

Title: 4-H Experiences Contributing to Leadership and Personal Development

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Year: 2004

Source: NAE4-H Proceedings (Forthcoming)

Description: The major purpose of the study was to ascertain how 4-H experiences of past members (4-H alumni) influenced or contributed to other experiences later in life. A secondary purpose was to identify 4-H experiences influencing leadership and personal development of 4-H alumni. One-hundred fifty eight former 4-H members responded to a mail survey in 2003-04.

Major Findings: Significant, positive relationships were found between the dependent variable (leadership and personal development) and independent variables--usefulness of 4-H projects ($r=0.61$), challenges and responsibilities ($r=.74$), and benefits of 4-H participation ($r=0.68$).

Low to moderate relationships were found between leadership and personal development and type of projects animal science ($r=.23$), leadership and personal development ($r=.30$), citizenship and civic development ($r=.18$), communication and expressive arts ($r=.15$), and number of years in 4-H ($r=.28$).

In all, a total of six variables (in order of entry): challenges and responsibilities, benefits of 4-H participation, number of years in 4-H, animal science projects completed, usefulness of projects, and total number of 4-H projects completed, contributed to leadership and personal development. The first variable, challenges and responsibilities explained 52.8% of the total variance in leadership and personal development. The second variable, benefits of 4-H participation explained 11.9% followed by, number of years in 4-H (1.8%), animal science projects completed (1.2%), usefulness of 4-H projects (0.8%), and total number of 4-H projects completed (1.0%) Collectively, these six independent variables explained 68.7% of the total variance in leadership and personal development.

