that began in the United States, but the methods used are different in every country. It is even different among states in the United States.

Each program has unique ideas used in the education of youth, but little communication exists to share these ideas among countries. The purpose of this study is to compare another country's 4-H program to the program that has been long established

in Wisconsin. The goal of the study is to show the similarities and difference of two programs that have been created using the same theme, “learning by doing.” Due to the scope of this research, the researcher chose to look only at one country. The country of Finland was chosen for comparison because of its location, similar structure, and its well-established example of European youth programming.

The researcher looked at the history of the two programs to help establish the similarities and difference that might exist. 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. The researcher also found that many articles have been written to show an importance in international programming and international travel.

The research was done using ethnographic research along with a qualitative written survey and various interviews. The written survey was used to gain basic information before ethnographic research began. The research revealed that although the programs have the same basic goal, the two programs are very different. The largest differences were seen in projects offered, staff roles, leaders participation, and competition. It was found that both 4-H programs contained ideas of superior quality. If these ideas were shared, it could help to improve the program in the other country. The research not only compared the two programs, but also recommended further programs or studies that could be established based on the research performed.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Background of the Research Question

The societal training of youth today is a problem and concern that is often addressed on a daily basis. Society is always looking for ways to improve the future generation. There are many organizations that are responsible for the molding and training of tomorrow's adults, today's youth. Some of the organizations are privately funded, while the government funds others. Although these organizations serve the same general purpose, there is little communication among them to make sure the work they are doing is actually making a difference in the lives of their clientele. One such organization is 4-H.

4-H is an organization that was founded in the heartland of America in the early 1900's. Since its founding, 4-H has stretched around the globe. 4-H or a partner organization of 4-H can be found in over 63 countries in the world (V. Gobeli, personal communication, February 25, 2002). Although these organizations are all based on the same principles of training youth for the future, the methods used to reach this goal are different in every country. It is even different among states in the United States.

In Wisconsin, and the entire United States, 4-H has actively been moving beyond the traditional farming approach that started the original organization. It continues to expand to include the inner-city population, the underprivileged, and others. Because there is little sharing that goes on among 4-H programs around the world it is unknown whether 4-H programs in other countries are progressing at the same pace, or in the same fashion as those in Wisconsin. Even though we have a vast majority of technological

advances that would make this communication possible little has been done to see what kind of programs exist in other areas of the world.

Many 4-H programs in other countries are run entirely different than the program in Wisconsin. The purpose of this study is to compare another country's 4-H program to the program that has long been established in Wisconsin. The goal of the study is to show the similarities and difference of two programs that have been established using the same theme, "learning by doing."

Knowing that a study of all 4-H programs in the world would be too extensive for this research, 4-H programs throughout the world were investigated to see which program was comparable to Wisconsin 4-H. Many of the programs are so different than the traditional Wisconsin 4-H program that a comparative study would be uncalled for, as there would be no basis to use for comparison. Many European countries and those in Australia use a program called Rural Youth that focuses mainly on older teenagers and adults. Another thing to consider when looking at a program for comparison is the geographical area and the kind of projects that are undertaken in the country. With all of this in mind the country of Finland was chosen to use for comparison.

Finland is said by many to have one of the most developed 4-H programs in all of Europe. The program's origin is directly related to the program in the United States, and the current target audience has similarities to Wisconsin 4-H. Although Finland is located much farther north of the equator than Wisconsin the climate is very similar due to the warming effect of the Baltic Sea, which means that many agriculture practices are the same in Finland as they are in Wisconsin.

The research question to be addressed in this study is simple. The study seeks to examine what similarities and difference exists between the Finnish 4-H Organization and the Wisconsin 4-H Organization.

If a person is not involved with the 4-H program, or has no idea of the general 4-H structure, there are many key terms and ideas that make little sense and must be further explained. The first is 4-H. 4-H is a youth organization established in the United States in the early 1900's. Its exact place and date of origin are unknown, as there were many of these programs started at the same time in many different places. No one place or date can be given for the start of 4-H. In the United States, 4-H has grown to reach hundreds of thousands of children each year. Currently, over 193,900 youth in Wisconsin are involved in 4-H activities (J. Ballweg, personal communication, February 27, 2002).

The 4-H pledge seen below identifies the importance of each of the "h" words that are used as a fundamental part of the program. "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 Lore, n.d.). Head, heart, hands, and health are the keys to the success of 4-H. 4-H members are taught to perform activities and projects using the concepts outlined in the 4-H pledge.

The start of 4-H was spurred by two important forces. The turn of the century saw young people moving from rural areas to the cities. Many feared there was a lack of job opportunities in rural areas. One goal of 4-H work was to increase the education in rural areas. This would not only help those who would continue to work in rural areas, but it would also help rural youth adjust to life in urban areas. 4-H was also seen as a way to educate the rural public on the improvements of agricultural and mechanical arts

practices, a concept that was not being addressed in schools. 4-H has undergone many distinct changes over the years (4-H History, n.d.). Today the focus has moved away from agriculture, but continues to teach children life skills in a learning by doing fashion. Most 4-H programs are based on hands-on learning with the result being an increase in valuable life skills.

4-H is a part of the University system and is administered by the state's Land Grant College. Cooperative Extension, and in turn the 4-H program, is found in all 50 of the United States along with Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. In Wisconsin, the Land Grant campus is in Madison. The program is funded through monies from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), state taxes, and county taxes. At least one 4-H Youth Development Agent can be found in each of Wisconsin's seventy-two counties. This individual works with the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) and is in charge of 4-H and youth programs in that geographical area.

Significance of the Study

The 4-H pledge as stated in the previous section ends with the following words: "for my club, my community, my country, and my world." The words "and my world" were added to the pledge in 1973 to signify the reality that 4-H had grown to a program that encompasses over 63 countries (V. Gobeli, personal communication, February 25, 2002) in North America, Asia, Africa, Europe, and South America (Wessel, 1982). The United States Department of Agriculture noted that world concepts play an important part not only in 4-H, but in the everyday lives of the youth it serves.

The importance of the world concept has been seen since the beginning of the International Four-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) in 1948 (Wessel, 1982), but little has been

done to explore the international possibilities of the 4-H program. This study could provide an open door to the possibilities of communication with other youth development programs worldwide similar to the 4-H program in the United States. International awareness is becoming an important concept for today's youth. Growing up in the United States we often overlook the rest of the world and focus on our history, our language, cultures, and customs. Bringing an international focus to youth programs is an investment in the future.

Currently 4-H events often happen between counties and sometimes even between states, however little has been done to pursue the possibilities of idea sharing between countries. Developing new ideas and writing new literature is an expensive and time-consuming task. Many of the ideas and concepts that have been developed in the United States have reached to other countries, yet there has been little done to explore the direction these ideas have taken.

Conceptual Assumptions

Before beginning the research on this topic the researcher knew little about the Finnish 4-H Organization. Of all the European 4-H programs, Finland is said to have one of the most similar programs to that found in Wisconsin (C. Babich Morrow, personal communication, January 17, 2001). With this in mind it was assumed that some type of comparison could be made of the two programs. In turn with the information gained there is potential of establishing new projects and activities in Finland as well as in Wisconsin by using the other country for an example and a resource.

Preliminary research also found that the Finnish 4-H Organization is a spin off of the program established here in the United States. Two men from Finland were touring

the United States in 1919, saw the program as a successful educational tool and returned to their country to start a similar program. A program based on the ideas observed was officially established in Finland in 1928 (Neiminen, 1995). . The conclusion was that elements of the program should be consistent with the core 4-H theme of teaching life skills in a “learning by doing” fashion.

Outline for the Remainder of Thesis

This chapter has given a brief introduction of the focus of this study that compares the Finnish 4-H Organization and the Wisconsin 4-H Organization. The significance of this research is that each program is made up of different qualities that can be shared with the other. The final conclusions will bring about ways that the two program’s ideas can be shared and ideally implemented for the future success of both programs.

The study will continue by reviewing the literature used for the study. This chapter will allow the reader to acquaint themselves with the two programs and set up a framework for the ethnographic research that was performed.

The third chapter will describe in detail the preliminary written survey that was used to gain information for the ethnographic research along with the ethnographic research that was performed. This section will also address the limitations of the procedure.

The fourth chapter will review the findings produced by the preliminary written survey and the ethnographic research. The section will address results found in both Finland and the United States, along with additional information gained through ethnographic research.

The study will end with a brief summary and the conclusions that have been reached, and the direct comparisons and contrasts that were found will be analyzed. Further recommendations as a result of the research that was completed will also be discussed.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Organization of Present Chapter

Due to a lack of previous research comparing international youth programs, little has been written to base further research on. This chapter will look at the history of both the Wisconsin 4-H Organization and the Finnish 4-H Organization. It will provide the reader with background information and in turn lay the framework for the study. This chapter will introduce the reference materials used to develop the research method.

A Global Look at the History of 4-H

The passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 was the beginning of what is now a worldwide youth development movement known as 4-H (4-H History, n.d.). In the United States alone there are over 6.8 million youth involved in 4-H programs (4-H Fact, n.d.). The concept of educating rural youth started long before money was actually allocated by the United States government. By the time Cooperative Extension was officially started in 1914 almost every state had boys and girls participating in club work (4-H History, n.d.).

The 4-H program's beginning cannot be credited to one location or one person, rather a group of people in many different places who were all concerned about the education of rural youth. A.B. Graham established the concepts of education in a club atmosphere in 1901 in the state of Ohio. In 1902 Graham formed clubs that elected officers, focused on specific projects, held meetings, and kept records of their accomplishments; concepts comparable to 4-H activities of the 21st century (4-H History, n.d.).

The concepts of rural club work and educational demonstrations were popular and spread across the United States. By the year 1905, most states had 4-H clubs, and the passing of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, beginning Cooperative Extension, only helped in this effort (4-H History, n.d.). The concept of 4-H not only spread in the United States, the idea of a youth organization to educate rural youth was a popular idea around the world. Word reached Scandinavia in 1926 with the formation of the Danish 4-H program, followed by Finland in 1928. By 1930 Belgium, England, France, and the Netherlands had started successful rural youth education programs (Organization, 1958).

The end of World War II was the true beginning of the concept of international youth programs. At the end of the war many youth met to discuss international relations, world peace, the United Nations, and the concept of an exchange program. In 1946, four former 4-H members from the state of New York decided to address the issue of an international exchange. Two years later the International Farm Youth Exchange (IFYE) was started, the name was changed to International Four-H Youth Exchange in 1974 (Thompson, 1985).

IFYE expanded the boundaries of 4-H worldwide. Members of the United States 4-H programs were given the opportunity to share ideas with other countries and in turn to learn new concepts from the program they are visiting. Ideally the knowledge gained is brought back to the United States and shared with Youth Development Agents, State 4-H Specialists, 4-H members, 4-H leaders, and the general public. Since the beginning of IFYE in 1948 over 5,000 4-H members from the United States have participated in this program (CD International, 2001).

In the year 2002, the United States 4-H program celebrates 100 years of club work. The past 100 years have seen a great deal of change; the organization has refocused its primary concern from improving agriculture production and food preservation to the development of young people (4-H History, n.d.). 4-H continues to grow internationally with over 63 countries in the world currently participating in 4-H related activities (V. Gobeli, personal communication, February 25, 2002).

The History of the Finnish 4-H Program

A youth program based on agriculture was first established in Finland in 1928. The youth work officially took on the 4-H name in 1939 with 300 associations and more than 45,000 members (Nieminen, 1995). Today the Finnish 4-H Organization is open to youth ages seven to twenty eight and has approximately 70,000 members representing 3,000 4-H clubs (Finnish, 2001).

Bertel Bockstromin is credited with bringing the original idea of club work to Finland. Bockstromin was one of two men who visited the United States in 1919 on a study tour. The men observed youth participating in club work as part of their tour. Bockstromin saw the value that club work had on the United States society. Upon returning to Finland Bockstromin presented the idea to Erik Mandelin, an employee at the office of the Ministry of Agriculture (Nieminen, 1995).

In 1922 Bockstromin wrote about the club activities he had witnessed in the United States. In his writings, he suggested the Finnish youth could begin the same type of program including raising pigs, planting vegetable gardens, and canning. Bockstromin also focused on forestry clubs, and saw them as a way to make the farm life richer and more fulfilling. Bockstromin promoted 4-H activities as an excellent way to teach young

people to be self-reliant and develop as better farmers and farmer's wives (Nieminen, 1995).

His thoughts and ideas were highly supported by his friend Erik Mandelin and Madelin's new employer the Mannerheim Children's Association. In 1925, Kalle Kalervo was hired to begin the first club in Suonenjoeki, Finland. The following year, the Rockefeller Foundation, based in the United States, agreed to assist in additional funding of club work and four more people were hired to establish youth club work through the Ministry of Agriculture. The beginning clubs were highly influenced by American ideas. The workers would visit club members and give them direction with their projects, usually gardening or home economics, and fall competitions would be held and prizes given for outstanding club work (Nieminen, 1995).

Conflict soon arose between the Mannerheim Children's Association, the Ministry of Agriculture and other smaller organization in Finland that had established youth club work. Each of the organizations had different ideas and, even though they were doing the same work, wanted to be independent of each other. On November 20, 1928 an official meeting was held to establish a new organization that would be in charge of youth education and club work. Twelve organizations that were actively involved in club work at the time were invited to assist in the development of the new organization (Nieminen, 1995).

In 1929, the Finnish government provided 300,000 Finnish Marks and 250,000 Finnish Marks were given by the Rockefeller Foundation for the official establishment of the Confederation of Agricultural Youth Clubs, later 4-H. When it was first established there were 100 advisors and 10,000 club members. In the beginning the concept of club

work was very well received by the Finnish population. With the start of WWII, 4-H numbers soared to over 100,000 members. Due to the war many youth were expected to take on the jobs of adults and 4-H took this opportunity to step in and assist the youth with the challenges they were facing. However, by 1953, interest in club work had declined and 4-H recorded its lowest membership (Nieminen,1995).

The History of the Wisconsin 4-H Program

The beginning of Wisconsin 4-H followed the process used to start 4-H in the United States. The first youth agricultural activities in Wisconsin were lead by Ransom Asa Moore. Moore sponsored the first corn roundup show at the Richland County fair on September 27-30, 1904. The original show awarded participants monetary prizes. However, in 1909 Moore decided that awarding scholarships to participate in youth courses at the College of Agriculture would provide a more lasting experience (McIntyre, 1962).

The year 1914 brought the establishment of the Cooperative Extension System (CES) in the United States through the Smith-Lever Act. Wisconsin CES was started at the Madison Land Grant College. That same year University of Wisconsin agronomist and Horicon School Superintendent, T. L. Bewick, was named the first state leader of boys' and girls' club work in Wisconsin. The agriculture education concept Moore started quickly spread throughout Wisconsin. In 1914, only ten years after Moore's first contest, thirty different agricultural and academic contests had been established with participation from youth in 57 counties. The first official club for young people in Wisconsin was started on October 30, 1914 in Walworth County. Although the first club

meeting had a small turnout of only seven members, two months later the club had grown to 21 members (McIntyre, 1962).

Under Bewick's direction, the 4-H program grew steadily until the start of World War I. The start of the war made the thought of organizing strong clubs seem almost impossible. Bewick worried that World War I was the end of the 4-H organizations. However, the war had the opposite effect on organized club work. World War I caused people to realize the importance of food production and 4-H club work soared. During World War I Bewick reported 6,320 youth working on projects that conserved food products totaling \$125,000 (McIntyre, 1962).

In 1927, Wisconsin appointed the first full-time county 4-H club leaders in Marathon, Marinette, and Milwaukee counties. The numbers continued to grow and in 1947 thirty counties had county agents (McIntyre, 1962).

Wisconsin 4-H has been very active in the installation of new programs. In the 1920's, Wisconsin was one of the first states to encourage achievement of their members and designed the Badger 4-H enrollment pin for new members and a second pin to those who finished projects and submitted record books. By the end of the 1930's, social affairs and community activities began to overshadow project achievement. A concentration was placed on personality, leisure time, and community betterment (McIntyre, 1962).

World War II brought hard times to the United States and the Wisconsin 4-H program. County agents were asked to focus on a variety of defense assignments and the work of 4-H club programming was not considered a high priority. Under the supervision of local club leaders, Wisconsin 4-H members did assist in war efforts.

Project members collected 5,616,000 pounds of scrap metal and 339,000 pound of paper and rags for salvage use. During this time over 1,000 boys also joined the armed forces and 8,000 girls worked in the fields (McIntyre, 1962).

The war era caused 4-H members to focus on food production and fundraising efforts that were needed for the success of World War II. Since then 4-H has returned to a focus on social affairs and community activities. Today 4-H continues to progress and focus on the strengthening of life skills, community service, and diversity awareness. Each year new efforts are made to assist in the development of Wisconsin 4-H members for the future.

The Importance of International 4-H Programming

Minimal research has been done comparing international programs or looking at ways in which sharing can happen among these programs. However, research has been done to address the importance of international exchange programs and international activities among youth and in youth organizations.

Each day the world is becoming a more global community. Life is no longer confined to the community that a person grows up in, the state they live in, or even the nation where they hold citizenship. Today life has an international aspect. Today businesses are looking for employees with international experience. An applicant who has a cultural awareness experience and understands how different cultures conduct business has a distinct advantage in today's job market (Boyd, 2001).

One study conducted by the Arizona 4-H program and the National Association of the Partners of the Americans, Incorporated looked at an exchange program involving Arizona 4-H and youth in Durango, Mexico. Research found the exchange influenced

the participants but it also impacted the communities involved in the exchange. The international experience was found to help increase interdependence, change stereotypes, establish friendships, and enhance cultural awareness. The Durango, Mexico exchange with Arizona was unique as it allowed two communities in different countries, but the same geographical location, to explore cultural barriers with the results going beyond the youth involved and reaching into the communities (Etling, 1990).

Another study conducted by the California Psychological Inventory (CPI) looked at personality changes among 4-H members who traveled to Japan for one-month home-stays as part of the 4-H/Labo Exchange. The study found that upon returning from their experience the participants were more open-minded, had increased independence, and were less conventional. The experience helped youth not only learn about a new culture, but in turn made them more aware of their own society and the values that shaped their lives (Stitsworth, 1988).

The Eisenhower Leadership Program (ELP) conducted a study with IFYE alumni in the state of Texas. The study found that IFYE participants were more aware of global events, more sensitive to other cultures, and more involved in community activities. It also found the IFYE participants were not the only people affected by their participation in the program. The participants felt their family, friends, and community were more aware of global events, and more sensitive to other cultures as a result of their participation (Boyd, 2001).

An article by Etling, Reaman, and Sawi (1993) addressed the fact that barriers exist, eliminating the chance for many youth to participate in exchange programs. The article lists expense, inadequate communication, and war recession affecting clients'

attitudes about global citizenship as common barriers in youth programs. However, not everyone has to participate in an exchange program. Sharing information among countries, creating activities that revolved around international topics, or talking to others who have international experience can help in the international education of youth. An international experience not only affects the person involved in the experience, it affects everyone they come in contact with.

Summary of Chapter

When the Smith-Lever Act was passed in 1914, almost every state in the United States was participating in rural agricultural club work. The start of 4-H cannot be credited to any one person or location. The program that started to educate the rural youth of the United States on agricultural practices has grown and evolved over the past 100 years. 4-H currently encompasses 63 countries in the world.

The 4-H program was introduced to the country of Finland in 1919. Two Finnish men observed the program while touring the United States. One, Bertel Bockstomin, saw the value 4-H had in the United States and felt the concepts and values would be applicable in Finland. Club work officially started in 1928 when the program became part of the Ministry of Agriculture. Finland currently has 70,000 members representing 3,000 clubs.

Youth agricultural activities first started in Wisconsin under the direction of Ransom Asa Moore who sponsored a corn roundup show in Richland County. The first official club for young people was started in 1914 in Walworth County. By 1927 club work in Wisconsin had grown enough to support three full-time county 4-H club leaders. The war era focused the 4-H efforts to fundraising and food production. Older boy club

members joined the military service and older girl members worked in the fields. After the war the focus returned to build social skills and life skills.

International programming is an important part of the current 4-H program. 4-H has spread across the world and can currently be found in more than 63 countries.

Cultural awareness is an important part of our society and teaching youth can only assist in the future success of 4-H. Exchanges have been found to increase cultural awareness not only in those who participate in the exchanges, but also people that participants come in contact with.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODS

Description and Design of the Research Methodology

The research was done using ethnographic research along with a qualitative written survey and various interviews. The research looked to address the similarities and differences of the Wisconsin 4-H Organization and the Finnish 4-H Organization and answer the research question.

The written survey was done as preliminary work to the ethnographic research that would be completed in Finland. A written survey (Appendix A and B) was developed using information gained from contact with the Finnish 4-H Federation, the International Four-H Youth Exchange Program (IFYE), and Dave Pace, of the University of Minnesota Extension Service. Mr. Pace was consulted because of the direct contact he had with staff members in Finland as part of an annual eight-state exchange conducted through the University of Minnesota Extension System.

The ethnographic research began in 1984 and has continued until the present. The researcher was a member of the Jefferson County 4-H program, participating as an active member of the Lucky Clovers 4-H club in Watertown, Wisconsin from 1984 until 1996. During this time direct observation was made of the Wisconsin 4-H program from the 4-H member's point of view. The researcher kept various records regarding participation in this organization over an 11-year period. Research was done on all levels of 4-H; club, county, district, state, and national events were part of the experience.

After 1996, research was done on the collegiate level and in the professional realm. Five different County Extension offices throughout the state of Wisconsin employed the researcher including, Dodge and Green Counties located in southern

Wisconsin, Sauk County in central Wisconsin, and Pierce and St. Croix Counties in the northwest region of Wisconsin. Four of the employment periods were in the summer and one spanned over three school terms. During this time the researcher also served as a leader for projects and clubs in Pierce County and was often asked to speak or assist with fair judging, workshops, and other 4-H events.

In the beginning of 1999, research moved to a national level where employment began at the National 4-H Center in Washington, D.C. While in Washington, D.C. observation was made regarding the relationship the United States Department of Agriculture, the National 4-H Council, and the state of Wisconsin had with each other regarding 4-H activities.

In the summer of 2001 research began in Finland for a six-month period. During this six-month period the researcher was participating in the International Four-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) program. The researcher was selected to represent Wisconsin and the United States in Finland. Applicants for this program must complete a state and national application along with an interview. The program is designed to provide a cultural experience for participants, while also allowing for individualized study. During this time, research was done regarding all levels of 4-H. During the six months, the researcher spent time living with families, assisting at the Finnish 4-H Federation, visiting District offices, living with 4-H advisors, and participating in a number of different 4-H activities. While in Finland, the researcher focused on answering the questions that were developed for the preliminary written survey.

Selection of Subjects and Instrumentation

It was decided that it was necessary to do some type of preliminary work before leaving the country and beginning the ethnographic research in Finland. Because little had been done in regards to this subject, or any subject like it in the past, the researcher developed a preliminary written survey.

Forty-three people from the United States who had participated in the IFYE program as a representative to Finland were sent the written survey. Because of the limited number of people available to ask, and the fact that each individual experience in Finland would have been very different, it was decided to send the written survey to all forty-three people. Addresses were obtained from CD International, Incorporated the organization currently overseeing the United States portion of the IFYE program.

The written survey questions were also the basis of interviews done with key members of the 4-H organizations in Wisconsin, the United States, and Finland. Before leaving and after returning from Finland, the researcher talked to the leaders of the Wisconsin 4-H Organization, a member of the 4-H staff at the United States Department of Agriculture, the coordinator of the International Four-H Youth Exchange, and an International Specialist in the Minnesota Cooperative Extension System. These individuals were chosen based on their knowledge of the research question.

The instrument was a short answer written survey developed to explore the similarities and differences of the Finnish 4-H Organization and the United States Organization. E-mail correspondence was done with David Pace, University of Minnesota Extension (personal communication, April 26, 2001), and with Mirka Pajunen, Finnish 4-H Federation Project Secretary (personal communication, April 6, 2001), to

look at general differences and similarities between the two programs. This information was used to develop a seventeen question written survey.

The instrument asks for basic demographic information including what year the participant traveled to Finland, if they were male or female, and their current age. An option was given of sending a response via mail or e-mail.

A letter of accompaniment (Appendix A) was sent with the written survey explaining the relevance of the study along with general information about the researcher and the confidentiality of any responses given. A copy of this letter and the written survey instrument can be found in the appendix of this study.

Due to the fact that the written survey was developed using information gained from both the Finnish 4-H Federation and the 4-H program in the United States, it also served as the basis for interviews that were done in the United States and in Finland. Ethnographic research, consisting of observation and interviews, was performed in both Finland and the United States.

Data Collection and Recording

The written survey had a low rate of response. Only seven of the forty-three preliminary written surveys were returned. Follow-up letters or calls were not performed due to the lack of consistency found in the written surveys that were returned. The researcher found those who did return the written survey had very different experiences while in Finland. The researcher also found that participants who responded commented on not having direct contact with the Finnish 4-H Program during the exchange period.

The ethnographic research in the United States consisted of eleven years of 4-H membership, documented through 4-H record books, Clover Award Forms, and

Membership Evaluation Forms. Research was also done through employment with the Wisconsin Cooperative Extension System and National 4-H Council. Reports were written and evaluations given at the five different counties of employment and at National 4-H Council.

In Finland the ethnographic research was done through observation and interviews. Each day the researcher kept a journal recording the various points on which comparisons could be made along with other general information gained.

Once in Finland, the Finnish 4-H Federation placed the researcher with eight different families in different geographical associations throughout Finland. The families were active 4-H members who would be able to share information with the researcher. The researcher was also invited to volunteer at the Finnish 4-H Federation in Helsinki for one week during the six-month period to perform interviews and general observations.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data from the returned written surveys was categorized by question. There were two data sections for each question, one section for information pertaining to Finland and one section for information pertaining to the United States. The information was then grouped by common themes. These themes were used as reference for the ethnographic study performed in Finland.

The researcher's personal journal from Finland was read through numerous times. Thoughts and ideas that pertained to the comparison of the Finnish 4-H Organization and the Wisconsin 4-H Organization were highlighted. These ideas were then grouped by themes for further comparison. The same process was used when looking at the interviews with key members of the Finnish 4-H Federation and key members of

4-H in the United States. The themes found in the journal and ethnographic study in Finland were then compared to the 4-H membership records of the researcher.

Limitations of Methodology and Procedures

The 4-H program is an unexplored world. There are many ideas and concepts that if explored, would help create new programs and better existing programs. Very little research has been done relating to international programming and 4-H. Taking the idea a step further to concentrate on sharing among countries is an idea that is often talked about, but even less has been done to look into this possibility. The lack of previous studies limited the researcher's ability to better focus the study on specific items that could be used to increase the amount of international sharing.

The International Four-H Youth Exchange Program (IFYE) is a diverse program that provides a unique experience to each individual who participates. The original survey was unable to gain a great deal of useable information because of this characteristic. Past IFYE participants are some of the only individuals who have had the opportunity to be part of both Finnish 4-H and 4-H in the United States. This should make them prime candidates to provide valuable information, however each participant traveled to Finland with their own goals in mind and for that reason the knowledge they gain is very different.

The IFYE program is an excellent way to experience a different culture first hand. The program was designed as a cultural learning experience. Because of this, many individuals who participated in the program were not interested in research. Many of the IFYE host families are repeat hosts and have certain expectations of the experience they are providing for their visitor. While performing research in Finland the researcher was

required to share expectations with each family in regards to seeing the 4-H program first hand.

In Wisconsin and in Finland, the 4-H program varies in each community. A 4-H Youth Development Agent in Wisconsin or a 4-H Advisor in Finland manage the county program. These individuals are responsible for the programs in their respected geographical area, which results in many differences and little continuity. All programs must follow specific guidelines set at the national and state level, but many program decisions are left in the hands of 4-H Advisors and 4-H Agents.

The study was also limited in that research in Finland was only done over a six-month period. The six-month restriction made the ethnographic research very intense. Although Finnish youth learn how to speak English starting in third grade, some language barriers were present during the research. In most instances someone was available to interpret the information. Unfortunately, meaning is often lost in interpretation. The language barrier also made it hard for the researcher to obtain additional information required upon returning to the United States.

The 4-H concept is diverse. The term 4-H can mean many different things depending on your location in the world, in the United States, and even in individual counties in Wisconsin. This makes it hard to focus on the type of programming to compare. 4-H programs in Wisconsin reach over 193,000 members, while only 44,800 members are involved directly in club work. In Finland membership numbers are based on the number of youth that pay dues to the Finnish 4-H Federation (J. Ballweg, personal communication, February 27, 2002). Finland currently records over 70,000 4-H

members, a number that does not take into account additional youth reached through 4-H programming (Finnish 2001).

Summary of Chapter

The research methods used were a combination of a preliminary research written survey, interviews, and ethnographic research. The preliminary written survey was based on information the researcher gained through e-mail conversations with members of the 4-H program in Minnesota and in Finland. The same information was the focus of the interviews and ethnographic research.

The researcher first surveyed past International Four-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) Representatives to Finland for information. The written survey was sent to forty-three past IFYE participants. Only seven written surveys were returned. The information gathered showed that each of the participants had a different experience, often unrelated to the 4-H program. Interviews were done with key 4-H workers from Minnesota 4-H, the United States Department of Agriculture, Wisconsin 4-H, and the Finnish 4-H Federation. Ethnographic research was done in Wisconsin for the past 16 years where the researcher was a Jefferson County 4-H member, a Pierce County 4-H leader, a University of Wisconsin–River Falls collegiate 4-H member, an employee of the University of Wisconsin Extension System, and an employee of National 4-H Council. In Finland the ethnographic research was over a six-month period. During this time the researcher stayed with eight Finnish 4-H families who were part of the 4-H Organization, attended various 4-H meetings and events, and spent one week volunteering at the Finnish 4-H Federation.

During the six-month stay in Finland, the researcher kept a daily journal of what was seen and done as it related to 4-H. Interviews were also performed with key members of the Finnish 4-H Organization. The main ideas and themes from the written survey, journal, and interviews were recorded. This information was then compared with the 4-H membership records obtained by the researcher during membership and employment with Wisconsin 4-H.

The chapter also discussed the limitation of the study. A more lengthy study would have led to additional information and programming ideas. A lack of past knowledge of how the two programs compare made it difficult for the researcher to develop expectations when beginning research. This caused the researcher to look at a variety of ideas, when a more precise study would have provided more specific information. The lack of continuity among 4-H programs was also a limiting factor.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Results of Written Survey

Only seven individuals responded to the written survey, which was sent to forty-three previous International Four-H Youth (IFYE) participants. The written survey was sent out before the ethnographic research in Finland began. The goal was to use the results of the written survey to better focus the ethnographic research in Finland.

The resulting data was tabulated and analyzed. It was found that many of the IFYE participants did not observe the 4-H programs as part of their exchange experience and were unaware of the differences that existed between the two organizations. Many of the written surveys came back blank or the participant responded with a do not know answer. It also showed that each person who responded to the written survey had a very different experience while in Finland.

The written survey did reveal that the Finnish 4-H organization is a government-supported program with a project focus different than that of Wisconsin. It was observed by past IFYE participants that the projects are based on helping out the community and have little basis on competition.

Finland Research Results Related to Questions Originally Developed

This section will explain in detail the answers to the questions that were developed from the initial interviews and written survey as they relate to the Finnish 4-H Federation. A copy of the questions can be reviewed as part of the written survey in the appendix of this thesis.

The review of literature completely addresses the historical information of the Finnish 4-H Organization. Today the Finnish 4-H Organization is funded the same way

it was when it first started in 1928. The government provides each association with eighty percent of the money they need for all 4-H activities. The money provided by the government is used to pay the association advisor, to buy supplies, to pay 4-H leaders, and cover any other expenses incurred by the 4-H association. Of the money provided by the government half of it is given by the 4-H district, which receives the money from the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture, and the other half is provided by the local association government (A. Ylonen, personal communication, August, 20, 2001). The money from the association is not guaranteed money. Each year the 4-H advisor and association leaders board must request the money. Due to decreasing population in the rural associations each year the money becomes harder to obtain and the amount given is declining.

With only eighty percent of the budget provided by the government, twenty percent must be funded by other projects or donations (A. Immonen, personal communication, July 31, 2001). In Finland there are very few organizations with extra money willing to make donations to non-profit organizations. 4-H advisors are often left to establish ways to raise money. Advisors have come up with many creative ideas to raise the needed money. Some associations sell plots of land in the city to be used as urban gardens, others have fundraisers selling items made by members, and others do community services projects, for which they are paid (A. Ruotsalainen, personal communication, October 10, 2001). Many 4-H members seek employment through the 4-H organization, and this is another way that associations raise money (P. Kiviranta, personal communication, August 11, 2001). Members are paid for different tasks they do, such as pet sitting or caring for elderly people. A percentage of their pay is given to

the 4-H association. Each member is also required to pay 120 Finnish marks, approximately twenty United States dollars, per year as dues. Half of this money goes directly to the 4-H association while the other half is used to pay cost associated with a monthly magazine that each 4-H member receives. The magazine is a publication of the Finnish 4-H Federation (A. Ylonen, personal communication, August 20, 2001).

Often there is not enough money raised to cover all expenses the association incurs and the result is often a layoff of the 4-H advisor. Due to the unique roles of the 4-H advisors in Finland, this also means that all 4-H club work is halted during the lay-off (P. Kekkonen, personal communication, September 25, 2001). This is not the only problem that results from the small budgets that each association has; a lack of funding also causes a lack of communication among members and 4-H advisors. On average, only one mailing is sent to members from the advisor per year. The mailing is usually at the beginning of September after the dues for the upcoming year have been paid. Activities that are not part of this mailing are advertised in newspapers or flyers at school (S. Malinen, personal communication, September 4, 2001).

The structure of the Finnish 4-H program starts at the national level where the Finnish 4-H Federation is under the direction of the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and an elected board of twenty-three members who make most of the decisions. The 4-H action plan is developed at the Meeting of Representatives, held every three years. Other decisions made throughout the year are made by a seven-member board that is elected from the members at the Meeting of Representatives. The Federation itself has a director and numerous specialists dealing with specific projects. The seven-member board monitors the work of these individuals.

Finland is divided into fourteen districts. Districts are then divided into associations; Finland has 360 associations or municipalities. Not all of the associations have a 4-H program. If the local government is willing to give a percentage of money for the 4-H Advisor's salary, additional funding from the district is given to support the 4-H program. Currently in Finland, 310 associations have 4-H programming (Youth 2001).

In each District Office you will find at least three employees. The District Advisor, who is in charge of membership, hiring and handling of money, runs the District. The other professional is a Training Manager, in charge of training new advisors, updating advisors on new ideas and technology, and developing training for leaders and members as requested by the advisors. These two positions also share a secretary who performs general office work. Other employees that may work out of the District Office are part of grant-funded programs, usually supported by the European Union (P. Kiviranta, personal communication, August 14, 2001).

Each association that supports 4-H programming has a permanent staff member known as a 4-H Advisor. The role of the advisor is to regulate all paperwork related to the 4-H association in which they are employed. They are also in charge of coordinating club leaders. If a club does not have a leader, the 4-H Advisor is in charge of all programming for that club. Due to lack of funds in each association, the 4-H Advisor is also in charge of raising money for the 4-H programs and their own salary. The 4-H advisor reports to a board of community leaders (S. Henttonen, personal communication, August 15, 2001).

Due to the nature of the position, the education level varies among associations. The 4-H Advisor usually has a degree from a technical school (P. Kiviranta, personal

communication, August 15, 2001). Due to the low pay that 4-H Advisors receive in Finland, only 96,000 marks or approximately 14,800 United States dollars, it is often hard to find someone with a degree (M. Pajunen, personal communication, January 24, 2001). In most cases associations do their own hiring and select an individual who enjoys working with children and is able to handle the tasks assigned to a 4-H Advisor.

The person who takes on the role of 4-H Advisor must be a dedicated individual. Their role is very important within the community. They are seen as a youth worker and advocate of youth issues. This often means the image of the 4-H program relies on the image of the 4-H Advisor. If the advisor is enthusiastic about the 4-H program, the program is more likely to thrive in that area (T. Lilya, personal communication September 5, 2001). A thriving program produces more money for programming and a higher number of members.

The 4-H Advisor position is partly government funded so the 4-H Advisor's office is often part of the association's government offices, similar to a town hall in the United States. If the 4-H Advisor does not have an office in the association office, their office location will be part of a building run by the government. The 4-H Advisor works alone without a secretary. This means that a major portion of their work also includes general office duties including typing and sending out mailings. There are a few 4-H advisors that have additional staff in their associations. If additional staff is available the positions are usually grant funded or European Union funded positions (A. Mustonen, personal communication, November 25, 2001).

Once the 4-H Advisor is hired, the training varies among associations. If the past 4-H Advisor is still an active part of the association, the new advisor's start date will

overlap with the ending date of the past Advisor (S. Malinen, personal communication, September 4, 2001). This is done so the past 4-H Advisor can train the incoming Advisor. If this ideal situation does not exist, the district is responsible for training. The district will try to set up some kind of mentoring program in which the new advisor can call a veteran 4-H Advisor for assistance. Because specific programming in each association differs so much the board of leaders that advises the 4-H Advisor is also important in the training of the Advisor. If the Advisor notices a particular subject they are having problems understanding they can also request that the District Training Manager hold a special training on that subject. However, training is not done unless an Advisor requests it (S. Henttonen, personal communication, August 14, 2001).

In each association, a board of volunteer leaders assists the Advisor. Members of this board are unpaid adults who have some type of interest in youth programming. Many of them are involved in Finnish politics and some have children in the 4-H program or have been a member in the program when they were younger (T. Palkkimaki, August 20, 2001). The job of the board is to oversee and evaluate the work of the 4-H Advisor and to help in fundraising efforts needed to support the 4-H program. In addition to a board of advocates for the 4-H program, the Advisor procures adults in their associations that will lead clubs. Usually the leaders are 4-H members who have outgrown the traditional club setting, but still want to stay active with 4-H activities. Others are parents and some are just dedicated community members (M. Pajunen, personal communication, August 31, 2001). Each leader is paid a small stipend for their services. Leaders are usually paid per meeting or per hour. An average leader would

earn about thirty-five marks or five United States dollars per hour or meeting (P. Kekkonen, personal communication, September 30, 2001).

The training of leaders is done on an association level. If the 4-H Advisor sees a specific training need in their association, they can make a request to the District Training Manager. Supplies for club meetings are obtained by the 4-H Advisor who buys supplies in bulk and then distributes them to different leaders for cost saving purposes. Leaders are not required to purchase any of their own supplies. Leaders are not required to have any specific skills and no screening process is performed (P. Kekkonen, personal communication, September 30, 2001).

The Finnish 4-H program currently has 70,000 4-H members. The largest numbers of 4-H members are those members involved in club work. The age of these members is seven to thirteen (Finnish, 2001), as most traditional Finnish 4-H club's meetings are after-school programs. On average, each club has about ten members. Some clubs only have four or five members and others have twenty or twenty-five members. Club size is often determined by the number of youth attending the local schools. The country schools in Finland can be very small having only twenty total students in all of the five grades.

During club meetings 4-H members stay after school and do some type of project or activity. In September, the beginning of each 4-H year which runs with the school calendar, clubs often decide on what project topic will be covered at each meeting and also elect officers for the club (A. Ruotsalainen, personal communication, October 16, 2001). The 4-H Advisor or club leader is then in charge of planning an activity related to the topic selected by the members. In some clubs, members are not given the opportunity

to make decisions about the year's activities. In these clubs, the Advisor or club leaders plan and implement the activities and programs for each meeting. Finnish 4-H clubs meet once a week or bi-monthly. Most of the activities are based on handicrafts or nature, however activities vary based on 4-H club member wants and the 4-H Advisor and club leaders knowledge.

Because of the numerous club meetings held each year, the 4-H Advisors and club leaders must be creative and design new projects weekly. Often, associations will share programming ideas with each other. Four to five local advisors will meet each month to share ideas and plan joint programs. Creating projects among more than one association also allows 4-H to survive in associations where funding is not available for the 4-H Advisor position (P, Kekkonen, personal communication, September 25, 2001).

Key members of the Finnish 4-H Federation are designing a new project step system. The step system will be broken down by ages, having each age do a specific type of project. The idea would help eliminate the weekly struggle of 4-H advisors to come up with new projects and activities to use at club meetings. Each step would focus on a new project area and include one or two specific themes. The step program is still in the beginning stages of development so specific details were not available at the time of the study. Some subjects being considered for theme ideas are popular projects like baking, forestry, animals, nature, sewing, and helping around the home. As members get older, the themes will be adjusted to include professional steps where youth can learn more about specific career enhancement tasks.

Under each theme in the step program, there will be specific tasks members perform in order to successfully complete the theme. Each theme will have about ten

steps. To complete the theme members will be required to achieve at least five steps of their choice. The step program was well received by the 4-H Advisors and members, however it is yet to be determined how it will specifically fit into the current 4-H program (M. Liukko, personal communication, September 6, 2001).

When 4-H members reach age fourteen, traditional Finnish club activities no longer attract their attention. Interests often turn to using the 4-H program to help them in other ways. At an older age, 4-H members are often interested in the program because it helps them earn money for themselves or their families. Pet sitting and caring for elderly are very popular 4-H projects among those fourteen and older, especially in urban areas. To participate in projects like this 4-H members are required to participate in a series of classes where specific training is given that will help the member handle situations related to the topic of interest. Once this training is completed, members are part of a list that is held by the 4-H association or the 4-H District. The list is used when community members call the 4-H Advisor looking for a pet-sitter, someone to help them around the house, or other services. The 4-H members are paid for the work they do, with part of the money going to the 4-H association to assist in 4-H association program funding (S. Malinen, personal communication, September 4, 2001).

Other popular projects for older 4-H members are projects related to forestry. Most rural 4-H associations have contracts with the local forest companies to supply seedling trees each year. On average a member that grows seedling trees can make 500 United States dollars a year growing and sometimes planting small trees. Because the

4-H advisor sets up the contract with the forest companies the only requirement of the members is to grow the needed amount of trees each year (R. Lehto, personal communication, October, 4, 2001).

International programming is another popular project for those not involved in traditional club activities. The Finnish 4-H Federation supports a very active International Four-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) program sending representatives to Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Hungary, and the United States, with new countries added each year. They also host youth from different countries each year. It is estimated that over 80 4-H host families are needed each year to support their international exchanges (M. Pajunen, personal communication, September 1, 2001).

The ultimate goals of the projects are learning, strengthening life skills, and the possibility of making some type of income during the learning process. Very few competitions are held within the Finnish 4-H Organization except for a forestry competition and a nature track competition that are held every year. Every other year competitions are held in baking, sewing, and handicrafts. The location varies so youth from different areas have a chance to attend. Only a handful of the 70,000 current members participate in these competitions. The country of Finland also holds an agricultural fair each year similar to county and state fairs in Wisconsin. Even though the fair is agricultural based, there is no relationship with the fair and the 4-H program (A. Illottu, personal communication, July 30, 2001).

At a young age, 4-H member projects are club specific and youth are given few opportunities to make decisions on type of project participation. The projects vary based on the 4-H club and the association. As youth get older, they choose projects in which

they want to participate. These projects are usually associated with specific interests the member has or an interest in earning money through projects offered by the 4-H association. 4-H members of any age may participate in one of the already established projects that have some type of literature to accompany them, but any participation is self-directed. Finnish 4-H projects having literature are animal husbandry, home economics, gardening and forestry. If members participate in a self-directed project the 4-H Advisor is asked to serve as a resource and checks in on the member's progress three times a year (A. Ruolsalantinen, personal communication, October, 16, 2001).

The research materials developed for different projects are developed by subject matter experts from throughout Finland, and are sometimes adapted from other countries. If 4-H or other youth programs in another country have already developed materials, the 4-H Federation will use those as a guide to write new material for the members of Finland. Many times Finland produces their materials in cooperation with other Nordic countries because of similarities that exist between these countries. Once compiled and printed the project materials can be purchased by local associations from a central distributor. The cost of the materials is minimal; the fee is often used to cover shipping costs. The association usually pays for the literature and a member who is interested in obtaining the materials incurs little cost (P. Tornainen, personal communication September 7, 2001).

The actual project ideas usually come from 4-H members who are interested in adding or starting something new in their area. Members' ideas are shared with the Finnish 4-H Federation. A staff member at the Federation is assigned to the idea based on the category of expertise that it falls into. The staff member develops the idea and

then it is presented to the Federation Board of Advisors for evaluation. If the idea is deemed to be a potential success the idea is further developed, funding is found, and materials are written (P. Torniainen, personal communication, September 7, 2001). One example of this is the popular Elderly People Care project that many older Finnish 4-H members actively participate in. The project was first started in the Western part of Finland. A member in that area had an interest in helping out the elderly people in the community. The project was successful and both the youth and the community benefited from the project. Financing was then sought from various sources and a staff member at the Finnish 4-H Foundation was assigned to the project. This person was in charge of creating additional reference materials and educational programs related to the Elderly People Care project (P. Torniainen, personal communication, February 25, 2002).

The materials are usually written and published using grant monies. The money comes from outside sources interested in youth education or from the European Union. The specialist at the Finnish 4-H Federation make sure the material being printed is something of quality that can be used by their members, but they very seldom write the materials themselves (P. Toriainen, personal communication, September 7, 2001).

Additional Information about Finland 4-H Not

Related to the Questions Originally Developed

The questions initially developed served as an excellent beginning basis for the ethnographic research that was done. The researcher also spent endless hours with 4-H workers and families and gained other information that was not related to the initial questions but yet important to aid in answering the research question.

The Finnish 4-H Organization uses the same pledge that is used in the United States. The pledge focuses on personal development through four words beginning with the letter “h”, head, heart, hands, and health. Even though most 4-H members have taken English classes at school the Finnish 4-H Organization uses their own four words that begin with the letter “h” harkinta, harjaannus, hyvyys, and hyvinvointi. The words do not translate directly, but their meanings are similar to the meaning and words in the 4-H pledge (Youth, 2001).

The slogan used by the Finnish 4-H Organization is “learning by doing.” The written goals of the organization are helping young people to lead others, express themselves, learn respect for others, learn to adapt to change, be responsible, make decisions, explore career options, and to generate an income through their own projects (Youth, 2001).

The Finnish 4-H organization, with its agriculture roots, has developed a great deal over the past seventy years, and just like any other established business or organization the Finnish 4-H Organization faces many challenges. One challenge is promoting the organization and helping the general public understand that it is more than an agriculture organization. The current Finnish 4-H Organization is based on the skill development of youth, rather than teaching agricultural, the concept that originally propelled the organization. Some of the funding still comes from the Ministry of Agriculture, forest companies, and other agricultural related organizations. The funding of the program causes many Finnish citizens to think that the organization is only for those with agricultural interests, turning away many individuals who could benefit from

the services the Finnish 4-H Organization provides (S. Hassinen, personal communication, September 6, 2001).

The competition that 4-H has with other youth organizations in Finland is another challenge that the Finnish 4-H Organization deals with. Finland does not have competitive high school sports or other school organizations like the United States. However, they do have many private sports clubs for youth. The school system in Finland is designed so youth must decide on a career educational path at the age of sixteen. This is the same age youth can start to participate in 4-H competitions and international programs. The need to be in school or working often does not allow youth to participate in 4-H activities (A. Ylonen, personal communication, August 20, 2001).

The Finnish 4-H program also lacks a much needed feedback process for its members. As members participate in projects and activities they receive little communication about the success or lack of success of their projects. Members are unaware of improvements that can be made to better their projects (P. Tornainen, personal communication, September 7, 2001). Currently, 4-H Advisors are asked to visit members involved in projects at least three times a year to evaluate projects (A. Rutosalainen, personal communication, October 10, 2001). However, not all 4-H Advisors can give expert advice on the different projects members are participating in, and some do not have time to give each member in their association the attention they may need to succeed.

The diminishing countryside population is also a problem facing the Finnish 4-H Organization. Although the 4-H program is looking at increasing the participation of urban youth in its programs, many of the members and future members reside in the

countryside. The Finnish rural population is decreasing and in turn the amount of money the association has, and the number of youth in the rural area is also decreasing (S. Hassinen, personal communication, September 6, 2001).

Wisconsin Research Results Related to Questions Originally Developed

This section will explain in detail the answers to the questions developed from the initial interviews and written survey as they relate to the Wisconsin 4-H Organization. A youth program based on agriculture was first established in Wisconsin in 1912. The youth work officially took on the 4-H name in 1924 (Wessel, 1982). Today the Wisconsin 4-H Organization is open to youth from kindergarten to one year out of high school. Wisconsin has approximately 44,800 4-H club members representing 2,229 4-H clubs and has reported that over 149,100 additional youth are affected by 4-H programming (J. Ballweg, personal communication, February 27, 2002).

4-H membership in Wisconsin is open to any youth regardless of race, creed, color, or religion. Membership participation is currently based on the school grade of the child. The grade classification change was made in 1998 so that activities were geared at similar abilities, rather than similar ages (K. Hobler, personal communication, February 6, 2002). Once members have been out of high school for one year they are encouraged to continue participation in the 4-H program in a leader position, but are no longer able to participate as a 4-H member.

The review of literature contains a complete history of the Wisconsin 4-H program. Since the beginning the Wisconsin 4-H program has evolved into a complex network of youth workers that reaches over 193,900 youth per year through both traditional and non-traditional 4-H programs (J. Ballweg, personal communication,

February 27, 2002). The Wisconsin 4-H program is run as part of the University of Wisconsin Extension System and is headquartered at the Land Grant campus in Madison, Wisconsin. At the state level, 4-H employs various project and program specialists, a program director, and other support staff. The state of Wisconsin is then broken down into six districts each of which has a director who is charge of personnel issues associated with 4-H and all of Cooperative Extension. The next level of the Wisconsin 4-H program is the county. The county 4-H program is run out of the County Cooperative Extension Office under the direction of the 4-H Youth Development Agent. Currently the 72 counties in Wisconsin have 4-H programming and Wisconsin employees 83 4-H Youth Development Agents when all positions are filled. Each county has access to the services of at least one Agent and larger counties employee multiple Agents (G. Hutchins, personal communication, January 24, 2002).

Funding of the 4-H program is different in each of the counties. The cost occurred by the State 4-H Office and district directors comes from money supplied by the by United States Department of Agriculture and the government in the State of Wisconsin. Programming money at a state level is raised by the Wisconsin 4-H Foundation, a separate non-profit fundraising organization associated with the Wisconsin 4-H program. The 4-H Youth Development Agent's salary is paid from three different sources. Sixty percent of the salary comes from a combination of funds from the United States Department of Agriculture and the State of Wisconsin. The amount of money that Cooperative Extension currently allots to 4-H work is about sixteen percent of their budget or ten million dollars. The University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension System distributes this money. The county government pays the other forty percent of

the salary. If the county government does not provide funding, the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension will not provide funding. The county government pays salaries for support staff members such as program assistants, administrative assistants, and summer interns.

The members and leaders of the individual counties, through dues and fundraising efforts, raise program costs at the county level. Communication was sent out to 4-H Agents in Wisconsin to obtain the average dollar amount budgeted for 4-H programming costs in Wisconsin. With nineteen of the seventy-two counties responding it was found that the dollar amount varied from \$1,200.00 to \$85,000.00 because the number of members and type of programming in each county is very different. The average county programming budget is \$24,500.00. Members sell plat books, pizzas, cookies, flowers and other items to raise the programming money. Food stands at local events, raffles, and potluck dinners are other popular fundraising ideas. Donations are also often given to the county to help pay for project and activity costs.

The position of 4-H Youth Development Agent is currently open to anyone with a Master's Degree and an interest in youth and youth work. If positions are left open for long periods of time an applicant with a Bachelor's degree is often sought, with plans for a Master's Degree in the future. The starting salary of a 4-H Youth Development Agent is 32,000 United States dollars (G. Hutchins, personal communication, January 27, 2002). This often makes it difficult to find qualified Master's Degree candidates. When any Cooperative Extension Agent is hired, they are required to go through a new colleague orientation. The orientation starts the first day of employment when a welcome letter, including a new staff member packet and 4-H Youth Development manual, is placed on

their desk. Other important first day happenings include a call from their district liaison, followed by a personal visit within the same week (Menart, D. personal communication, February 25, 2002).

Within six-months of being hired each agent is required to go to a Cooperative Extension New Colleague Orientation session. One month after this orientation new agents are required to attend a 4-H Youth Development seminar on preparing a plan of work and program reporting. New 4-H Youth Development core sessions must be attended during the employment of any 4-H Agent. A mentoring program has also been established to assist new 4-H Youth Development (Menart, D. personal communication, February 25, 2002).

During employment 4-H Youth Development Agents are encouraged to continue professional development. One way this can be achieved is through self-directed professional development activities. These activities are identified by the 4-H Youth Development Agent and are conducted through various sources (UWEX, n.d.). Professional development is also done at the district level. District 4-H Agents hold meeting about eight or nine times per year. These meetings allow 4-H Youth Development Agents in similar areas to address issues they are facing. A yearly conference, sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension, is held to aid in the development of 4-H Youth Development Agents. Similar training for all University Cooperative Extension Agents is held every three years (G. Hutchins, personal communication, December 12, 2002).

4-H Agents are also encouraged to join the Wisconsin Association of Extension

4-H Youth Development Professionals (WAE4-HYDP). The mission statement of the WAE4-HYDP states that the purpose of this organization is to, “promote, strengthen, and advocate the Extension 4-H Youth Development profession while providing a safe forum, camaraderie, support and recognition of its members” (WAE4-HYDP, n.d.). The WAE4-HYDP allows for sharing among counties and provides workshops for 4-H Youth Development Agent professional improvement and personal development.

Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Agents are also encouraged to join the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents (NAE4-HA). This organization serves a similar function to the WAE4-HYDP on a national level. The NAE4-HA holds annual conferences that keep 4-H Youth Development Agents up to date on current youth development issues (NAEE4-HA, 2001).

The main support for 4-H members in clubs is done through volunteer leaders. Currently there are over 15,000 volunteer leaders in Wisconsin. There are no educational criteria for individuals who are interested in helping out the 4-H program in this capacity. In order to protect the children in the program each person who wishes to be a leader must go through a screening process that includes a background check, participation in a one-hour orientation, and signing a volunteer expectation form. Once a person passes through this process they enroll as a leader and serve the 4-H program at various levels (G. Hutchins, personal communication, December 12, 2002).

Most leaders serve as project and activity leaders. These individuals have a special skill or interest in a particular project. As a project leader they assist and guide youth who are interested in enhancing their skills. A select group of individuals serve as club leaders, also called general leaders. These people are in charge of leading the club

and assisting the club officers in running the meeting. The responsibilities of the general leader also include making sure all of the paperwork for the club and its members is completed and turned into the County Cooperative Extension Office in a timely manner. An even smaller number of leaders serve as Key Leaders at the county level. Key Leaders are individuals who do not have a club affiliation, but have an expertise in a particular project and instead of helping members of only one club, they assist members of the entire county. Key Leaders usually reach members by hosting countywide educational workshops and trainings. Some leaders do not fit into any of the above categories, but still have an interest in helping. Additional leaders are always needed to drive members, chaperone events, help with paperwork, and complete other meaningful tasks to assist the 4-H members.

All leaders are required to participate in an orientation program. Besides this training other educational courses are set up for the leaders. Some of the courses are offered at the district, state, and even the national level, and others are countywide and usually taught by the 4-H Youth Development Agent. The course materials vary depending on the type of training needed. Leaders in the shooting sports project are required to attend certification courses on safety and shooting procedures before they can work with youth. Workshops for cultural arts leaders include new ideas for use in club and project meetings. General or club leaders attend meetings on policy and paperwork, along with workshops on educational games and how to work with youth officers. 4-H Youth Development Agents and 4-H Specialist usually develop workshops to best fit the desired needs of the county and the leaders with whom they work. If training is not

available within the leader's home county there is usually another location they can go for training.

Most 4-H activities in Wisconsin are based on club participation. Most clubs in Wisconsin meet once per month. The meeting is normally conducted as a business meeting with 4-H members making decisions about club programs, funding, community services projects, and other items of business that are brought to the club. At club meetings youth are often led in recreation and selected members give demonstrations about different projects or activities they are participating in.

The club may meet at other times throughout the month to perform community service projects, recreational activities, or for fundraising efforts. Clubs often participate in contests held at the county and sometimes the district level. Contests are held for speaking, drama, music, and sports.

The next level of participation is the county level. Members learn about county activities through a monthly newsletter. At the county level members often attend workshops to assist with specific skill development or to update members on new policies. Other popular activities are county camps, day camps, social activities, community service projects, fundraising efforts, animal judging teams and the county fair.

Active members also choose to participate in district, state and national activities. These activities are also listed in the monthly 4-H newsletters or the 4-H Agent may share the information with individuals that fit the criteria for the different programs.

In Wisconsin youth are given the opportunity to choose from a variety of projects. In some counties the number of projects one member can take is limited based on age or number of years as a 4-H member.

Although the projects vary among counties there are eight main subjects in which projects are categorized. These eight subjects are youth leadership; special projects; animal science; cultural and communication arts; family, home, health; mechanical science; environmental education; and plant and soil science (Jefferson, 2001). If a member has an interest that is not covered in one of the projects 4-H offers they can also participate in the self-determined project. This project encourages 4-H members to create their own projects using skills they learned somewhere else. If there is a large interest in the same subject matter there is potential for this to become an official 4-H project. Examples of this in recent years include the computer project, the llama project, and the clowning project.

Each of these subjects is broken down into projects and the projects are broken down into units, based on the skills of the members. Members start by enrolling in the simplest unit and take projects that require a higher skill level as their skills progress. Ideally each project is designed to have its own leader at the club level, but this is often not the case. Members usually learn on their own with the help of project materials provided to them by the County Cooperative Extension Office personnel who purchase the materials from various sources. The cost for materials is usually a small fee that covers printing and shipping. Most county 4-H budgets pay the fee; in other counties members are asked to pay the fee themselves, or the club pays the fee.

Most educational material used in the 4-H program is written by University faculty. Most of the literature used in Wisconsin comes from the 4-H Curriculum Cooperative. Projects are developed in conjunction with other State Extension Systems. The 4-H Curriculum Cooperative has two, three, or even four states collaborating to develop project material. The funding for the project is funded through grants, and the cost of time that University faculty spends working on the curriculum is part of their salary (G. Hutchins, personal communication, December 12, 2001).

Projects that are not done in collaboration are written by subject matter experts within the state along with 4-H volunteer members and leaders who have interests and ideas to share about the project. This method is rarely used today.

Once the materials are written, it is very common for the materials to be shared among states to eliminate time and money spent duplicating a curriculum that has already been written. There is currently a national list of developed curriculum. In order for a publication to be part of this list it must be approved by a National Committee made up of individuals from throughout the United States who are considered to be subject matter experts in the given project (V. Goebeli, personal communication, June 26, 2001).

Projects are an important part of the Wisconsin 4-H program, but the overall emphasis is placed on the development of personal skills and civic responsibility (G. Hutchins, personal communication, December 12, 2001). Projects, project literature, and the overall 4-H program are designed to help youth in making better decisions, solving problems, relating to others, planning, organizing, learning to learn, communicating with others, leading one's self, relating to change, applying science and technology, and

developing self (4-H Informant, 2002). All of this can play a key role in shaping effective adults who can be an active part of their community.

Additional Information about Wisconsin 4-H Not
Related to the Questions Originally Developed

This section contains additional information that is not directly related to the questions asked as part of the survey. Because information not related to the survey was discovered during the researcher's time in Finland it is also necessary to address similar concepts as they relate to the Wisconsin 4-H program.

The focus and goals of the Wisconsin 4-H program are often scrutinized. Many wonder if the current program is the best way to assist in the development of today's youth. For many 4-H members the highlight of their year is the county and state fairs held each summer. 4-H activities, especially county fairs, cultural arts contests, sporting events, and trip award programs, focus heavily on competition. Youth who are not able to succeed in these activities may experience feelings of inadequacy and failure.

Wisconsin continues to struggle with creating a balance within the competitive events that allows for all involved to succeed. Many counties have moved away from traditional judging known as the Danish system, to face-to-face conference judging. Danish judging gives awards based on number of entries. Face-to-face conference judging allows each participant to talk one-on-one with a judge, explain what they have learned from the project, and how to improve for the future. This not only enhancing the child's learning experience it also helps to eliminate the direct competition 4-H members normally experience.

The Wisconsin 4-H program is faced with many challenges. 4-H is still seen as an organization for rural youth. However statistics reported for 1999 indicate that only eleven percent of 4-H members were from farm families. Over twenty-four percent came from cities of 50,000 people or more (4-H Youth, n.d.). Even though these statistics tell the real story the general public still sees 4-H as a rural organization. Promoting 4-H as a leadership organization for youth rather than an agricultural education organization for youth is a concept that Extension Educators and 4-H members deal with everyday, however stereotypes are very hard to change.

Today's busy society also provides a challenge to the Wisconsin 4-H program. Children are becoming more involved with community organizations, sporting teams, and other commitments that parents can seldom find a minute of the day when they are not dropping off or picking up a child. Dedication to a 4-H club is hard to achieve with increasingly busy schedules. Members are too busy with other activities to obtain the full benefits of the 4-H program.

Summary of Chapter

The research showed there were similarities and differences with the Finnish 4-H organization and the Wisconsin 4-H organization. The written survey did not reveal detailed information, however, it did help the researcher to better prepare for the short six-month stay in Finland. The researcher was able to realize the obvious differences that existed and in turn focus on differences that were less obvious. The ethnographic research method used allowed the researcher to see these concepts first hand. The table below summarizes the researcher's findings.

Table 1

Main Concepts Summary for Finland 4-H and Wisconsin 4-H

Concept	Finland 4-H	Wisconsin 4-H
Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects related to nature, earning money, or crafts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects are divided into eight subject areas • Members can design own project if not already available
Project Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Skill Development and source of income • Lack of Competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Skill Development • Focus on Competition
Beginning of Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Education for Rural Youth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Education for Rural Youth
Program Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National government, association government, grant money and fundraising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA, State government, county government for employees salaries and office expenses • Grants and fundraising by members for all programs and activities
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper, word of mouth, 4-H magazine, and yearly newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent mailings, monthly newsletters, and word of mouth

Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National, District, Association, Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State, District, County, Club
Role of 4-H Advisor / 4-H Youth Development Agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise funds for program • Serve as leader of clubs • Observe and assist members with projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, Implementing, and Evaluation of Programming • Training leaders • Youth Development beyond traditional club
Education Level of 4-H Advisor / 4-H Youth Development Agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical school degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master's Degree
Salary of 4-H Advisor / 4-H Youth Development Agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14,800 United States dollars, starting salary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$32,000 United States dollars, starting salary
Training of 4-H Advisor / 4-H Youth Development Agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisor request training • Sharing meetings with Advisors in same geographical area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed new colleague orientation • State and National Professional Development Organizations • Scheduled District and States Workshops

Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited number • Almost all are paid • No screening process • Trained at association level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening process • Run entire club program • Training at all levels, most done by 4-H Youth Development Agent
Structure of Club Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft or learning sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business meeting
Development of Educational Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed by project members under direction of Federation staff member • Materials from other countries are often used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed by cooperation of specialist from different states • Materials are shared among states
Funding of Educational Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members pay for literature, or the association pays for literature • Most writing of literature is grant funded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members pay for literature or the county pays for literature • Most writing of literature is grant funded

<p>Challenges of Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition with other youth activities and organizations • Funding • Agricultural organization stereotype • Lack of feedback for members • Decreasing of rural population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition with other youth activities and organizations • Funding • Agricultural organization stereotype • Dealing with diversity • A focus to serve rising urban population
<p>4-H Motto</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning by doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning by doing

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Previous Chapters

4-H, an organization that originated in the United States in 1901, can currently be found in over 63 different countries (V. Gobeli, personal communication, February 25, 2002). The organization originated to educate rural youth on concepts they were not learning in school has grown to focus on enhancing the life skills of over 6.8 million rural and urban youth in the United States.

4-H has truly reached to the ends of the earth, but the programming varies greatly among countries. Each country has developed a program to best suit its culture. Even though each country has a unique culture, the concept developed as part of the 4-H program can be shared and then adapted by other countries to enhance the program they are currently supporting. However, little has been done to explore the differences among the programs and in turn how these differences can be shared among nations. Due to the increase in technology and communication, life is global and focus needs to include the entire world.

This study was developed to compare the Finnish 4-H Organization and the Wisconsin 4-H Organization. Preliminary research was done by surveying past members of the International Four-H Youth Exchange (IFYE). These individuals have had a chance to see both programs at work. The main research was done ethnographically. The researcher studied the Finnish 4-H Organization for six months, living among Finnish 4-H families and actively participating in 4-H activities. The researcher also reflected on work experience gained through internships in five different University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Offices, an internship at National 4-H Council, and

experiences as an eleven-year member of the Lucky Clovers 4-H Club in Jefferson County, Wisconsin.

Ethnographic research was used to provide detailed answers to the survey questions. The research shows the beginning of each program, the current situation of the programs, and the challenges that are faced by each organization. A summary of the main concepts and ideas has been provided at the end of chapter four.

Conclusions

Comparisons and Related Conclusions

The similarities between the Finnish 4-H Organization and the Wisconsin 4-H Organization exist in core ideas. Both organizations are derived from the program started in the United States in the early 1900's. The roots of the 4-H programs began in agriculture. As society changes both programs are being forced to change to meet the needs of the youth in their country. For the United States this progression has come at a faster pace than in Finland. However, both programs continue to strive for improvements.

The programs share the 4-H motto, "learning by doing". However, the outcome that is produced is very different. In both countries, 4-H activities are focused on hands-on learning. In Finland, the outcome is some type of income for the members. Often 4-H projects are derived from a family business. Other 4-H projects in Finland train youth in specific skills that can be used to earn money. Examples of these projects are pet sitting, caring for elderly, being a 4-H leader, or growing trees. In the United States projects focus on life skill development, with yearly competitions serving as reinforcement. While developing life skills youth participate in county fairs and additional county and

state competitions. Both programs could learn from each other in this area. By adding competition to the Finnish 4-H Organization member would have the opportunity to receive feedback and constructive criticism that is currently not available.

4-H in the United States could focus more on development of work skills aiding the 4-H members in employment and income opportunities. Currently, Wisconsin 4-H teaches life skill development without focusing on specific careers. Wisconsin 4-H could work directly with businesses to provide opportunities for 4-H members to obtain hands-on work experience. Because of the differences in labor laws and job markets it may not be possible to incorporate the money making projects into the Wisconsin 4-H program. However, providing 4-H members with additional employable skills could be beneficial.

The programs share similar funding sources. However, a large difference is seen in the amount of money received by each organization. While the government pays for one hundred percent of the office and salary costs for the Wisconsin 4-H program, Finland struggles with only eighty percent of the money needed provided by government. The time and effort spent by 4-H Advisors in Finland to raise the additional twenty percent takes away from the programming aspects of their position. In Wisconsin, all additional money raised is for actual programming. Because of this, Wisconsin 4-H is able to provide its members with a wider array of programs, activities, and projects.

Due to a decrease in government spending, the future of 4-H in Wisconsin may soon be following in the footsteps of the Finnish 4-H Program. 4-H Agents may need to look to outside sources to fund salary and office costs. Finland 4-H Advisors have learned to do more with less. Their program reaches 70,000 individuals with a budget that is much smaller than the one used in Wisconsin.

Although the Finnish 4-H Organization is able to operate using a smaller budget than the Wisconsin 4-H Organization, many resources used by Wisconsin are lacking in Finland. The greatest problem is in the area of communication. In Wisconsin, 4-H mailings are sent out frequently keeping leaders and members well informed on 4-H happenings. The communication in Wisconsin allows them to share numerous opportunities with members. In Finland only one mass mailing is sent out per year. This mailing contains little information about upcoming events, instead it introduces the youth and their family to the program, discusses funding, and highlights the events for the year. All other communication is made in newspapers or by flyers placed at the schools.

The Wisconsin 4-H program has more informed members, but the Finnish 4-H program has learned how to communicate on a limited budget. The limited dollars keep Finland from using the same type of communication Wisconsin 4-H currently uses. Wisconsin is looking at e-mail communication in the future. With so many people being part of the information superhighway, this is a great way to conserve paper and postage costs. The Finnish society is very advanced in technology, but the 4-H program is lagging behind. This is a concept the Finnish 4-H program needs to address.

More informed Wisconsin 4-H members are given greater opportunities to participate in programs and activities. More informed members also results in informed parents and leaders, which leads to another extreme difference in the two programs. The Wisconsin 4-H program is run with volunteer parents and leaders who receive support from the 4-H Agent. The Finnish 4-H program has few if any volunteer leaders; almost all of their leaders receive a small stipend for their work. Although the Finnish 4-H program has looked into the possibility of running their program with volunteer leaders,

the present Finnish society does not support this concept. Unlike the United States, Finland does not have a high rate of volunteerism, and the stipend appears to be the only way to keep the leaders involved in the program. Many of the leaders are also youth, and the money the youth receive is their only source of income.

In this situation it would be ideal if Finland could adapt the concepts used by the United States, but the difference in society may not allow this to happen. If the Finnish 4-H program starts slowly and offers alternatives to a stipend, such as educational materials or reward trips, they may soon be able to ease away from paying their leaders. Not paying their leaders may also help to increase the amount of money available for programming and wages for 4-H Advisors.

The other large difference between the two programs is the role of the 4-H Agent and the 4-H Advisor. The Finnish 4-H Advisor serves many roles that volunteer leaders have undertaken in the Wisconsin 4-H program. This does not allow the Finnish 4-H Advisor to implement programming and conduct training like 4-H Agents in Wisconsin. The Finnish 4-H Advisor leads club meetings, creates activities for the club members, and serves as a project guide in many different areas. In addition, the 4-H Advisor is also in charge of the association accounting tasks and fundraising efforts.

In Wisconsin, the job of the 4-H Agent takes on a very different role. Agents are responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating programs in which 4-H members and leaders participate. Leader training and support is a key aspect of their job with the hope leaders will then take the knowledge gained and share it with youth. 4-H Agents are also professional advocates for the youth.

An increase in funding and volunteerism in Finland would be a great asset to the 4-H program and in turn free up many tasks currently placed on the 4-H Advisor. An Advisor or Agent who is active at a club level is an asset to the program, however there are other tasks in which resources of the Advisor or Agent could be better allocated. The Agents and Advisors are hired because of their ability to perform youth development work. The training and education of youth and leaders to help others could be a large focus of their work.

Currently anyone wanting to work with youth can work as an Advisor in the Finnish 4-H program. Most 4-H Advisors only have a technical college degree, but this is not a requirement. If funding were available, Finland's 4-H program could benefit from hiring someone who specializes in youth education. An additional asset would be the development of an orientation and training program to support that role with continuing education and support groups to enhance the program and the individual.

Wisconsin requires that candidates have a Master's degree in a field related to youth development. This is also something that needs to be looked at for the future. With a high level of education required and a low salary base, qualified candidates are often not applying for the position.

The 4-H Advisor also plays a role in the function of a club. Each program has a very different type of club meeting. In Finland, the club is a place for direct education through hands-on learning experiences. This is especially important for younger 4-H members. In Wisconsin, the club is a place to conduct business and make decisions about upcoming activities and hands-on learning experiences outside the club meeting. Similarly, the Wisconsin members do not receive the hands-on learning experiences as

often as they do in Finland. Project meetings in Wisconsin are only held in clubs with active project leaders or by county Key Leaders. Many Wisconsin youth often miss the hands-on learning experience that the 4-H program is based on.

In Wisconsin, the club structure is better set up to retain older members. Members are given the chance to make decisions and plan events in which they are interested. Older members are given leadership roles that help to develop the life skills they need.

Wisconsin clubs need to adapt to provide the hands-on learning experience that youth, especially younger members, are looking to obtain through 4-H participation. In turn Finnish 4-H clubs can use Wisconsin as an example for ways to keep older members involved by providing them with more activities to participate in and more decision making opportunities.

Both programs have acknowledged the importance of 4-H literature to enhance the youth's experience. One person cannot be an expert in all aspects of 4-H programming. The Finnish 4-H Organization and the Wisconsin 4-H Organization have realized the importance of looking outside a state or nation for project literature ideas. Most 4-H projects are not specific to one location and someone else may have developed literature for these projects. Using resource wisely is very important and helps save time and money.

The challenges faced by both programs are similar. Both programs compete with other youth organizations, are always looking for new funding sources, and are constantly dealing with the agricultural stereotype that many associate with the term 4-H. These are constant struggles that 4-H has been facing for the last decade. Facing these challenges is

an ongoing struggle of every youth development program. Any type of solution that is found will be beneficial to both programs.

The Finnish 4-H program sees the decreasing rural population as a challenge. The Wisconsin 4-H program also faces this challenge, but addresses it in a different way. Wisconsin 4-H is looking at diversity and the creation of programs for urban youth. The rural community in Wisconsin will never be the same as it was when 4-H began in the early 1900's. The youth audience in Wisconsin and all of the United States is changing. The government currently funds the 4-H program and because of this there is a need for Cooperative Extension to serve all youth, not just those in rural areas. The materials and projects Wisconsin has created and continues to create dealing with urban programming and diversity would be a great asset to the Finnish 4-H program as it looks to face the challenge of a decreasing rural population.

The Future of the Finnish 4-H Program

As the Finnish 4-H Organization looks to the future there are many concepts that bring up concerns. Funding is an issue in the Finnish 4-H Organization. Currently the Ministry of Agriculture gives 23,000,000 Finnish Marks or 3,300,000 United States dollars to the program (P. Tornainen, personal communication, September 7, 2001). Although the cost to run the program will continue to increase over time, it is probable the amount of money given by the Finland Ministry of Agriculture will not increase. This means more money will have to be raised from private organizations, club members, and other fundraising efforts; a task that is already somewhat impossible in many areas of Finland. The future could see associations combining with two or three other

associations sharing one advisor (S. Hassinen, personal communication, September 6, 2001).

In the future there is also a need to improve the training received by the Advisors and leaders in the Finnish 4-H program. Club leaders educated in youth development practices will help provide support for 4-H Advisors, and in turn provide needed constructive feedback for 4-H members (P. Torniainen, personal communication, September 7, 2001).

The Finnish 4-H Organization is also very concerned about international programming. In 1976, Finland helped to develop a 4-H program in Tanzania. The program's beginning was similar to that of Finland's program. Two men from Tanzania came to Finland to learn more about youth work in Finland. They saw 4-H as a great program and wanted to bring it back to Tanzania. Non-government money was raised to assist in starting the program. In the year 2000 the program had about 20,000 members and continues its cooperation with the Finnish 4-H Organization (P. Torniainen, personal communication, September 7, 2001).

The Future of the Wisconsin 4-H Program

The Wisconsin 4-H program has similar concerns for the future. The current economy is affecting every area of government including Cooperative Extension. Without eliminating programs and positions the Wisconsin Cooperative Extension system cannot continue to function as it does. Each year the costs for programming increases and budget constraints get stricter. Future 4-H members in Wisconsin may be asked to pay a small statewide fee to participate in 4-H activities. Currently many members are charged a small fee by their clubs, and some are required to pay county

dues. The statewide fee would help to support staff salaries and state programming costs (G. Hutchins, personal communication, February 27, 2002).

As a government-supported program 4-H also needs to focus on making contact with a larger population of youth. Traditional 4-H programs seldom reach past the rural youth in Wisconsin. The concept of after-school programming has been started in many counties and thought about in others. The current 4-H curriculum and staff are a great resource for anyone looking to start an after-school program. The future will see money targeted at supporting this type of activity. Many small communities will be required to look into exploring an idea that many urban 4-H programs are already utilizing (G. Hutchins, personal communication, February 27, 2002).

In an ever changing world, 4-H must continue to adapt to meet the needs of the audience it serves. The original 4-H program was started to assist in educating a rural youth audience. Today much of that audience has diminished. Family farms are becoming the exception, being replaced by corporate farms. The audience 4-H needs to serve is also changing. The world diversity is going to be key in the future of the 4-H program. Wisconsin 4-H is looking to develop programming models to accommodate different cultures. The future will see new staff being hired devoted to this idea. Leaders will need to be trained to work with diverse communities, not only in urban areas, but also in rural Wisconsin (G. Hutchins, personal communication, February 27, 2002).

Recommendations

The research conducted shows there are differences and similarities in the 4-H programs in Wisconsin and in Finland. The research also assists in creating new ideas that could be implemented to increase awareness of international concepts. One

such idea is creating an international staff exchange allowing youth workers in different countries to take sabbaticals to observe the youth programs in other countries. This would allow individuals to experience first hand new programming ideas to implement in their own youth programs and in turn to share with other members of their state or country. Although language barriers might exist, individuals participating in a youth work exchange would be able to work with members and leaders in countries in which they are visiting. The program could benefit all participants.

Another idea to increase awareness of youth programs across the world is to establish an international conference for those employed by 4-H, 4-H leaders, 4-H members, and other interested individuals. Currently the International Four-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) program holds an international conference, however it is usually only attended by past IFYE participants. A conference open to anyone who works with youth in the world could involve more individuals who may not be part of the IFYE program, but still have an interest in learning more about youth work and 4-H programs in other countries, and in turn sharing information about their own country.

The conference could focus on programs that are successful in different parts of the world and how similar programs or programming ideas could be incorporated into youth programs in other countries. The cultural awareness gained by those attending the conference would also prove to be important for future education of youth. These ideas are not without a price and would require grants or fund raising efforts as well as coordination and planning.

A simpler idea that would not involve travel would be the creation of an international sharing library. The library would pool together resources created in

different countries. Programs and ideas created in one country could be checked out or viewed by members of other countries who may be involved in the same type of programming or are looking for new ideas to add to their current programs. The library could be run as a website with title and abstracts available to interested youth workers, and paper copies available upon request.

This is a rather simple idea, but the impact it could have would be amazing. Children in American could learn about programs that are being used in Tanzania and, in turn, children in Tanzania could learn about programs in Costa Rica. The programs that are currently underway could be tried in other countries and in turn increase cultural awareness among youth and youth workers.

A technology program allowing youth to contact youth in other countries would also be beneficial. Setting up chat rooms or e-mail exchanges among 4-H members would allow them to ask questions of children and adults who have similar interests, but are miles apart in different countries. Having 4-H clubs or school classes e-mail each other about customs and traditions in their country would allow youth to see the difference that exist in everyday life in other countries. Youth could use the information they gain to create projects to enter in the county fair or share with other community members at an international bazaar. Youth could even use this idea to find out more about the projects and activities the other country is involved with and set up similar projects with their own clubs and communities.

The IFYE program is already participating in many international activities that create cultural awareness in the participants and those that they come in contact with. However, changes in the program could help to better maximize the potential impact

these individuals could have on cultural awareness in their 4-H programs and their communities.

IFYE is an excellent program that allows individuals ages sixteen to thirty to participate in international sharing activities. However there are few people who take the opportunity. There is little publicity for the IFYE program beyond sharing by past participants. The IFYE organization needs to examine and develop a plan to better reach their target audience. Most American 4-H programs end at age nineteen, and little communication has been established with program alumni. This means many people who meet the IFYE age requirements are unaware of the program. One suggestion is sharing the IFYE program at college campuses where target audiences can be found.

Another way to make IFYE more recognizable is the education of 4-H Agents and leaders. Many Agents are scared of international programming and see it as just another program to promote. If the IFYE program can work to help 4-H Agents see the benefits of the program they may be more likely to encourage participation.

The exploration and addition of a work development program to the Wisconsin 4-H Organization could benefit members and the surrounding communities. 4-H is about teaching life skills to youth. Many of the projects that members are currently participating in are the basis for future employment. Because of this it would be beneficial to look at how to better equip Wisconsin 4-H members for the world of work. Establishing a project for older members based on resume writing, interviewing, job searching, college searching, and other related topics could help to better prepare Wisconsin 4-H youth. It may not be feasible to establish the same program that is used in

by the Finnish 4-H Organization, but teaching valuable work development skills would greatly benefit the program, the members, and the community.

In addition to developing new programs and strengthening existing program the research shows there is a need for additional research on volunteerism and why it is successful in the United States. The Wisconsin 4-H program is strong because of the support it receives from volunteer leaders, parents, and community members. In many Finnish 4-H clubs there is only one leader helping ten to twenty youth. If Finland could adapt the volunteer support that exists in the United States, they could increase activities and projects to aide in satisfying the needs of a wider range of youth. Further research might be able to explain why volunteerism is so strong in American and what elements would help to increase volunteerism in Finland and all of Europe.

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Appendix A

Written Survey Cover Letter

May 24, 2001

«First_Name» «Last_Name»
«Address»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Dear «First_Name»;

Paivaa, mita kuuluu? For those of you who have not been practicing up on your Finnish, the beginning statement says: Good day, how are you?

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Sarah Staude. I am a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, and also a 2001 IFYE Representative to Finland. I am very excited for my upcoming trip. I have been preparing by reading and re-reading the helpful hints that past IFYE Representatives like you have put together to assist in my travels.

As part of my time in Finland I will be working on my thesis for my Master's Degree. I am looking at studying how the 4-H program has adapted as it moves from the United States into other countries, namely Finland. Because I know very little about the Suomen Liitto (Finnish 4-H), I am hoping that your expertise and past experience can be used to give me a little insight before I head to Europe.

Enclosed you will find a short survey regarding the Suomen Liitto and the United States 4-H Program. I would greatly appreciate if you would fill out the survey to the best of your ability and return it to me in the enclosed envelope by June 4, 2001. You can also visit my IFYE web page and e-mail me your responses to the questions (www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/pierce/4h/Sarahpage.html). I realize you may not know the answers to the questions, but any help you can give me would be much appreciated.

The data collected will be used to better focus the information I collect while I am in Finland. Completing this survey is completely voluntary on your part and all the information will be handled in a confidential matter. Once my thesis is completed it will be placed on the web, so you will be able to read more about my study.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in this project. Your response is crucial to the success of my study. Feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions regarding this project.

Sincerely,

Sarah J. Staude
2001 IFYE Representative to Finland
N1475 Hwy M
Watertown, Wisconsin 53098
920-261-6729
staude98@msn.com

Appendix B

Written Survey

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. The completed survey should be returned using the addressed envelope or e-mailed to Sarah Staude at staude98@msn.com. Please return the survey by June 4, 2001.

The first three questions deal with demographical information. The remaining questions compare the two different 4-H programs. The information gathered will be used to better focus my research while I am in Finland and will be kept confidential. Answers regarding the Suomen Liitto (Finland 4-H) should be placed in the left hand column and answers regarding the United States program should be placed in the right hand column. Please keep answers concise for better tabulation. You may add pages if necessary.

1. What year did you participate in IFYE?	
2. Are you Male or Female?	
3. How old are you?	

FINLAND – SUOMEN LIITTO	UNITED STATES – 4-H
4. What are the ages of the members?	
5. How long can a person be in the program?	
6. Why was 4-H started in this country?	
7. Who pays for the 4-H program?	
8. What are the qualifications of a professional person who works with the 4-H program?	
9. How are the professionals trained?	
10. Who can volunteer with the program? Do they need any specific qualifications?	
11. How are the volunteers trained?	

FINLAND – SUOMEN LIITTO	UNITED STATES – 4-H
12. What are the main 4-H projects that members can take?	
13. What is the ultimate goal of these projects?	
14. Who writes the research material?	
15. Who funds the research material?	
16. What organizations financially support the program?	
17. Any other information you have that would be helpful to this study or my trip to Finland:	

Thank you for your time in completing this survey.

I realize that you may not be able to answer all questions, but any assistance you can provide is greatly appreciated.

**Please return by June 4, 2001 using the enclosed envelope or
email input to staude98@msn.com.**

I understand that by returning this questionnaire, I am giving my informed consent as a participating volunteer in this study. I understand the basic nature of the study and agree that any potential risks are exceedingly small. I also understand the potential benefits that might be realized from the successful completion of this study. I am aware of that the information is being sought in a specific manner so that no identifiers are needed and so that confidentiality is guaranteed. I realize that I have the right to refuse to participate and that my right to withdraw from participation at any time during the study will be respected with no coercion or prejudice.

NOTE: Questions or concerns about participation in the research or subsequent complaints should be addressed first to the researcher or research advisor and second to Dr. Ted Knous, Chair, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects In Research, 11 HH, UW-Stout, Menomonie, WI, 54571, phone (715) 232-1126.