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OHIO 4-H AGENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE AND FREQUENCY OF USE OF THE EIGHTEEN COMPONENTS OF THE GEMS MODEL OF VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

Administrators of volunteer-driven programs and agencies need to consider the most appropriate ways to manage volunteer programs that maximize volunteer contributions and provide meaningful experiences for the volunteer. 4-H Youth Development agents continually utilize volunteers to drive and conduct programs and were, therefore, considered volunteer administrators for the purpose of this study. This survey research utilized mailed questionnaires to explore how 4-H Youth Development agents in Ohio perceived the level of importance and the frequency of use of each of the 18 phases and four categories of volunteer administration outlined by the GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration. The categories and phases of the GEMS Model include Generate (Needs Assessment, Position (Job) Description, Identify, Recruit, Screen, Select), Educate (Orient, Protect, Provide Resources, Teach), Mobilize (Engage, Motivate, Supervise) and Sustain (Evaluate, Recognize, Retain, Redirect, Disengage). The discrepancy, or difference, between the perceived level of importance and the frequency of use yielded the perceived need. Relationships between the characteristics of the population and perceived level of importance and frequency of use were explored. The greatest discrepancy (need) for 4-H Agents existed in the Sustain category followed by Mobilize, Generate and Educate. The relationship between characteristics of the population and perceptions held of the importance and frequency of use of the 18 phases and four categories were described as either negligible or low associations in all cases.

Introduction & Theoretical Base

As a profession, volunteer program management is less than 20 years old. While volunteers have been around since the days of the Mayflower, formal volunteer programs with trained leadership are a recent development. Volunteers themselves have largely been taken for granted. It is a new phenomenon to consider volunteers, volunteer development and volunteer program management subjects worthy of study. This is compounded by the fact that until only a few years ago, no academic major, either at the bachelor or advanced degree level, offered courses in volunteer program management. Therefore, the subject was not even considered for serious attention (Ellis, 1985). Because volunteer program management is relatively unresearched, the relevant functions required for successful volunteer program management have not been widely studied (King, 1998).

"It is clear that a new profession is emerging in the volunteer world. It is the volunteer administrator ... who oversees and supervises a volunteer program..." (Schindler-Rainman, 1988, p. 20.4). The volunteer program manager position has established itself as a profession requiring particular management skills; nevertheless, widespread disparity still exists in both the number of additional responsibilities which volunteer administrators are expected to fulfill as well

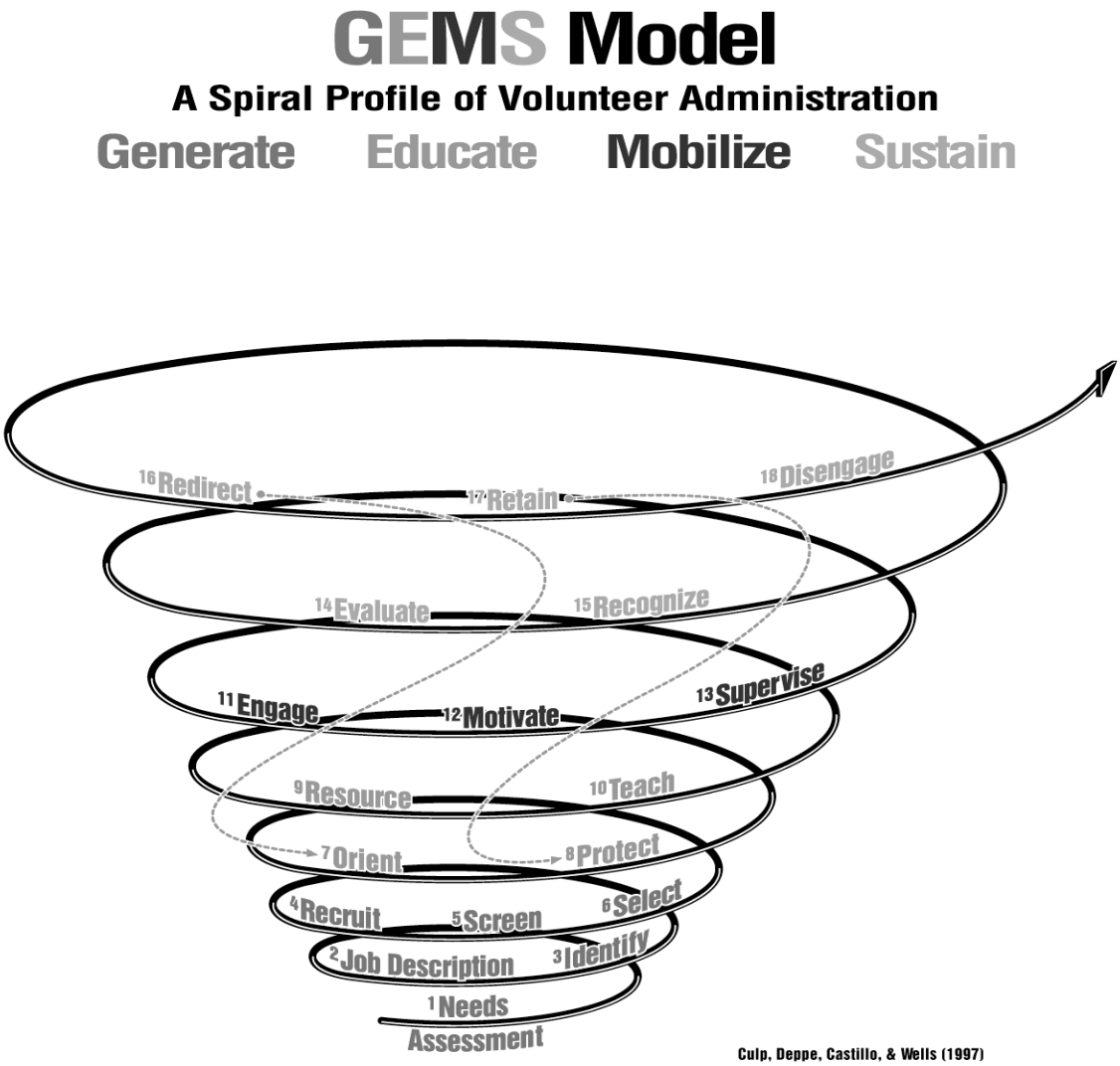
as the amount of weight which volunteer administration is afforded on personnel evaluations. Extension employee's job descriptions often fail to articulate the varied aspects of volunteer development and volunteer program management which are required in order to successfully fulfill the responsibilities of their employment. "Volunteer administration is a rapidly growing and evolving field. Volunteer administrators will need to strategically position themselves for dynamic audiences and clientele, as well as a changing volunteer base" (Culp, Deppe, Castillo, & Wells, 1998, p. 36). Innovative programs should be implemented which will anticipate and meet these evolving needs. Therefore, the tools and technologies which volunteer administrators use to manage and develop will need to evolve in order to stay current with changing societal, demographic and organizational needs (Culp, et al., 1998).

Identifying the level of importance of administrative tasks of volunteer administrators, as well as their frequency of use, become important research functions. The discrepancy, or difference, between the perceived level of importance and the frequency of use of each of these administrative tasks yields a perceived need. The identification and prioritization of the needs of 4-H agents in Ohio will enable both administrators and state specialists to prioritize their programmatic focus and educational in-service needs that should, in turn, result in a more well educated and empowered group of agents and volunteers.

Similar to other emerging professions, the profession of volunteer administrator has been forced to struggle with a precise definition of the responsibilities involved (Fisher & Cole, 1993). In simple terms, this involves "deciding what needs to be done, creating networks of people and relationships that can accomplish an agenda and then trying to ensure that those people actually get the job done" (Kotter, 1990, p. 5). While several models provide a framework for volunteer administration, the need exists to prioritize these needs, thereby providing focus and direction to the volunteer administrator. Several volunteer administration models have been developed and utilized by volunteer administrators in the United States. These models include: ISOTURE (Boyce, 1971; Dolan, 1969), the Bridge from Dreams to Reality (Vineyard, 1984), the Volunteer Professional Model for Human Services Agencies and Counselors (Lenihan & Jackson, 1984), the Volunteer Management Cycle (Lawson & Lawson, 1987), 4-H Volunteer Leadership Development Program (Kwarteng, Smith & Miller, 1988), L-O-O-P (Penrod, 1991) and the GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration (Culp, Deppe, Castillo & Wells, 1998).

Building on aspects of earlier models, the GEMS Model was conceptualized and developed (Figure 1). GEMS is depicted in a spiral, illustrating that volunteer administration is an ongoing process. While GEMS was developed by extension personnel, the GEMS Model is multi disciplinary and may be effectively utilized in any type of volunteer or service organization. The GEMS Model is depicted in a spiral, illustrating that volunteer administration is a cyclical, ongoing process. The GEMS Model consists of four broad categories which include: Generate, Educate, Mobilize and Sustain. The four categories comprise a total of 18 phases. "The Generate category consists of an organizational needs assessment, writing job (position) descriptions, identifying, recruiting, screening and selecting. The Educate phase includes orienting, protecting, providing resources and teaching. Mobilize includes engaging, motivating and supervising. The Sustain category contains evaluating, recognizing and redirecting, retaining or disengaging" (Culp, et al., 1998).

The GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration (Culp, et al., 1998) was utilized as the theoretical framework for this study. GEMS addresses current and emerging needs of volunteer administrators, is comprehensive and is currently the most contemporary model that can be utilized by volunteer administrators to provide a framework for volunteer-based programs.



Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe how 4-H Youth Development agents in Ohio perceived the level of importance and the frequency of use of each of the 18 phases and four categories outlined in the GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration (Culp, et al., 1998). Each of the 18 phases of the GEMS Model represents both a step in volunteer development as well as an administrative function which extension professionals should be able to perform.

Objectives of the study were to: (1) demographically describe Ohio 4-H Youth Development agents; (2) explore and describe how Ohio 4-H Youth Development agents perceive the level of importance of each of the 18 identified phases and four categories of volunteer administration; (3) explore and describe how Ohio 4-H Youth Development agents perceive their frequency of use of each of the 18 identified phases and four categories of volunteer administration; (4) determine the discrepancies that exist between 4-H agents' perceptions of the level of importance and frequency of use of the 18 identified phases and four categories of volunteer administration; (5) determine if populational parameters relate to perceptions held of the importance and frequency of use of the 18 identified phases and four categories of volunteer administration.

Procedures

Population and Sample

This survey research was conducted utilizing Dillman's (1978) procedures. The target population for this census was identified as 4-H Youth Development agents in Ohio. The frame of the study was obtained from the 1997 Ohio State University extension personnel directory. The population includes 102 4-H Youth Development Extension employees in 88 Ohio counties.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire was developed based on a review of related literature and discussions with agricultural education and extension education faculty members at The Ohio State University. Eighteen areas of volunteer administration were identified in the conceptual GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration (Culp, Deppe, Castillo, & Wells, 1998). Statements pertaining to each of the 18 volunteer administration components were presented. Respondents were asked to indicate the level of importance and their frequency of use for each of the identified phases in carrying out their duties as a volunteer administrator by circling the appropriate corresponding number on an eight point Likert-type scale.

A panel of experts was used to ascertain the content validity of the instrument. The panel included researchers and experts in the field of volunteerism and research methodology from the Department of Agricultural Education and 4-H Youth Development at Ohio State.

To establish internal consistency reliability, the research instrument was pilot tested among a sample (N=44) of 4-H Youth Development extension educators in Indiana. Questionnaire items which yielded a Cronbach's alpha level below .70 were modified and retested among the pilot test respondents (n=21). Test results from the instrument were again subjected to reliability analysis. Reliability for level of importance ranged from .73 to .92 and for frequency of use from .70 to .89. These alpha levels were deemed acceptable as they exceeded Nunnally's (1967) recommendation of .50 to .60 for initial stages of instrument development. The data for this study were collected by mail questionnaire during February and March, 1998. A total of 63% (n=64) of the questionnaires were initially returned by the 4-H Youth Development Agents. A reminder postcard was mailed to non-respondents two weeks after the initial mailing. This yielded an additional 6% (n=6) questionnaires. An additional 11% (n=11) of the questionnaires were received after a follow-up mailing was sent to non-respondents.

To aid in controlling non-response bias, a comparison of early respondents and late respondents was utilized to determine differences between the two groups (Miller & Smith, 1983). Finding no significant differences between the early and late respondents, all of the questionnaires were combined. The combined questionnaires yielded a total 79% (n=81) response rate from the 4-H Youth Development agents.

Analysis of Data

To explore and describe how Ohio 4-H Youth Development agents perceive the level of importance and frequency of use of each of the 18 identified phases of volunteer administration, the following anchored Likert-type scale was used. A value of 8 was assigned to "Essential," 7 was assigned to "Extreme Importance," 6 was assigned to "High Importance," 5 was assigned to "Moderate Importance," 4 was assigned to "Some Importance," 3 was assigned to "Slight Importance," 2 was assigned to "Negligible Importance, " and 1 was assigned to "No Importance."

The Borich model (1979) was utilized to calculate the differences between perceived level of importance and frequency of use. The Borich model determines needs scores by subtracting the perceived performance (or use) score from the perceived importance score, and then multiplying the result by the mean perceived importance score. (Importance - Use) * μ Importance = Needs Score.

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to compare continuous parameters with the 18 phases and four categories in the GEMS Model. Point biserial correlation coefficients were calculated to compare

discrete parameters with the 18 phases and four categories in the GEMS Model. Spearman rank order correlations were calculated to compare ordinal parameters with the 18 phases and four categories of the GEMS Model.

Results

Objective 1

Demographically, the typical 4-H agent in Ohio may be described as a 38 year old female who has completed a master's degree. She has had nine years of experience as a 4-H agent in Ohio, two years of experience in another state and 12 years of experience as a volunteer administrator. This "typical" 4-H agent has previously served or was currently serving in six volunteer positions outside of Extension and coordinates 271 volunteers annually. Youth Development was her chosen area of specialization in the Professional Research Knowledge (PRK) base. The county in which she works is rural and she was previously involved as a 4-H member/participant for eight years.

Objective 2

4-H agents indicated the three phases of greatest importance to be from the Educating category. These include Orienting (mean=6.98) followed closely by Protecting (mean=6.94) and Providing Resources (mean=6.91). 4-H agents perceive Identifying (mean=5.47) as the least important phase. On an eight point, Likert-type scale, the mean level of importance for all 18 phases was 6.47. By virtue of the small range of importance scores (1.51), one could conclude that 4-H agents identified all 18 phases as highly important or extremely important. As compared to importance, agents identified somewhat greater variation in use (range = 2.09). All 18 phases were used between sometimes and frequently. Table 1 summarizes the mean and rank of each of the 18 GEMS Model phases based on the perceived level of importance, frequency of use, and calculated needs score for each phase of volunteer administration.

Table 1
Mean and Rank for Perceived Level of Importance, Frequency of Use and Needs Score

Phase	Level of Import. Mean	Level of Import. Rank	Freq. of Use Mean	Freq. of Use Rank	Mean Needs Score	Needs Score Rank
Needs Assessment	5.73	17	4.82	17	5.17	5
Position (Job) Description	6.06	15	5.36	14	4.27	9
Identifying	5.47	18	4.97	15	2.68	14
Recruiting	6.42	12	5.86	9	3.48	11
Screening	6.83	4	6.35	5	3.28	12
Selecting	6.81	5t	6.53	3	2.02	17
Orienting	6.98	1	6.65	2	2.41	15
Protecting	6.94	2	6.16	8	5.41	4
Providing Resources	6.91	3	6.68	1	1.68	18
Teaching	6.78	7t	6.17	7	4.21	10
Engaging	6.56	9	6.19	6	2.39	16
Motivating	6.48	10t	5.80	10	4.43	7
Supervising	6.41	13	5.71	11	4.32	8
Evaluating	5.85	16	4.59	18	7.20	3
Recognizing	6.77	7t	6.38	4	2.70	13
Retaining	6.48	10t	5.70	12	5.14	6

Table 2 (Continued)

Phase	Level of Import. Mean	Level of Import. Rank	Freq. of Use Mean	Freq. of Use Rank	Mean Needs Score	Needs Score Rank
Redirecting	6.13	14	4.89	16	7.45	2
Disengaging	6.81	5t	5.62	13	8.02	1
	Mean=6.47		Mean=5.80		Mean = 4.24	

Objective 3

Respondents indicated that they most frequently provide resources to volunteers (mean=6.68). Orienting (mean=6.65) was reported as the second most frequently utilized phase, and Selecting (mean=6.53) was the third most frequently utilized phase. 4-H agents spent the least amount of time in Evaluating (mean=4.59) and Needs Assessment (mean=4.82).

Objective 4

The Borich Model (1979) was utilized to calculate the needs score for each phase where (Importance - Use)*μ Importance=Needs Score. Three phases in the Sustaining category were identified as having the greatest need, these include Disengaging (mean=8.02), Retaining (mean=7.45), and Evaluating (mean=7.20). The lowest needs score was calculated for Providing Resources (mean=1.68). Agents perceived all 18 phases of the GEMS Model to be between "highly important" and "extremely important" (mean=6.47) with a range of 1.51. However, administrators perceived greater differences in their application and use of the 18 phases as identified by a greater variation of Use Scores (mean=5.80, range=2.09). Finally, the greatest variation was observed in the mean Needs Scores (mean=4.24, range=6.34).

The findings indicate that Ohio 4-H Youth Development agents perceived level of importance to be greatest for the Educate category (mean=6.89), followed by Mobilize (mean=6.48), Sustain (mean=6.41) and Generate (mean=6.20). 4-H agents also indicated that frequency of use was greatest for the Educate category (mean=6.41), followed by Mobilize (mean=5.90), Generate (5.63) and Sustain (mean=5.44). The greatest discrepancy existed between the level of importance and level of use for the Sustain category with a calculated needs score of 6.10. The Mobilize category was found to have the second greatest needs score (3.71), followed by Generate (3.48) and Educate (3.43). Therefore, Ohio 4-H agents determined their greatest need for support to be in the Sustain category. Table 2 illustrates these findings.

Table 2

Mean and Rank for Perceived Level of Importance, Frequency of Use and Needs Score

Category	**Import. Mean**	**Import. Rank**	**Use Mean**	**Use Rank**	**Mean Needs**	**Needs Rank**
Generate	6.20	4	5.63	3	3.48	3
Educate	6.89	1	6.41	1	3.43	4
Mobilize	6.48	2	5.90	2	3.71	2
Sustain	6.41	3	5.44	4	6.10	1

The relationship between population parameters and perceptions held of the importance and frequency of use of the 18 phases and four categories of the GEMS Model were described as either negligible or low associations in all cases.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions are presented according to each of the four categories of the GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration (Culp, Deppe, Castillo, & Wells, 1998).

The Generate category ranked fourth in perceived level of importance and third in frequency of use. Based on the importance and use scores, the needs score was calculated and ranked third out of the four categories.

Generating new volunteers can be a time consuming process involving many steps. Without a clear understanding of the number and types of volunteers needed in the program, the organization may suffer from lack of volunteer assistance. Because the Needs Assessment phase ranked 17th for both importance and use by 4-H agents, they may not understand the importance of seeking input from the community, and volunteers within the program, as they carry out their volunteer administrative duties. Agents would benefit from learning about the importance of needs assessments and a variety of ways in which they can be conducted.

The importance of position (job) descriptions ranked higher than their frequency of use. These findings may indicate a classic example of having position descriptions on file but not utilizing them. Agents may need a more thorough understanding of how to utilize the written position (job) descriptions that they have access to.

4-H agents in this study usually do not identify specific individuals or groups who may serve as volunteers for 4-H, nor do they feel that it is important to do so. Without understanding how beneficial the Identifying phase may be, Agents may experience difficulty in locating sources of volunteers. Ohio 4-H agents would benefit from a peer generated list of potential groups who may be willing to serve as 4-H volunteers. Furthermore, agents could benefit from learning the importance of identifying diverse groups of volunteers who represent the characteristics of the communities served or targeted to serve. In addition, utilizing the Identifying phase, targeted recruitment becomes easier. The calculated Needs Score for the Recruiting phase ranked 11th among the 18 phases, therefore, the respondents do not perceive recruiting to be a great need. Although they may not perceive the need to be high, successful examples of mass and individual recruitment techniques would be helpful to them.

Screening potential volunteers was perceived by respondents to be the most important phase within the Generate category. This survey research reflected a low Needs Score by 4-H agents in the area of screening volunteers. References related to interviewing techniques including the appropriateness and legal issues related to interview questions would prove to be beneficial to 4-H agents.

Selecting 5th in importance and 3rd in frequency of use among the 18 phases. The calculated mean Needs Score ranked 17th. Therefore, respondents perceived the Selecting phase as being important and also utilize the phase frequently in their county 4-H program. While additional resources or education may not be a necessity, 4-H agents may need support on an individual basis from district personnel and state 4-H extension specialists when dealing with difficult situations involving volunteer selection.

Mean ranking for both the level of importance and frequency of use for the Educate category ranked first. The mean rank of the calculated Needs Score, therefore, was last. At the time this study was conducted, many 4-H agents were typically conducting activities related to the Educate category. Their involvement in those duties may have been a factor in how respondents rated the importance and frequency of use for those phases.

The mean importance score of the Orienting phase ranked first among the 18 phases. Frequency of use ranked second with a mean Needs Score rank of 15th. This indicates that 4-H agents perceive orienting volunteers to be important and they are also utilizing the phase. While the results show that agents are conducting some sort of orientation with new volunteers, the orientation format or the effectiveness of the orientation program is unknown. Although the Needs Score for this phase was low, agents could still benefit from orientation reference materials to use with their

volunteers. Included should be how county based 4-H programs fit into Ohio State University Extension and the National 4-H Youth Development program.

The Protecting phase ranked second in terms of importance, eighth in frequency of use and fourth in need. 4-H agents understood the importance of protecting volunteers by making them aware of appropriate behaviors, risk management procedures and liability issues. However, agents may not have a good understanding of how to inform volunteers about those issues. Agents may not understand the legality of many issues or feel comfortable discussing legal issues with their volunteers. State staff first need to educate 4-H agents on liability issues when dealing with volunteers and youth and then need to provide support for county programs such as meeting with groups of volunteers to discuss protection issues.

Providing resources to volunteers was ranked 3rd in importance, 1st in frequency of use, and 18th in need by respondents. Questionnaire items related to providing volunteers with written sources of information received high scores. However, agents did not consistently provide volunteers with monetary resources, or information about how volunteers can seek 4-H funding at the county level. Agents indicated that they do not as frequently provide volunteers with sources of other individuals that may serve as resources for the program. A list compiled by 4-H agents of agencies or individuals that volunteers could tap as resources would be beneficial and increase the frequency of use of those areas within the Providing Resources phase.

The Teaching phase was seen as relatively important compared to the other phases and the Needs Score ranked 10th among the 18 phases. County programs frequently have organized procedures for teaching volunteers. However, agents less often utilize a variety of teaching methods for the programs offered or solicit input from volunteers when planning educational opportunities. Agents would gain from sharing ideas with other agents from around the state about educational programs that have been successful and what aspects made the programs successful. In addition, Agents may benefit from information on various learning styles and techniques that could be utilized when teaching individuals with different styles.

Overall, agents' ranking of the level of importance and frequency of use for the Mobilize category was second among the four categories. The Needs Score also ranked second. Respondents perceived the category as being important and although they are utilizing the category, a discrepancy exists creating the second highest need for further education and resources.

Questionnaire items related to Engaging volunteers in the duties they were selected to perform indicated that while 4-H agents do well delegating authority to the volunteers to complete tasks, volunteers are less often provided with new challenges and opportunities or have their volunteer responsibilities increased gradually. Ohio 4-H agents should be instructed to engage volunteers in a role in which they feel comfortable and gradually increase their duties as they become familiar with the program policies and procedures. Serving in an assistant position can often be helpful before carrying out volunteer duties individually.

Motivating 4-H volunteers is a concern for agents, as it ranked seventh in Needs Score. Understanding what motivates individuals to begin and continue volunteer service is beneficial to 4-H agents. Studies conducted to explore motivational factors for 4-H volunteers should be shared with agents and suggestions should be given on how agents can utilize the motivating factors to increase motivation among volunteers within the county 4-H program.

The Supervising phase is important to insure the quality of the program and that volunteers are performing in an acceptable manner. 4-H agents do not utilize this phase as much as they would like, as there is a discrepancy between the level of importance and frequency of use scores. Individual supervision of all volunteers cannot be accomplished with the limited supply of time and resources most agents face. Agents reported an average of 271 volunteers coordinated. Therefore, 4-H agents may need to rely on volunteer middle managers, parents and 4-H members to serve in supervisory roles

and in turn report to the Agent.

Sustaining volunteer involvement will lead to strength, stability and continuity of the program. 4-H agents indicated that they least frequently utilize phases within the Sustain category and perceive this category as the greatest need for additional education and resources.

Evaluating volunteers on a continuous basis can be both time-consuming and difficult for agents with several hundred volunteers. Evaluating volunteers ranked third in need. Although evaluations are often utilized to determine if programmatic goals are being met, agents less frequently determine if volunteers' goals are being met. Nor do evaluations focus on the contributions made by volunteers or include the volunteers in their own evaluation. Samples of formal evaluations that focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the volunteer in addition to the program would be beneficial to 4-H agents. In addition, 4-H agents could benefit from learning ways to informally evaluate the work of volunteers through feedback from program participants.

Recognition often serves as a form of motivation for volunteers. Volunteers may continue to serve because they are told they are doing well and are making a difference. Agents indicated through a relatively low needs score that they perceive they are doing well in the area of recognition. However, agents may gain new ideas for both formal and informal volunteer recognition from peers. Each county 4-H program may have different methods of recognizing volunteers. Sharing those ideas among counties may help all agents find new ways to recognize volunteers for their service leading to greater volunteer motivation and retention.

4-H agents indicated that they only sometimes have a plan for volunteer retention. Volunteer retention will lead to continuity within the program. Volunteer retention can be accomplished by maintaining a good relationship between the 4-H professional and the volunteer and asking volunteers to renew their commitment to serve the program. Agents should determine a retention goal for the county program, then develop methods to reach their goal. Planning for retention, rather than just letting it happen by chance, will likely increase the number of volunteers who renew their volunteer commitment and continue to serve 4-H on an annual basis.

Agents indicated the second greatest need in the Redirecting phase. Volunteers within the 4-H program are often promoted to positions with greater responsibility. However, redirection is less often utilized to move a volunteer from an unsuccessful position to another volunteer position within the 4-H program that offers the potential for greater success. Agents may be apprehensive about moving a volunteer from one particular position to another for fear they may leave the organization entirely. Agents may also be concerned about maintaining a positive relationship with the volunteer after redirection. Support and guidance should be given to 4-H agents in the event that they redirect or transfer an unsuccessful volunteer to another position in the 4-H program. Agents would also benefit from learning how to use Redirecting by promoting volunteers to serve as middle managers for the volunteer program.

The Disengaging phase is often viewed negatively by volunteer administrators and avoided whenever possible. 4-H agents are no exception. Ohio 4-H agents identified their greatest need to be in this phase. While Disengaging ranked 5th in terms of importance, its frequency of use rank was 13th. Positively, 4-H agents may not be utilizing the Disengaging phase very often because retention rates are high in the program. However, all volunteers will at some time disengage from the organization. Agents should remember that leaving the organization is a natural phase in the volunteer's relationship with 4-H.

Volunteers who resign their position should leave with a positive feeling toward 4-H and their role. Volunteers who are dismissed from their position due to problematic behaviors should have been made aware of dismissal policies at the beginning of their service, during orientation. Agents would greatly benefit from learning their rights, responsibilities, and proper procedures to follow related to volunteer dismissal. Support is often needed from district and state specialists in the event that an agent must terminate a volunteer's involvement in 4-H

program.

In addition to the specific recommendations for each phase previously described, the researchers offer the following general recommendations as a result of the findings.

Ohio 4-H Youth Development agents could benefit from educational opportunities, resource materials and support in each of the 18 phases of volunteer administration. Emphasis should first be placed on developing and revising resource materials for the phases receiving the greatest Needs Scores.

Demographic characteristics of 4-H agents need not be of concern as educational opportunities or resources are developed, as no moderate or strong relationships were found between any demographic variable and any GEMS phase or category.

Further studies could investigate the effectiveness of the volunteer administration practices utilized by 4-H agents in each of the 18 phases of the GEMS Model. Additionally, further studies could explore the levels of competency of 4-H agents in each of the 18 phases of volunteer administrations represented by the GEMS Model. Finally, because of the relatively small range in means calculated for the level of importance for each of the 18 phases of the GEMS Model (1.51 on a 7 point scale) it could be inferred that the GEMS Model provides a useful framework for 4-H agents to utilize when administering volunteer programs.

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