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FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPANT  
MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE  
MICHIGAN YOUTH FARM STAND PROJECT

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**FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPANT MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN  
THE MICHIGAN YOUTH FARM STAND PROJECT**

**By**

**Ashley Anne Brander**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted to  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **FACTORS INFLUENCING PARTICIPANT MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE MICHIGAN YOUTH FARM STAND PROJECT**

By

Ashley Anne Brander

The purpose of the exploratory study was to understand what motivated and engaged youth in the Michigan Youth Farm Stand Project (YFSP) offered by the C.S Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at Michigan State University. The qualitative study included interviews and observations to explore the motivations and sustaining factors influencing youth participants. An opportunity to earn money and have something to do during the summer interested most students. Those with prior gardening experience were motivated by the opportunity to garden while having fun. Similarities and differences emerged during the study; however, the opportunity to garden and spend time with friends emerged as sustaining factors.

Teamwork, decision making and caring adults attributed to favorable project components and emerged through the study as possible motivators to remain active, which led to participant engagement. Participation barriers included transportation, family commitments and discontinuation from the host program. Recognizing participation barriers and involving youth in decision making enhances involvement and provides youth opportunities to reap benefits offered by participation in YFSP. Programs that strive to provide positive impacts on youth in low-income communities can gain insight from the findings in this study to strengthen and enhance youth knowledge and skill in local food systems initiatives.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

In today's society, youth play an integral role in their own development and use of time outside school hours. The matter of how youth choose to spend their time is a concern to parents, teachers, and human services professionals and to youth themselves. Most people probably agree participation in quality youth programs is a good opportunity for youth development and skill building. With a growing interest in issues pertaining to how young people choose to participate or not participate in youth programs, the study examined what motivated and engaged youth involvement in an innovative community-based program – the Michigan Youth Farm Stand Project (YFSP).

The project was community-based and offered through a variety of after-school programs, agricultural and natural resources education, 4-H groups and community programs. Practices and relationships formed in such programs provide an avenue for skill development, personal gratification, and integration within community. It is dissatisfying to know that not enough youth are taking advantage of these opportunities and engaging in these growth-enhancing activities (Saito, 2006).

With the apparent benefits of participating in activities, it is important to increase access to participation and remove barriers. It is equally important to design programs of interest that are available (Borden, Perkins, Villarruel, & Stone, 2005). It recently has been reported youth often attend programs either irregularly or for only a short time before they quit (Lauver & Little, 2005). Further, becoming physiologically engaged increases the benefits obtained and the likelihood of continued participation (Ferrari & Turner, 2006; Bartko, 2005). Youth must become interested and motivated in activities to engage and benefit from learning objectives and other valuable experiences.

The question of how youth become motivated and engaged is crucial to youth development programs. This impacts not only youth but also resources and time required by program stakeholders and organizers to recruit and retain. Without active participants, future sustainability of programs may be jeopardized. This chapter addresses:

- Background of the study
- Research questions
- Professional significance of the study
- Overview of the methodology
- Delimitations
- Limitations

## Background of the Study

### *Youth Motivation & Engagement*

Positive youth development is a desired outcome of organized activities. The extent to which organized activities influence development can vary across individual youth, programs and community settings (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles, & Lord, 2005). In order to experience the greatest development in organized activities, participants must join and continue participation (Mahoney et al., 2005; Bartko, 2005). Youth who are active and engaged in an activity are more likely to continue participation and benefit from the positive aspects offered (Pearce & Larson, 2006).

To become engaged, one must be interested and motivated by program activities (Larson, 2000; Vandell, et al., 2005). The study defined engagement as, “meaningful participation and sustained involvement in an activity with a focus outside of him or herself” (Center of Excellence for Youth Engagement, 2004). Further, the study defined

engagement as participating and expressing interest while in attendance. Even if external barriers force discontinued participation, youth may be perceived as engaged during their time with the program. The study adapted Ryan & Deci's (2000) motivation definition. Motivation is concerned with energy, direction and persistence – all aspects of activation and intention. Developing and implementing meaningful and engaging programs which enhance individual skills is a priority of many community programs. Research lacks in youth motivation and engagement. Thomas (2007) found most research focuses on youths' motivation and engagement in academic learning environments.

#### *Current Situation – Food & Fiber System*

Throughout Michigan, local groups are expanding food systems to include health, access, and local economic value. Michigan ranks second in the United States for agriculture diversity attributing to more than \$60 billion to Michigan's economy (Michigan Ag Council, n.d.). Fostering support and stimulating interest in local agriculture and food and fiber systems remains a priority for stakeholders and enthusiasts. Community groups are connecting consumers to growers while fostering economic vitality for local farmers. Increased access to healthy local food provides Michigan's resource exhausted and densely populated communities' opportunities to link food and civic revitalization (Cocciarelli & Reardon, 2006).

The food and fiber system has changed dramatically in the United States in the last half of the twentieth century with industrialization of production and processing operations. Farmer control over marketing and labor decisions is being replaced by corporate control. Rural communities are struggling socially and economically as consumers' gradually lose knowledge of their primary food sources (Garrett & Feenstra,

n.d). In areas of high poverty, such as inner cities and remote rural towns, access to healthy, local food is not always available.

Community-based foods systems are promoted in Michigan and across North America as a way to connect food growers and consumers, retailers and distributors, processors and preparers. A community-based system gives priority to local resources and focuses on local markets, while ensuring environmental sustainability and social equity (Heller, 2006). To be successful, community-based food systems rely on informed customers having a stake in how and where food is produced, processed and sold. For relationships to form, the younger generation needs education and a willingness to promote local agriculture and food production in their communities. Heller (2006) states by eating local and making connections among farmers, consumers, processors and retailers, a greater impact on health and well-being of communities is anticipated. Programs and initiatives throughout North America are attempting to address the need to build community-based food systems. The study involves youth - the future voices of communities, agriculture and food systems.

#### *What is the Youth Farm Stand Project?*

According to Michael Hamm, the C.S. Mott Chair of Sustainable Food Systems at Michigan State University, the future of food systems in the state is a niche market with emphasis placed on community foods, value-added products, community sustainable agriculture (CSA), and urban agriculture, to name a few (M. Hamm, personal communication, January 15, 2007). To begin intertwining the future of food production and youth, the C.S. Mott Group developed the Youth Farm Stand Project (YFSP), a program focusing on nutrition education, entrepreneurship and sustainable local food

systems. This is one of several initiatives through the Mott Group attempting to tackle the larger question of *Who will feed Michigan?* Joining forces with agriculture and natural resources education programs and community stakeholders, youth are given opportunities to experience topics of sustainable agriculture, food nutrition, entrepreneurship, and community foods.

YFSP attempted to address issues of food access and availability in Michigan through two mechanisms: (1) nutrition and entrepreneurial education designed to impact purchase and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, and (2) product proximity in targeted neighborhoods (Cocciarelli & Reardon, 2006). The program was a collaborative effort between the C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at MSU, USDA Family Nutrition Program (FNP), community partners and Michigan youth. The foundation of YFSP was to integrate community-based food systems with food production and local communities. Equally important were experiences gained by youth; including, opportunity for leadership development, connecting with community for resources, and networking with farmers. Community connections included strengthening ties through networking with members for donations in time or resources. Networking with farmers provided opportunity to negotiate in share-cropping or product procurement. YFSP was a program targeting low-income urban communities. There were no prescribed steps in YFSP; each action plan was youth driven, community-based and locally unique. Youth created operational business plans, grew and/or procured produce, became ambassadors of healthy food, prepared cooking demonstrations, and directly marketed produce locally. Youth were exposed first hand to local community food systems and the environmental and economic impacts that promoted the systems over time.

YFSP was piloted in 2005 with two Michigan sites. Results highlighted positive change in nutrition education and in reaching low-income communities. The C.S. Mott Group, with funding from FNP, provided opportunity for six programs to be implemented in Michigan for the 2006-07 year. Sites ranged from inner city urban schools to rural agriculture and natural resources education programs. Although the sites were connected to a school district or school program, the project emphasized integrating the components of a community-based food system in neighborhoods. The schools were only one link of the connection. All sites were located in resource-lacking communities. To meet the criteria for FNP funding sites had to establish that over 50 percent of students at the school qualified for the free and reduced lunch program.

Each site offered a different approach to meet program objectives. Whether it was through formal school programming or after school activity, unique tactics used made each program individually successful. Each approach proved how diversity of youth impacts programs and how program diversity influences benefits gained by participants. Benefits can be reached through interaction between program coordinators, caring adults, youth and communities. Interpreting what motivated and engaged youth in YFSP was a significant component of evaluating program outcomes – without participation the project would not have succeeded.

### The Problem Statement

Research has focused on positive and negative consequences of youth participation in extracurricular activities; yet, researchers have failed to ask why individuals participate in programs and why they continue participation over time (Mahoney & Cairns, 1997; Thomas, 2007). Rather than focusing on academic

engagement, where most engagement research has been done (Thomas, 2007; Weiss, Little & Bouffard, 2005), the study addressed engagement through the lens of organized activities and community programs. The lack of youth engagement research has researchers examining how to engage and motivate students out of school time hours (Thomas, 2007).

Integration of community-based food initiatives, such as farmers markets and community gardens, have potential to boost effectiveness of USDA nutrition assistance and education programs by increasing availability and affordability of nutritious food (Scott-Kantor, 2001). Such programs also provide opportunity for youth involvement in the community. School-aged children in the United States and other Western nations spend nearly 50 percent of their waking hours in leisure activities (Mahoney et. al, 2005). Analyzing how young people can best use time and become integrated into communities has been an area of discussion, yet research over the past 100 years has ignored time youth spend out of school (Kleiber & Powell, 2005). More recently an increased interest in after-school hours and the benefits offered to youth participating in these extra-curricular and community-based programs have been examined.

The food and fiber system is vital to human existence and youth are the next generation to fulfill needs of agriculture production, education, and consumption. It makes sense to develop programs teaching adolescents the importance of community-based food systems and healthy eating. Integrating community-food systems education with youth programming provides opportunities to educate young people about local food systems while providing avenues to engage them in after-school activities. Such activities

promote positive development and help build skills not available in the classroom. Yet, these skills are not fostered without motivated and engaged youth.

The study examined the levels of motivation and engagement by YFSP participants. To reap success and realize benefits, youth must join and remain engaged in programs (Pearce & Larson, 2006). The following research questions guided the study.

1. What initially motivated youth to join the farm stand project?
2. What components of the project did the youth find most enjoyable?
3. What factors influenced sustained engagement in the project?
4. What barriers did youth face preventing continued participation in the project?

Motivational factors and engagement process of youth attributed to achievement gained by YFSP communities. With a youth-driven program, active participation influences success while ensuring project sustainability.

#### Professional Significance of the Study

Emerging community-based food systems are impacting thousands of communities across the United States. With diverse initiatives and potential impact on local communities, food systems are emerging across the nation. Incorporating youth in community-based food systems attempts to foster education surrounding eating local, healthy foods while becoming ambassadors in future food systems. Research has become increasingly more important for assessing how youth spend leisure time and the value of developing programs that initiate involvement and community engagement.

Research has not significantly addressed community-based programs. Although small in magnitude the study has potential to impact future programming and recruitment



for community-based food systems and youth programs. Further, motivation for participating and reasons for continued engagement can be used to develop new community-based programs and/or programs focusing on youth involvement in food systems. Results of the study may change recruitment and retention methods, as they provide reason for participation. While recruiting youth, coordinators can emphasize program objectives meeting motivation and engagement needs.

Youth recounting reasons for participation and continued engagement provides perspective on experience and served as the foundation of the study. Vandell et al. (2005) illustrated it is possible to assess youths' engagement level by asking about their feelings and experiences. Thus youth were the informants sought to answer the study's research questions. Prior research about YFSP was minimal and youth motivation data was not included. Youth involvement and engagement was a priority for the study because of its significant impact on overall program success.

### Overview of Methods

Research from the students' perspective is lacking in the field of youth development. With the intent of capturing data about their motivation and engagement in YFSP, research was conducted gaining the youths' perspective. Although additional information was gathered from site coordinators, the main focus was youth centered, particularly, 15 youth participants, three youth from each site.

The qualitative study encompassed data collection at five youth farm stand sites in Michigan in 2006-07. Coordinators selected 15 students to participate in the study. Purposeful sampling was used to select students involved with YFSP since its inception in the community. This method was used to ensure collected data was *rich* and provided

data to inform research questions. Because of the nature of the questions – youth motivation and engagement – qualitative research was used to better understand the experiences of the participants in the YFSP.

Data collection consisted of two rounds of youth interviews exploring motivation and engagement of students. Interviews were held during early spring while second interviews took place in September. The study design was modified including coordinator interviews in September; this accounted for seven youth who did not participate in second round student interviews. Coordinators were asked to give perceptions on why students did not complete the farm stand project. During summer months, one observation was conducted to understand project logistics and gave the researcher opportunity to interact with students. Interaction with students yielded additional data encompassing youth beyond those interviewed at the sites.

The study sample was taken from youth participating in YFSP at five sites. Interviews were in-depth and conducted individually by the same interviewer. Interviews included questions about reason for joining and continued participation. Interview guides were used to lead discussions; however, the interviewer allowed data to emerge and subsequently followed-up on relevant topics (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Data was coded and analyzed with aid of qualitative data analysis software, NVivo 7. Cluster matrices and memos helped interpret and summarize the data collected for each research question. Narrative was collected and summary statements were derived as a starting point in writing results.

## Delimitations

Although YFSP encompassed about 70 participants in 2006-07, the study sample focused on 15 youth and five coordinators. The intent of the study was not to interact and gain information from all involved, especially youth. Bassett, Beagan, Ristovski-Slijepcevic and Chapman (2008) cited recruitment of youth as the most challenging component of research with adolescents. Because of conflicting schedules and ability to meet with students, three students were selected from each site. In part, the difficulty in recruiting youth for research guided the study and was designed to gain informative data from a sample of youth, not each participant. The study results do not represent the entire population of participants; however, this was not the intent.

The YFSP was in its second year, and its first full year beyond the pilot of the project. There was very little research done on YFSP prior to the study and therefore project design was exploratory. Because the program was new, it was difficult to anticipate youth participation level throughout the project. Rather than random sampling, purposeful sampling was selected to ensure youth interviewed had shown initial involvement in YFSP. The researcher did not want students included in the sample who participated on only a few occasions. This impacts the ability to generalize the study results across all youth participants in YFSP. However, the study provides a basis for future YFSP motivation and engagement research, as the results yielded are from a select group of participants.

## Limitations

Maxwell (2005) stated researcher bias and reactivity are the main threats to validity. Because of the exploratory nature of the study, researcher's understandings of

youth motivation to participate in the farm stand project evolved through data collections. The conceptual framework changed from the beginning to the final draft, indicating the researcher allowed themes to emerge and preconceived ideas were not factored during data collection. The study's purpose and research questions were clearly stated and the process for data collection was made apparent.

Subject reactivity is evidence of validity, yet during this research project, reactivity to the researcher was not sensed. The data process was explicitly presented and throughout the project colleagues were consulted and feedback given on emerging themes and developing ideas.

Another limitation is in-depth interviews with youth. With the intent of making interviews open-ended, many questions required follow-up and probing to receive enough information to inform research questions. Bassett et. al (2008) stated when adolescents could not be engaged in extended conversation it became difficult to continue the interview process beyond one-word answers. This obstacle forced the researcher to adapt questions and make them more semi-structured to gather enough qualitative data to complete the study. This minor adjustment reiterates the difficulty of involving youth in qualitative research studies; yet the results prove with probing and more structure, results are sufficient and informative.

### Summary of Introduction

With the study briefly outlined in this introductory chapter, evidence shows need for structured after-school programming. Community-food system initiatives can entertain this need. By exposing students to YFSP, it provides avenue for participation in communities and makes connections with local food systems. Motivation and

engagement are key elements to sustained participant involvement and through the remaining chapters; the study is highlighted, including: review of literature, methods, results, and discussion and recommendations.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Much research has been done pertaining to the positive and negative consequences of youth participation in extracurricular activities; yet, researchers have failed to ask why individuals participate in programs (Mahoney & Cairns, 1997). In general, researchers have implied motivation is an intra-individual process focused on needs, attitudes, goals, experiences, and values a person brings to a situation (Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998). Motivation related to extracurricular research has not addressed how situational contexts impact individual's desires to continue participation or withdrawal from the activity (Fredericks, et al., 2002). Youth have a built-in motivational system with potential to engage them in positive development (Larson, 2006). Patterns of student engagement and disengagement from learning have emerged on in-school situations; however, the role of community-based settings in fostering engagement and learning has received less attention and is less understood (Thomas, 2007).

Motivation and engagement are often used interchangeably. However, it is important to differentiate the two concepts. Youth can be motivated, yet unengaged in their actions. Motivation is about energy and direction, reasons for behavior. Engagement describes energy in action, the connection between person and activity (Russell, Ainley, & Frydenberg, n.d.) This chapter synthesizes the theoretical and empirical research completed on what motivates and engages youth in the contexts of after-school, community based programs, and service learning initiatives. It is organized in a way that the foundational theory and definitions used to derive the framework for the study are addressed followed by supporting work and suggested findings proposed by developmental psychologists and youth motivation and engagement researchers.

## Definition of Youth Engagement

Rather than focusing on academic engagement, where most engagement research has been done (Thomas, 2007; Weiss, Little & Bouffard, 2005), this section addresses engagement through the lens of organized activities and community programs outside the academic arena. In order for youth to experience positive development provided by organized activities, they must join and become psychologically engaged (Pearce & Larson, 2006). Developmentally, engagement is a growth producing activity in which individuals allocate attention in response to their environment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Engagement is more than motivation or the desire to succeed; it involves participation, connection, attachment and integration into settings (Newmann, 1986). Although derived from an academic standpoint, Strong, Silver and Robinson (1995) state engaged students are driven by the following four goals: success (the need for mastery), curiosity (the need for understanding), originality (the need for self-expression) and relationships (the need for involvement with others). This relates to community engagement because of youths' desire to join an activity on their level of interest and to perceive connection to a group. Further this is explained in the section relating to the three needs: (1) competence, (2) autonomy, and (3) relatedness.

Walker (2006) defines engagement as “the extent to which young people are involved, interested, and enthusiastic about what they are doing.” Nakamura (2001) states the key features of engagement in an activity are: (1) the individual experiences “enjoyed absorption” in the activity, sustained over time, (2) the activity providing a link between the individual and the outside world and, (3) the activity has a feeling of meaning and significance. According to *The Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement*, the concept

of youth engagement is defined as the “meaningful participation and sustained involvement in an activity with a focus outside of him or herself” (2004). The stated definitions are relational to one another and combined offer important pieces to the youth engagement. *The Center of Excellence for Youth Engagement*, definition best aligns with the study as it supports sustained involvement, encouraged by the defined motivation theory driving the study. The concept of engagement is often used interchangeably with other ideas, including, but not limited to involvement, participation, volunteering and community service (Yeung, 2007). For the purpose of the study, consider all aforementioned terms as synonyms of engagement.

Walker stated young people are engaged when they are involved and participating in something they enjoy doing. For the study, this concept is also integrated especially because sustained engagement for an entire year may not result in some programs because of their inherent nature. External barriers can cause youth not to attend; not because they do not want to but because other obstacles prevent participation. For the study, youth are engaged when they have every opportunity to attend and participate in meaningful activities and show apparent interest. If youth discontinue participation for external reasons beyond their control it does not imply they were not engaged while participating.

Youth engagement can be thought of on two levels – an individual level and a systems level (Pancer, Rose-Krasnor, & Loiselle, n.d). Youth initially become involved in organized activities because of ‘initiating factors’. Such factors include the influence of others, such as parents, friends or teachers (Nakamura, 2001.) At the systems level, such factors include organization of youth activities in the community (Pancer et al., n.d).



Engagement is sustained if additional ‘sustaining factors’ are present; such factors for individual youth are supportive environments and positive experiences (Pancer et al., n.d). At the systems level, engagement is sustained if youth are in an environment having values and structure supported by adults as meaningful activities (Pancer et al, n.d). If initiating and sustaining factors are present, engagement will occur (Nakamura, 2001), meaning youth experience positive engagement outcomes (Pancer & Pratt, 1999). However, Eccles & Barber (1999) noted some forms of engagement do not lead to substantive change either on an individual or systems level in accordance to outcomes experienced by youth. Although an important aspect of engagement, outcomes are not part of the study and will not be further discussed.

#### Definition of Motivation

Ryan & Deci (2000) define motivation as being concerned with energy, direction and persistence – all aspects of activation and intention. Motivation has been a central issue in the field of psychology, as it is the core of biological, cognitive and social regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Motivation is perhaps more important in the “real world” as it is highly valued because of its consequences; teachers, managers, coaches and parents among others are concerned with motivation because it produces results. People are motivated to act because of different factors and experiences. They can be motivated to participate because of interest or external coercion. This is the basis of extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation. The issue of whether people stand behind a behavior out of their interests and values, or do it for reasons external to the self is important in many situations and cultures representing basic reasoning by which people make sense of their behaviors and others’ (deCharms, 1968; Heider, 1958; Ryan & Connell, 1989).

## Motivational Theory

Motivational theories are concerned with the energization and direction of behavior; more precisely – what gets people moving towards activities or tasks (Pintrich, 2003; Russell et al, n.d). It has been suggested this reflects one central theme, what do individuals want and are there are basic needs that define what they want (Higgins & Kruglanski, 2000). Rather than examining motivation broadly, the study focused on different stages of motivation and its relationship to engagement and thus requires a more centered approach. A needs' based motivation theory was not chosen because the study examined more than motivation; it examined a change from motivation to engagement. Self-determination theory was utilized as the theory of choice when developing the framework of this study. Pearce and Larson (2006) identified that self-determination theory provides a useful framework for thinking about how youth are motivated and then engaged in an activity and how this transformation occurs. Ryan and Deci (2000, 2003) suggest self-determination theory provides a lens to look at the continuum of amotivation to extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation, with degrees along this continuum representing greater personal engagement (Pearce & Larson, 2006). Theoretical and empirical work is presented on self-determination theory and further looks at how the theory is connected to motivation and engagement.

### *Overview of Self-Determination Theory*

Human beings can be proactive and engaged or, alternatively, passive. These traits are determined largely on the social conditions in which they develop and function (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Research guided by self-determination theory (SDT) has focused on the social conditions that facilitate versus inhibit the natural processes of self-

motivation and physiological development (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Fundamentally, self-determination is an issue of choice and is a theory built on concepts such as choice, intentionality, or will (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Self-determination looks at factors enhancing versus undermining intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2002; Deci, 1980). Deci (1980) also stated it is a physiological construct referring to people's flexibility and capacity to choose among behavioral options and to accommodate situations where only one option is possible.

There are major differences between self-motivation and external regulation. A major component of SDT has been to take a differentiated approach to motivation and look at the different kinds of motivation that are being exhibited at any one time (Ryan & Deci, 2000). By looking at what forces move a person to act, SDT has identified several types of motivation, each of which have consequences for learning, performance, experience and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2002).

SDT focuses on inherent growth tendencies and physiological needs that are the basis for self-motivation and personality integration (Ryan & Deci, 2002). There are three basic needs that have been identified, as the fundamental physiological needs: (1) the need for competence, (2) the need for relatedness, and (3) the need for autonomy. Jacob (1973) defines a need as something that must be fulfilled if a living thing is to persist and thrive. In the field of biology the need concept is far less controversial compared to the need concept in psychology (Ryan & Deci, 2002); however, SDT maintains there are necessary conditions for growth and well-being of people's personalities and cognitive structure, just as there are for physical development and functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2002). The need for competence, relatedness and autonomy are known as the *basic*

*physiological needs*, also known universally as innate requirements not acquired motives, and are evident in all cultures and developmental periods (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Whether or not people are conscious of needs, the healthy human mind strives for these nutriment or needs and when possible gravitate towards situations that provide them (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

The need for competence refers to feeling effective in one's ongoing interactions with social environments while experiencing opportunities to express one's capacities (Deci, 1975; Harter, 1983; White 1959). Competence is the accumulated result of one's interaction with the environment, of one's learning and one's adaptation to situations (Deci & Ryan, 1985). White (1959) proposed a need for effectance - satisfying and exercising one's capabilities. This is referred to effectance motivation and the feeling of efficacy. The term competence is used to indicate the structures through which effectance motivation operates (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Deci (1975) suggested the need for competence also makes people seek challenges that are optimal to their capacities. Danner and Lonky (1981) supported this statement by concluding when children were free to select activities they would participate in, compared to not selecting; they selected ones that were slightly beyond their current level of competence. Competence is not an attained skill or capability but rather a perceived attitude while in a social environment (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Competence and effectance are often used interchangeably; for this review competence is the term used throughout.

As motivational literature suggests, people participate in activities because of their perceived competence. Youths' perceptions of themselves and what they are good at are expected to contribute to their involvement and commitment to activities (Patrick et

al., 1999; Carlson, 1998). In a study conducted by Fredericks et al. (2002), youth suggested increased self-confidence resulting from competence in the activity contributed to ongoing participation. Conversely, those youth who did not feel competent in their skills tended to lose interest in activities over time. For example, the development of competence and self-esteem were stated as main reasons for participation in Boys & Girls Club programs amongst African-American or Latino and living below the poverty line (Borden, Perkins, Villarruel, & Stone, 2005). Youth who receive positive recognition from significant people, such as coaches and parents, strengthened their perceptions of their own abilities and thus helped encourage continued commitment to the activity (Fredericks et al., 2002).

The second basic physiological need is the need for relatedness. Relatedness refers to feeling connected to others, caring for and being cared for by others, having a sense of belongingness with individuals and within one's community (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Bowlby, 1979; Harlow, 1958; Ryan, 1995). Engagement happens when adults create a sense of belonging and youth feel connected to the activity (Pete, 2004). Further, relatedness refers to connecting with others and feeling accepted; however, this does not mean acceptance through status but rather physiological sense of being with others in unity or community (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

The third basic physiological need is the need for autonomy. It refers to the perceived origin or source of one's behavior (deCharms, 1968; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Connell, 1989). Autonomy supportive techniques include: taking the other's perspectives, acknowledging the other's feelings, providing information and choice, and minimizing use of control (Guay, Boggiano & Vallerand, 2001). People act from interest

and integrated values; when autonomous, people experience their behavior as an expression of the self (Ryan & Deci, 2002). deCharms stated people strive to feel like an origin of their own behavior, striving for personal causation (1968). This implies people need to feel behavior has been chosen by them rather than imposed by an external source (Deci & Flaste, 1995). When one is autonomous they are willing to continue interaction as they embrace the activity with a sense of interest and commitment (Deci & Flaste, 1995).

Giving students choices, even when they may seem trivial or irrelevant to instruction has proven to enhance interest (Cordova & Lepper, 1996; Iyengar & Lepper, 1999). Choices lead to ownership and have been related to autonomy. Autonomy and independence should not be confused; independence refers to the concept of not relying on external sources or influences (Ryan & Deci, 2002) and the concepts are not related (Ryan & Lynch, 1989; Ryan, 1993).

Deci and Ryan (1985) theorize that people enjoy, prefer and persist at activities that provide them opportunities to make choices and control their own outcomes. Conversely, without choice and control, detrimental impacts on intrinsic motivation and life satisfaction can result (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999). Young people are often motivated to participate and continue their participation when they have a choice in what they learn and activities they join (Carlson, 1998; Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005; Thomas, 2007; Walker, 2006; Borden et al., 2005). An important part of participating in activities is the youth's responsibility in choosing the activity in which to participate (Carter & Nelson, 1984).

Carlson's (1998) youth-driven model is based on a learner who is self-directed and involved and has a sense of choice within their environment. The model implies youth are intrinsically motivated with choices that are fun and relevant to their futures and that youth can complete the task, thus achieving self-efficacy. In 4-H activities, young people are often self-motivated to learn when they have a choice in what they learn (Carlson, 1998). Further, Walker (2006) states providing choice and flexibility encourages youth to take charge of their learning and own development. Walker states choosing level of participation, roles and ways of contributing portrays to youth they are in control promoting positive thinking and continuous involvement. For activity programming, Saito (2006) found youth enjoyed working on projects that had some level of autonomy and influence over important decisions in order to feel important as community members.

Failure to satisfy any three basic physiological needs can result in decreased personal development and happiness (Deci & Flaste, 1995). The concept of basic physiological needs is different from the broader areas of personal motives, desires and strivings (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Although people may devise motives to meet needs, it is clear there are many motives that do not qualify as being essential for well-being and may be unfavorable. Even when people are highly successful at satisfying motives the motives still may be detrimental to their well-being if they interfere with autonomy and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2002). This point is important because it shows that successfully obtaining goals is not enough to ensure physiological well-being. Goals and motives relating to behavior must be viewed as either being minor to physiological needs

or as being substitutes that developed as compensations when basic needs were not met (Deci, 1980).

### *Intrinsic Motivation*

Intrinsic motivation is the natural tendency to engage one's interests and exercise one's capacities to seek out challenges to learn and explore (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Such motivation emerges spontaneously from internal tendencies and can motivate behavior without extrinsic rewards or environmental controls (Deci & Ryan, 1985). It has been suggested no single phenomenon reflects the positive potential of human nature as much as intrinsic motivation does (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Humans are endowed with intrinsically motivating tendencies at birth. Their inclinations toward mastery, spontaneity, and exploration are essential to social and cognitive development as sources of enjoyment and strength throughout life (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993; Ryan, 1995). Although these behaviors are natural at birth, maintenance of these inclinations needs support. The theory and research behind intrinsic motivation views how these tendencies can be sustained rather than what causes intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

Fredericks et al. (2002) conducted a study on youth's participation in athletics and arts programs, and reported that if youth perceived the activity to be less challenging, they were not motivated to keep investing their time in the activity. It has also been found humans learn more effectively when they are intrinsically motivated or they have internalized a learning goal – a person does not have to enjoy every moment to remain engaged (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2003).



Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde (1993) found intrinsic motivation is strongest when individuals are engaged with a challenge meeting their abilities. Motivation and engagement declines when tasks are too difficult or too easy. Eccles et al., (1998) derived that motivational system such as the need for competence and autonomy, self-efficacy and interest, encouraged engagement in challenging, task-oriented behaviors, including learning. People are most motivated to take on challenges when they experience ownership of what they are doing – when they see themselves as agents of their actions. This motivation can later lead to engagement (Eccles et al., 1998; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Carlson, 1998). Ownership is not required to be individualized; it can be part of a collaborative group. Moreover, what is important is for internal motivation to be sustained, one needs to perceive their actions as their own (Larson, 2006). This is supported in a study conducted by Vandell et al., (2005). The study focused on how youth viewed activities they participated in during different segments of time to see if they offered foundational support for factors influencing youth engagement. Answers reflected three factors: intrinsic motivation (enjoyment, choice, and interest), concerted effort (challenge, skills, and concentration), and importance. The study also illustrated the possibility to assess youth's engagement level by asking about their feelings and experiences.

Feedback and rewards that increase competence during the action can often increase intrinsic motivation for that action. For example, early studies indicated positive feedback enhanced intrinsic motivation, while negative feedback diminished motivation (Deci, 1975; Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999). Further studies (Ryan, 1982) indicate feelings of competence will not enhance intrinsic motivation unless accompanied by a

sense of autonomy. According to Ryan & Deci (2000) one must experience both competence and experience as being self-determined or chosen (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Controversy resulted with repeated research indicating extrinsic rewards can undermine intrinsic motivation. Deci (1975) interpreted these results as extrinsic rewards diminishing autonomy. Although this topic has been debated, Deci et al., (1999) completed a meta-analysis of 128 studies examining the impacts of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation concluding, engagement, completion and performance rewards significantly undermined free-choice intrinsic motivation. Engagement-contingent and completion-contingent rewards also undermined self-interest. Further, tangible rewards were indicated as being more detrimental to young youth compared to college students, and verbal rewards tended to be less enticing for youth than college students (Deci et al., 1999). Not only tangible rewards but threats (Deci & Cascio, 1972), deadlines (Amabile, DeJong, & Lepper, 1976), surveillance (Lepper & Greene, 1975; Plant & Ryan, 1985), and evaluation (Ryan, 1982), all decreased intrinsic motivation. In contrast, choice, acknowledgement of feelings and opportunities for self-direction were found to enhance intrinsic motivation because they allow for a greater feeling of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Although the meta-analysis showed extrinsic rewards undermining intrinsic motivation, Hidi (2000) argued it may still be premature to conclude when people are intrinsically motivated, tangible extrinsic rewards will always be detrimental (Harackiewicz & Sansone, 2000; Zimmerman, 1985). Hidi (2000) points out the studies included in the meta-analysis focused on short-term simple activities; moreover, it is inappropriate to conclude the same criteria would yield similar results if the relationship

between long-term activities and rewards were examined. The impacts of external rewards may depend on the complexity of the activity and the length of involvement (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000). A combination of intrinsic rewards imbedded in interesting activities and external rewards, specifically feedback, may be necessary to maintain one's engagement over a difficult activity or learning period (Hidi & Harackiewicz; 2000). Additionally, Zimmerman (1985) concluded extrinsic rewards may be necessary when individuals have no initial interest in the activity.

In a less degree than competence and autonomy, relatedness is the third need that impacts intrinsic motivation. Researchers reported when children worked with adults who ignored them and failed to respond to their initiations, a low level of intrinsic motivation resulted (Anderson, Manoogian, & Reznick, 1976). Further, Grolnick and Ryan (1987) reported when children worked with teachers, who were not caring or supportive, their intrinsic motivation was diminished.

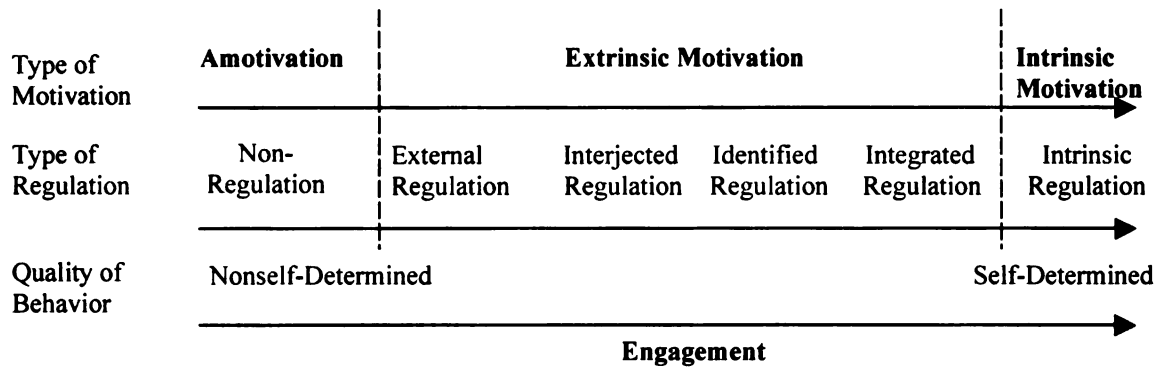
### *Extrinsic Motivation*

Extrinsic motivation refers to behavior where the reason for acting is something other than a personal interest in the activity. In other words, extrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain a separable outcome differing from intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2002; Harackiewicz & Sansone, 2000). The activity may be one that the person feels pressured to do rather than genuinely wants to do. People may be extrinsically motivated by behaviors determined highly controlled versus being determined by free choice of ones' values and desires. (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Some view extrinsically motivated behaviors as non-autonomous; however, SDT suggests extrinsic motivation can vary greatly in its autonomy (Ryan & Connell, 1989; Vallerand,

2000). As an example, students who complete their homework because they value their grades are extrinsically motivated, as are those students who complete homework under parents' control. Both examples provide instrumentalities rather than enjoyment for the homework, yet the first case involves personal choice where the second involves compliance with an external regulation. These examples represent intentional behavior, but their degree of autonomy varies (Heider, 1958).

Researchers are concerned with understanding how individuals are motivated by non-intrinsically motivated behaviors and how this motivation impacts their persistence and well-being. As one (parent, teacher, coach, or boss) tries to foster motivation, behavior may range from amotivation, to passive compliance to personal commitment (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The differing stages of motivation reflect the degree at which the behavior has been internalized and integrated by the individual. Internalization refers to one's "taking in" a value or regulation and integration refers to one further transforming the regulation into their own so it feels as though it comes from the self (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The continuum from amotivation to intrinsic motivation involves several extrinsic motivation steps involving different integration and internalization degrees of which are illustrated in Figure 2.1. Pearce and Larson (2006) suggest this motivation continuum may explain the process of motivation to engagement; as one is more motivated their regulation increases and ultimately one's behavior that was nonself-determined moves towards self-determined.



*Figure 2.1.* The self-determination continuum.

Adapted from “Handbook of Self-Determination,” by R.M. Ryan and E.L. Deci. Copyright 2002 by The University of Rochester Press.

Extrinsic motivation has different degrees and is represented by the continuum. Amotivation is defined as not acting at all or acting without intent (Ryan, 1995), or not feeling competent to do it (Bandura, 1986). Many researchers have viewed extrinsic motivation as a unitary concept. Ryan & Deci (2002) attempt to explain the five categories of extrinsic motivation. The extrinsic categories lie between amotivation and intrinsic motivation along the continuum, showing the variation that their regulation is autonomous.

On the left side of extrinsic motivation lies external regulation – behaviors that are least autonomous and done to obtain rewards or avoid punishments. External regulation is when the reason for performing a behavior is to satisfy an external demand (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Perceived locus of causality relates to the need for autonomy and is said to affect how an event or activity changes one’s perception towards a more external locus (Ryan & Connell, 1989). External regulation is motivation that has been classically contrasted to intrinsic motivation in early research (deCharms, 1968).

Introjected regulation is a type of extrinsic motivation involving an external regulation that has slightly internalized, but not accepted as one's own (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Behaviors are performed to avoid guilt or anxiety and to boost one's ego, such as pride. Introjection indicates individuals are motivated to demonstrate ability or avoid failure in order to maintain feelings of self-worth (deCharms, 1968; Nicholls, 1984). Studies by Ryan (1982) have shown when ego is involved as an outcome, one tends to lose intrinsic motivation for the target activity and thus introjected regulation is seen as controlling and therefore not very autonomous. Although it is internally driven, introjected regulation still has an external locus of causality and is not seen as part of the self (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

As the continuum continues towards self-determination, identified regulation is an extrinsic behavior more self-determined. It involves behavioral goals that are personally important. Identification is seen as a component in the process of transforming external regulation into self-regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2002). As an individual becomes conscious of the goal and begins to personally identify, a higher degree of perceived autonomy results (Deci & Ryan, 2002). However, these identifications may be separated from one's other beliefs and values in which case their identification with these goals may not be equivalent to their ultimate goals or values in a given situation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci & Ryan, 2002). Yet, relative to the previous two degrees of extrinsic motivation, external and introjected, identification is relatively more autonomous and self-determined.

The final degree on the continuum is integrated regulation, referring to the most autonomous or self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. It results when identified

regulations have been evaluated and brought into line with one's already established values, goals and needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2002). Integrated regulation is similar to intrinsic motivation; however, actions that characterize integration are done to accomplish separable outcomes rather than enjoyment, an aspect of being intrinsically motivated (Ryan & Deci, 2000). One who shows characteristics of having integrated motivation is still motivated for external outcomes, but the values are integrated in the self.

As indicated, people internalize regulations and incorporate them into the self experiencing more autonomy. This motivation continuum is not a developmental one and does not suggest that people progress through stages to eventual self-determination. Rather, they can experience this motivation at any particular time depending on the situation and prior occurrences (Ryan & Deci, 2000). However, behaviors tend to become more regulated over time and Chandler and Connell (1987) showed that children's regulatory style does tend to become more internalized or self-regulated over time.

#### *Relationship between Extrinsic Motivation and Intrinsic Motivation*

Researchers have defined intrinsic and extrinsic motivation differently and these concepts are growing more complex. Although Ryan & Deci (2000) keep intrinsic and extrinsic motivation distinct, they suggest the same factors that influence one's intrinsic motivation may influence extrinsic motivation. Harackiewicz and Sansone (2000) determined the extrinsic motivator (ex. rewards) could simultaneously initiate processes resulting in greater intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, depending on the activity or the individual. Contrast to earlier research, Lepper and Henderlong (2000) suggest intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can occur at the same time and are not necessarily shared.

Newer perspectives on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation would not lend researchers to ask whether an extrinsic motivator enhances or undermines intrinsic motivation, but rather focuses on how extrinsic motivators affect the individuals' intrinsic or extrinsic motivation (Harackiewicz & Sansone, 2000). Further research needs to focus on the nature of the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for a given activity and given individual, rather than assuming a relationship (Harackiewicz & Sansone, 2000).

#### *Summary of Self-Determination Theory*

SDT focuses on the human organism and social contexts that either support or hinder one's attempt to integrate their experiences into a coherent sense of self. The basic psychological needs of competence, relatedness and autonomy define the social contextual events supporting or undermining one's motivation, performance and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Overall, SDT was used as the foundational theory in this study to formalize how youth motivation and engagement are examined based on motivation and the continuum of motivation to engagement.

#### **Motivation & Engagement – Linkages**

Studies conclude youth may be motivated and engaged for multiple reasons, including fun and enjoyment, wanting to learn, improving skills, and applicability (Fredericks, et al., 2002; Ferrari, Anderson-Butcher, & Jesseson, 2003). Youth gain many developmental benefits from involvement in organized youth programs (Larson, 2000; Marczak, Dworkin, Skuza, & Beyer, 2006). Such developments include: social skills (Bartko, 2005; Fredericks et al., 2002; Quinn, 1999), initiative and teamwork (Larson, Hansen, & Walker, 2005), and increased educational attainment and achievement



(Mahoney et al., 2005; Bartko, 2005; Fletcher, Elder, & Mekos, 2000; Fredericks et al., 2002). Pancer et al., (n.d.) stated youth engagement and participation can have a profound impact on almost every aspect of youth development. They conclude that this impact can significantly change the environments in which youth live, work, and learn.

Engagement in after-school and community activities is important because of the relative disengagement students have while at school or at home (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984). By replacing time youth spend in unstructured activities with activities such as those provided after school or with the community, students' opportunities to simultaneously achieve autonomy, competence and relatedness are enhanced (Shernoff & Vandell, 2007). These are suggested as the three most important motivational forces according to a number of developmental psychologists (Eccles, 1999; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Pearce and Larson (2006) reported youth do not have to enter programs already motivated in order to become engaged. As concluded in the "Youth Action" study in which students were required to participate, students can participate in programs out of requirement and then become intrinsically motivated and engaged to participate beyond their service requirements.

### *Enjoyment and Support*

Youth engage in activities for the perceived fun and enjoyment they offer. In a study of urban African American youth participating in programs at the YMCA or Boys and Girls Clubs, youth identified "fun" most often as the motivation for their participation (Borden et al., 2005). Fredericks et al., (2002) questioned why students engage in arts and athletics programs and found a common reason for participation was

enjoyment. Further probing resulted in youth finding the activity enjoyable because they were good at it and it was an opportunity to see friends. Elsewhere it was reported that youth involved since an early age in an activity found it enjoyable and continued participation because they were good at it (Marczak et al., 2006).

Jones and Hill (2003) focused on patterns of commitment for high school students involved in community service, socializing with peers played a key role in student participation. They found if friends were involved in service then these students were more likely to participate. Overall, community service became a way of having fun and spending time with friends (Jones & Hill, 2003). One reason youth participate in voluntary after-school activities is to fulfill their social goals (Fredricks, et al., 2002; Luken, 2002). When asked what they wanted out of programming, youth reported the following: (1) opportunity for physical activity, (2) participate in recreational activities and (3) the chance to socialize with friends more (Marczak et al., 2006).

Peer support has been identified as a significant factor in the engagement process (Bartko, 2005). When youth join new programs their social network usually extends to those who are participating in the activity they have joined (Dworkin, Larson, & Hansen, 2003). Engagement may result when youth are offered opportunity to grow individually through meaningful interaction with others (Pete, 2004; Luken, 2002). Yet, engagement in a particular activity usually results when youth feel a sense of belonging (Bartko, 2005; Pete, 2004). Patrick et al., (1999) found over half of participants have made new friends as a result of joining a program. Failure to feel accepted by peers or feel a sense of belonging was cited as a source of non-participation for middle school children (Marczak et al., 2006).

Pearce & Larson (2006) concluded the influence of peers as important when researching motivation and engagement in a service-learning program. Peers provided a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. Talking with peers and sharing experiences increased commitment to the program, and interaction among the youth made their work more enjoyable (Pearce & Larson, 2006). Youth indicated the welcoming atmosphere amongst was a factor for continued participation beyond the required service. On the contrary, Ferrari & Turner (2006), found a limited number of participants engaged in an after-school 4-H program because of friends. Yet, research does reveal peers have an influence on each other's decisions to continue participation and engagement in organized activities (Huebner & Mancini, 2003; Fredericks, et al., 2003; Pearce & Larson, 2006). As illustrated, adolescents are motivated by perceived competence and a need to feel socially accepted. Forming and maintaining social relationships with friends is a significant motivational goal and engagement factor for most youth involved in organized activities (Patrick, et al., 1999).

### *Parental Role*

Pancer & Pratt (1999) stated the social settings provided by family and peers are key elements in engaging youth in community life. Those youth who know activities are important to parents are more likely to develop and potentially maintain interest (Fletcher et al., 2000). Youth and parents reported parents influenced their child's decision in program participation. Often students participate in programs their parents participated in as a youth or programs parents encourage them to join (Marczak et al., 2006). Additionally, if parents are not engaged in community activities reinforcement of their children's involvement is most consequential and may lead to disengagement by youth

(Fletcher et al., 2000). Overall, parents contribute significantly to discouraging or encouraging participation in youth programs (Marczak et al., 2006).

### *Youth-Adult Relationships*

Ryan & Deci (2003) suggest adults who are over controlling undermine motivation and learning. Adults are most effective when they support youth ownership and agents of their own actions. Adults in youths' lives should provide structure, challenge and support (Eccles et al., 1998). Dworkin et al. (2003) suggest leaders should not teach students but rather help students teach themselves. In the youth development field, this is known as "youth empowerment." A study was conducted to identify what activities help youth develop – the study was recounted by youth. In almost all situations, students' portrayed themselves as their own development agents. They described processes derived from their own thoughts and choosing from what adults tell them (Dworkin et al., 2003).

Healthy, caring and respectful relationships between adults and youth are imperative for sustained involvement and activity success (Walker, 2006; Mahoney & Cairns, 1997; Bartko, 2005). Youth activity leaders are often significant when youth are asked about adults who are influential in their lives (Blyth, Hill, & Thiel, 1982). In a study conducted on girls participating in Girls Inc. (a program promoting positive development of girls) researchers found the most cited response for participating was the opportunity to learn new things and interact with caring adults (Borden et al., 2005). Marczak et al. (2006) stated youth want to connect with adults who share similar interests and can build positive relationships with involved youth.

Authentic learning and engagement happens when youth are treated respectfully by adults and are given an appropriate amount of support and freedom to make decisions (Joselowsky, 2007; Luken, 2002). Larson (2006) found in situations where adult advisers or leaders of high school programs took control of activities youth were less likely to feel ownership, and thus youth felt less motivated and disengaged from the activity. Conversely, when adults left activities totally up to the youth, work was often not completed or off task, which led to declining motivation and investment in the assignment (Larson, Hansen, & Walker, 2005).

Youth and adult driven models offer a context in which to perceive the role each can take in a community-based program. The adult-driven model focuses on the approach adults “know best” and adults offer greater knowledge and experience to program activities. Youth-driven model refers to an approach taking the form of a partnership in which youth and adults contribute, but youth perceive ownership and decision making rights (Carlson, 1998; Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005). Carlson states youth learn by helping to choose projects, share in discussions, being active in the group, and deciding on the evaluation standards.

Although each program has a different context and different objectives, a study was conducted analyzing the youth-driven vs. adult-driven model, using four programs. Larson et al. (2005) found participants in the FFA group and “Youth Action” perceived activities they planned as their own and were highly invested in work outcomes. Youth reported positive experiences they encountered left them more empowered, competent and motivated to strive towards distant goals. Skills learned through participation carried over into other parts of their lives. The adult-driven model was utilized with two groups

in which adults were able to create specially designed learning experiences for e youth and often created student-centered learning experiences, yet remained in control of activities. Larson et al. (2005) concluded the clearest liability in the adult-driven model was the threat of adults' control undermining youths' ownership.

Pearce and Larson (2006) found leader support was an important part of motivating and then engaging youth in programs. Leaders fostered a welcoming group climate, directed youths' attention, challenged youth and offered support. These different mechanisms appeared influential at the different engagement processes encountered by youth (Pearce & Larson, 2006). Saito (2006) reported young people want to be treated with respect by staff and other participants and viewed as community resources. Shernoff and Vandell (2007) found middle school children were most motivated when activities offered social structure and were performed with peers and adults.

The challenge faced by adults is trying to allow youth ownership while maintaining focus and order in program activities (Larson, 2006). Creating activities and working together to share leadership responsibilities encourages youth involvement and utilization of their talents (Walker, 2006). Engagement is developmental – for youth and adults – continuous skill development for all involved is essential in creating and sustaining youth-adult partnerships (Joselowsky, 2007).

### *Perceived Importance & Helping Others*

Youth are motivated by programs perceived as important to future and distant goals or for other reasons found personally valuable (Fredericks et al., 2002). Youth are engaged in programs allowing for expanding opportunities. Such programs permit youth to join and stay for several years because of the chance for learning and leadership

(Walker, 2006). Borden et al., (2005) found students were interested in programs that are more than just fun. Students are looking for organized programs that have high-quality staff and offer skill development opportunities preparing them for adulthood. Further, youth want to participate in authentic programs offering quality learning (Walker, 2006; Eyler, 2002).

Service-learning researchers found service initiatives that bring youth into contact with the needy are helpful in civic engagement development (Youniss & Yates, 1997; McLellan & Youniss, 2003). Meaningful roles and power to make a difference can help youth develop a sense of efficacy and help them realize the impact they can have while helping others (Joselowsky, 2007). Kraft (1996) suggests youth involved in communities assist community members resulting in the attitudes of the youth significantly changing in the process of helping others. In a study conducted by Serow (1991) on college students' motivation for participating in community service programs, 80 percent of respondents indicated a sense of satisfaction from helping others as a decision factor in their participation. Additionally, 54 percent of students reported feeling a duty to correct societal problems. Raskoff and Sundeen (1999) reported 24 percent of students were self-motivated for reasons such as helping others in their study on community service programs in various high schools. These factors indicate altruism; motivation is concerned with the ultimate goal of helping or increasing the welfare of one of more individuals (Batson, 1994). Conversely, Serow, Ciechalski, and Daye (1990) suggest that for most people, the costs of undertaking good deeds (time, energy, lost opportunities) must be offset by rewards derived directly or indirectly from the activity. Although, the

researchers further describe the possibility that engagement in helping behavior can in itself be enticing and motive for participation in community service.

### *Challenges & Skills*

Matching skills with challenges are an important part of creating intrinsic motivation and enjoyment (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Challenges must feel personally meaningful for youth to experience high levels of motivation and engagement. Pearce and Larson (2006) found when youth were challenged by goals set and supported by leaders in meeting these goals, they experienced enjoyment. The leader helped with this “channel of engagement” allowing a more sustained experience than if youth were challenged without support.

Engagement in activities often occurs when opportunities are stimulating and offer challenging experiences. Youth want to participate in programs helping them improve their skill set (Raskoff & Sundeen, 1999) and engage them cognitively (Bartko, 2005). Bartko found mastering skills and the excitement that accompanies this process also relate to positive engagement. Programs designed to foster youth development build on youths’ strengths, while providing ongoing support and challenging opportunities to meet their needs (Quinn, 1999). Further, engagement in challenging extra curricular activities is associated with less delinquent behavior and less chance of dropping out of school, especially among high-risk youth (Mahoney et al., 2005; McNeal, 1995; Vandell, et al., 2005; The City of Calgary, 2004).

Voluntary service allows opportunities for youth that may not be readily available in other contexts of their lives and represents a way youth can acquire skills pertaining to interpersonal relationships, time management and career options (Raskoff & Sundeen,



1999; Serow et al., 1990). Raskoff & Sundeen (1999) stated youth seek to gain valuable career experience as a major factor determining satisfaction with service learning opportunities. Lauver & Little (2005) also found teens desire opportunities to develop marketable skills, learn about careers and make community contributions. It is evident by empirical studies completed that youth participate in activities for more than fun and enjoyment. They look for ways to assist communities while benefiting their future through these helping efforts.

### *Barriers to Participation*

Although there are great benefits for youth to participate in extra-curricular programs and community based activities, many youth do not take advantage or do not have opportunity to participate in such programs. In many communities, there are not formal programs organized (opportunity-depleted communities); however, even in some communities where there is some level of programming, many youth do not participate in these growth enhancing experiences (Saito, 2006).

Lauver, Little and Weiss (2004) suggested five key barriers to youth participation; (1) desire to relax and spend time with friends, (2) desire or need to work, (3) family responsibilities, (4) boredom or disinterest, and (5) transportation. Saito (2006) reported similar barriers to participation; (1) restricted access, including cost and transportation, (2) youth feel unwelcome by other participants or adult leader, (3) lack of knowledge about what is available to them, and (4) the program is run poorly. It has been found youth disengage in activities because they are distracted by the pressures demanding the majority of time throughout the day (Yeung, 2007). The Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement (2004) investigated what prevents youth from becoming involved and or

staying engaged by categorizing barriers. The three categories include: (1) personal barriers, (2) school/family/organizational barriers, and (3) community/societal barriers. With apparent benefits youth gain by participating in community-based activities, barriers hinder these possible advantages. By better understanding barriers, youth programmers have the ability to attract and sustain meaningful engagement over time for young people (Weiss et al., 2005).

### Conclusion

Although commonly used interchangeably, motivation and engagement are different; however, their common similarities and natural linkages drove the study to integrate the concepts together. Motivational theory occupies much of the cited research. However, studies on extra-curricular programs, community activities and youth initiatives are lacking. Student engagement in an academic setting has also been highly published; yet, youth engagement in non-formal settings is deficient (Thomas, 2007). Pearce and Larson (2006) suggested the self-determination theory provides a useful framework for thinking about how youth are motivated and then engaged in an activity and how this transformation occurs. Self-determination theory suggests motivation can be understood in terms of a continuum from amotivation to extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation, with degrees along this continuum representing greater personal engagement.

Having defined engagement and motivation and with the use of self-determination theory, one can understand the use of it as the foundational theory. From extrinsic to intrinsic factors, youth chalk their participation up to different levels of motivational factors. By tradition, youth join after-school activities or community programs for a multitude of reasons. Attendance and engagement vary amongst activities and

participants. Within the motivation to engagement continuum, the study gives reason to explore factors influencing student decisions to engage or disengage in a community-based initiative.

### 3. METHODS

The methods section of the narrative outlines the research design and describes the procedures followed. It further examines the research participants and the data collection instruments used. The study design, in particular the interviews, were conducted to answer each proposed research question. The observations conducted helped the researcher understand each site and provide opportunity for interaction with participating students. This allowed the researcher to gain a better perspective of youths' reasons for participation. Finally, the chapter describes how data was analyzed and provides a summary.

#### Overview

Four research questions were derived to examine youth motivation and engagement in YFSP. The following research questions guided study design and data collection.

1. What initially motivated youth to join the farm stand project?
2. What components of the project did the youth find most enjoyable?
3. What factors influenced sustained engagement in the project?
4. What barriers did youth face preventing continued participation in the project?

The qualitative study was exploratory in nature; relying on interviews and observations. Because of the nature of the study, qualitative research was used to better understand the experiences and nature of the persons participating in the Youth Farm Stand Project (YFSP). According to Strauss & Corbin (1990) qualitative research allows participant experiences to emerge by interacting with the researcher. Additionally, qualitative

research has an inherent openness and flexibility allowing modification to the design and focus during the research to understand new relationships and discoveries (Maxwell, 2005). As will be illustrated, the study adapted to the circumstances that arose and the methodology evolved over the course of the research.

## Background to Study

### *Description of Youth Farm Stand Project*

YFSP is a community-based initiative designed to connect youth with communities and food systems. The program was developed by the C.S Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at Michigan State University. This group focuses on research and outreach surrounding community-based food systems and sustainable practices. YFSP is one of many projects the C.S. Mott Group organizes surrounding local food systems work. YFSP participants ranged from ages 11-19 years old with multiple levels of agriculture experience. The program attracted 70 youth and reached 2,000 community members and food stamp eligible participants through increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables and nutrition information.

### *Study Sites*

In 2006-07 six YFSP community sites participated in Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Research activities covered a 10-month period from January to October, 2007. Work at Michigan sites ranged from agri-science students independently gardening at home to adjudicated youth gardening at their program center. The study included five sites; one site was excluded because it was not actively participating at project onset. Table 3.1 provides an overview of each study site, including a project description, illustrating site diversity.

Table 3.1

*Description of sites and youth participants.*

Site	Description
<b>Applegate</b> – Agriculture science education program	Offered through FFA chapter and agri-science classes
<b>Bell</b> – Adjudicated youth program	Offered to students in the program
<b>Coldwater</b> – Alternative education and Extension	Offered through an after school 4-H program
<b>Duffy</b> – Middle school	Offered as an after school program
<b>Elgin</b> – Agriculture Charter school	Offered as a club at school

Each community site was different and encompassed different strategies and provided different learning opportunities. Farm stand location in proximity to youths' homes varied across participants. Most sites had a central gardening location and were relative to the school or host program location.

Applegate YFSP involved FFA students in the agriscience program at Applegate High School. The project's goal was to teach students skills in entrepreneurship, sustainable agriculture, and hands-on skills in production and marketing of local produce. As described by their goals, participants strived to educate other students and consumers about producing and choosing healthy foods. This was accomplished through mentoring of student growers as they worked to grow fresh produce in home gardens. The approach Applegate YFSP took was unique as the project was based on student home gardens.

Bell program was an alternative high school serving at-risk youth. Youth have been ordered by the Probate Court and remain in the Bell program for one year. Youth ranged from 14-17 years old. Because of the nature of the program, participants in YFSP continually changed from project inception. The overall goal was to increase nutrition knowledge among students, increase entrepreneurial knowledge and experience among students, increase connection between adjudicated youth and the community, increase understanding by students of agri-business related career options, and make the project sustainable.

Coldwater site partnered with an alternative education high school for YFSP. The project's purpose, in part, was to connect at-risk youth with the project to expose them to an experience in an academic and personal sense. The goal of YFSP was to provide a developmental experience related to establishing a business and providing educational lessons focused on healthy eating. The project established a viable market niche in the community via a farm stand. Students ranged in age from 16-19. Target population included students attending the alternative high school.

Duffy Middle School is located in a low income area; and serves 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The goal of YFSP was to provide fresh produce to the school community and local residents while providing students opportunity to learn entrepreneurial skills and provide an earning opportunity. The mission was accomplished by establishing a student farm market, a special event in the school to promote the project and regular sessions on nutrition and cooking. Thirteen youth participants took part in YFSP at Duffy Middle School.

Elgin YFSP integrated the project into school programming. Students involved were sophomores at Elgin Charter School. The objectives were to reach low-income communities with fresh food and to educate them about the benefits of fresh produce. Benefits of eating fresh produce were discussed with the youth, as well as business basics about pricing food to sell for a profit. The importance of buying local was also discussed.

### Data Collection

Qualitative research focuses on specific situations and allows the study to facilitate issues in depth and detail (Patton, 2002). The intent of the study was not to compare individual youth or groups, but rather to look at the motivation and engagement of youth in the farm stand project from an overall program perspective.

Qualitative interviews are detailed allowing the interviewer to understand experiences and reconstruct events in which they did not participate (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). By asking participants open-ended questions and giving them opportunity to reconstruct events and experiences, interviews provided *rich* data and informed the overall research questions. Qualitative research design allows data collection without following predetermined data analysis categories (Patton, 2002); data emerged and subsequent data collections were crafted meeting research study needs.

### *Study Design*

The study consisted of qualitative interviews and observations. Each data collection evolved from subsequent findings allowing themes to emerge. The youth interviewed were important to study design. They provided first-hand data (Rubin & Rubin, 2005) about why they joined YFSP and what ultimately motivated and engaged them. Although students interviewed were part of the core group, it was useful to



question them about the overall project, reflecting on different aspects of YFSP. During observations, all students present at each of the sites were observed and included in the study data. Further, coordinators provided general statements about youth involved; including students other than those interviewed. All youth were first-time participants.

The first student interviews focused on answering research question #1 pertaining to initial motivation. Second student interviews helped answer research questions #2 and #3, enjoyable project aspects and sustained engagement. Coordinator interviews guided results for research question #4 examining participation barriers. Observations taken complimented the study and provided additional data in answering the research questions. The study consisted of 33 formal data collections - 28 interviews and five observations. Table 3.2 provides a participant description and a purpose for each data collection.

Table 3.2

*Illustration of information about data collection subjects and purpose/rationale of each collection*

Method	Participant Description	Purpose
Interview #1 Students (15)	Interview conducted with a YFSP participant – selected by coordinator.	To explore the factors that influenced the student to initiate their involvement in the farm stand project. Further the interview focused on the students' involvement and experience thus far in the project

Table 3.2 (con't)

Interview #2 Students (8)	Interview conducted with same individual as first interview.	To understand the change in motivation and engagement from the onset of participation in YFSP. Further, to gain awareness of the outcomes of the project and the impact on individual students.
Observations (5)	Participants of YFSP – participating in the project during the observation.	To understand the background and objectives of the farm stand project and observe the culture of the gatherings. Understand the work completed by the youth while working toward their project goals.
Interview – Coordinators (5)	Coordinators of YFSP – coordinating the project and interacting with the youth participants during the course of the program.	To understand why some youth did not complete YFSP. Further, understand the motivation and engagement of the youth to stay in the project, as communicated and seen by the coordinators.

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## Sampling

The study sample included youth and coordinators participating in YFSP at five sites in Michigan. The sample was limited to YFSP participants because of the nature of the questions and the study's intended focus on the farm stand project. The youth included middle school, high school, and alternative high school aged students. The youth were selected based on their initial involvement with the farm stand program – more precisely the youth who showed an interest in the program, as noted by their respective coordinators. Initial involvement was defined by participating in YFSP since starting in the community. For most students this meant since winter 2006. Included in the sample were site coordinators because of their involvement with youth. Coordinator perceptions were accounted for at project end.

Each coordinator selected three youth participants for the first interviews, totaling a sample size of 15 students. The researcher asked each coordinator to select youth actively involved in YFSP from the program's start. Purposeful sampling was used to identify and select informants for the interviews; this type of sampling is advocated when information-rich sources are sought (Patton, 2002). Since research focused on what motivated and engaged youth participants, youth participating in YFSP were selected. Anticipating youth would provide *rich* data guided the study design and led the researcher to recruit study participants actively involved in YFSP. For the second interview, it was not possible to interview the same 15 students, as some were no longer in contact with coordinators or no longer part of YFSP at the respective sites. The researcher made effort to contact those youth no longer affiliated with YFSP by making telephone calls and sending emails with contact information provided by the youth

through first interviews. Contact with these seven youth was not successful. Eight students were interviewed a second time at the end of their participation.

Table 3.3 illustrates the five sites and the interviewed participants. Pseudonyms protect participant identities. Although sites and participants were not compared in the study, it is important to note differences and context in which farm stand projects were offered. Each was unique and emphasized different program aspects. Although not a comparative study, to better interpret and analyze results it is helpful to note program sites and describe participant focus.

Table 3.3

*Youth and coordinators participating in interviews.*

<b>Affiliated Site</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>Interview 1</b>	<b>Interview 2</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>
Applegate	Alex	X	X	
	Jamie	X	X	
	Jesse	X		
	Coordinator A			X
Bell	Kelly	X		
	Jordan	X		
	Chris	X		
	Coordinator B			X
Coldwater	Taylor	X		
	Bailey	X		
	Shannon	X		
	Coordinator C			X
Duffy	Corey	X	X	
	Sam	X	X	
	Charlie	X	X	
	Coordinator D			X

Table 3.3 (con't)

Elgin	Morgan	X	X	
	Cameron	X	X	
	Lee	X	X	
	Coordinator E			X

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### Data Collection Techniques

By asking participants open-ended questions and giving them opportunity to reconstruct events and experiences, interviews provided data and informed the research questions. To understand why students did not complete the project, and to gain insight into coordinator perceptions of youth motivation and engagement, the five coordinators were interviewed in September. Coordinators provided information as to why the initially interviewed students did not complete the project. Although this was not part of the initial research design, qualitative research allows for unstructured approaches, allowing researchers to focus on particular trends and tailor methods to allow data to emerge (Maxwell, 2005).

#### *Interviews & Observations*

Interviews were focused and semi-structured. Focused interviews provide depth and personal context (Merton, Fiske, & Kendall, 1990). To gain more insight into participant responses, the researcher used follow-up questions and probes. Interview guides were developed and used to facilitate discussions; however, the interviewer allowed data to emerge and subsequently followed-up on relevant topics (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Interview guides were developed and are found in Appendices A-C. Guides were developed and followed during first and second student interviews and coordinator interviews. The researcher's major professor and two other colleagues checked interview

questions for content and validity before approving guides. The first interview was piloted with two students participating in YFSP and then modified accordingly for remaining interviews.

Completing interviews and scripting observations allowed the researcher to first explore why youth joined the project and follow up on emerging themes in subsequent data collection. Conducting scripting observations provided opportunities to understand project culture, interactions amongst participants, and overall project objectives.

### *Procedures Used*

Parental/guardian consent forms were required for youth to participate in interviews. The Michigan State University Institutional Review Board approved consent forms. The researcher notified interviewees about the confidentiality of responses and study purposes. They also explained through the consent form before the formal interview began. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher outlined interview procedures and reassured participants of anonymity. It was also indicated to participants that if at any time they were not comfortable answering a question they could pass.

The researcher arranged interviews, via telephone calls, with coordinators for all data collections. These telephone calls were not blind calls as the researcher had prior affiliation with coordinators through other farm stand project interactions. Held individually by the same interviewer, interviews were in-depth and lasted approximately 15 to 30 minutes. Conducted in person, they were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Observations lasted on average one-hour in length. Observations were participatory as the researcher participated in YFSP activities, meetings, or marketing events. Data was collected at various sites— either at schools or community locations.

Depending on the activity, some interviews were conducted indoors while others were conducted outdoors.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis included transcribing, coding, and documenting emergent themes from interviews and observations. Interviews were transcribed as verbatim and extensive notes were taken during observations. Interviews and observations were the basis for analysis and subsequent study results.

Analyzing the data consisted of three methods. To aid in analysis, qualitative data analysis software, NVivo 7 was used. Upon completion of first interviews a coding scheme was developed as a starting point in determining emerging themes. Codes were modified, deleted and added as research progressed. Following first round interviews, observations were conducted and coded. However, after coding the data the scheme was revised to clarify some codes and make them more related to motivation and engagement. After completing second round interviews with students, data was recoded identifying examples to distinguish when codes were applicable and not applicable. Interviews with coordinators were coded using already established student interview and observation codes. Additional codes were developed to better adhere to coordinator comments. Coding and re-coding grouped data themes became apparent and easily recognized when codes grouped together. By beginning with coding it simplified analysis allowing the researcher to eliminate narrative not related or connected to research questions.

Codes were grouped and categorized in accordance to which research question they identified with. Codes were reviewed by two colleagues and checked for clarity and validity. From this categorization, themes were developed and sub-themes emerged from

main themes of each research question. Reviewing coding reports allowed supporting text to emerge and highlight research question results. More than one code may be affiliated with one of the themes or sub-themes. Although some codes were not directly linked to motivation, they were developed to identify supporting or relevant information. For a complete list of codes and how they relate to themes later discussed in the results, refer to Appendix D.

As a second step of analysis, major themes and sub-themes corresponding with each research question were created. Once themes were created the researcher found narrative supporting each sub-theme. For each emergent theme a memo was created encompassing themes and their sub-themes as a way to categorize and start interpreting data. For each theme a summary statement was written about information gathered.

After completing memos, clustered matrices were created to make connections and summarize data collections. Each clustered matrix summarized an emergent theme. For example, ‘something to do’ was noted through data collections. A summary statement derived from analyzing the theme, ‘something to do’ for each round of data collection (three interviews and one observation) was charted in a matrix and used to report results. Each round of data collection is interpreted by first student interviews (15), second student interviews (8), coordinator interviews (5) and observations (5). Once matrices were completed, the researcher analyzed them ensuring interpretation accuracy. An example of the matrix can be found in the Appendix E.

The researcher re-read the data collections in their entirety making certain themes and sub-themes for each research question were still relevant. While reading transcripts and expanded notes, they gathered important narrative evidence that would aid in writing



results and discussion. Specific examples were noted as possible quotes to use when discussing results. The coded data was interpreted and categorized under each research question using the derived themes. The results and discussion were written from the collected and analyzed data.

#### 4. RESULTS

Results are presented reflecting the four research questions. Data was coded, analyzed and grouped providing interpretive results. Codes pertaining or connecting to each question make up results presented in this section. Not every motivating or engaging factor is listed; however, results reported reflect comments of most interviewed individuals. When referring to most students, more than 50% of respondents made an indication of the point in question. Beyond interviewed youth and coordinators, results also synthesize data collected by the researcher during observations. Data collected also reflects other youth participants taking part in YFSP at the respective study sites. To provide clarity in results, Table 4.1 depicts students and coordinators involved in the interview process.

Table 4.1

*Students and coordinators involved in data collection.*

<b>Affiliated Site</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>Interview 1</b>	<b>Interview 2</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>
Applegate	Alex	X	X	
	Jamie	X	X	
	Jesse	X		
	Coordinator A			X
Bell	Kelly	X		
	Jordan	X		
	Chris	X		
	Coordinator B			X
Coldwater	Taylor	X		
	Bailey	X		
	Shannon	X		
	Coordinator C			X

Table 4.1 (con't)

Duffy	Corey	X	X	
	Sam	X	X	
	Charlie	X	X	
	Coordinator D			X
Elgin	Morgan	X	X	
	Cameron	X	X	
	Lee	X	X	
	Coordinator E			X

The following synopsis is provided to better understand the overall project and the success and obstacles each site faced at the garden locations and at their marketing outlet. This section of the results compliments the research questions and provides an overview of some pertinent background information on each farm stand project. This synopsis is meant to attribute to the overall research completed on the project, some of which may have influenced motivation and engagement.

The Applegate farm stand was open from June thru September on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. It was located in a vacant lot in downtown Applegate. Articles were published in the local newspaper and flyers were hung in community businesses to promote the farm stand. The approach Applegate YFSP took was unique to the other projects in that students grew produce at home gardens. Garden plots ranged from small raised beds to a one-acre plot. Other students in agriscience classes contributed to the project by building the actual farm stand in mechanics class and completing the business plan in the agri-business class. The partnerships allowed for more students to be involved in the project, in an indirect but important way.

Bell participants were adjudicated youth and attended alternative high school where the YFSP was located. Participation was voluntary but occurred during regular school programming hours. Youth had opportunity to complete the business plan, design and plant the garden and work at the farm stand as part of their regular school day. Bell serves 600 people with disabilities and other barriers to employment at the plant where the farm stand was located. Of the 600 people, many participants are low income and have limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Garden plots were made available to the CYS by Peckham and utilized to grow produce and flowers to sell at the farm stand. The farm stand began operation in August and the students' hosted a salsa tasting party for the clients at Peckham as a way to kick-off the harvest season.

The Coldwater project established a viable market niche in the community via a farm stand. All produce sold at the stand was grown by the youth at the site where it was sold. Key partnerships were developed with the Public Schools and the County Sheriff's Department Community Corrections unit, as they provided the land to grow the produce. The farm stand site was in the countryside requiring the coordinator to provide transportation to participating youth. The Coldwater site experienced predator problems; half way through the season a severe problem with deer resulted and a large portion of the produce was destroyed. Sales from the farm stand did not exceed \$500. Although greater sales were anticipated, the coordinators are confident with changes, the project can be much more profitable in future years.

The YFSP started at Duffy in October and finished in September, making it the only project to run the entire year. The target population was the school community and nearby residents. Duffy reached their target population through school announcements,

signage, flyers distributed through the mail and large banners in front of the school. Two cooking demonstrations were conducted at the school involving parents. The coordinator felt the project was somewhat successful in reaching the target population; however, an increase in marketing would have brought more customers to the stand. A small garden plot at the school allowed youth to garden. However, the majority of their farm stand produce was procured from outside sources. Over 1000 pounds of fresh produce was given away to food stamp eligible community members. This was a result of giving away 20 fruit baskets and the leftover produce from the farm stand to the families of the involved youth.

The students at Elgin grew produce in two large raised beds and sold it at the farmers market on a few occasions, however, they learned it was not economical to buy and re-sell produce and the market was not as busy as they had hoped. Success was measured by talking to one person per market day about the benefits of eating fresh produce. At weekly meetings throughout the summer months the benefits of eating fresh produce were discussed with the youth, as well as business basics about pricing food to sell and make a profit. The importance of buying local was also discussed with the participating youth. The profit made (\$250) was put towards next years' project. The coordinator expressed the need for a better outlet to sell the produce and connect with local producers to make the project more successful.

#### Question 1: Reasons youth initially joined YFSP

The first question examined why youth initially joined the farm stand project. The description of the project, as they understood from leaders influenced their decision to join. Because of the projects' uniqueness, each leader emphasized different parts when

coordinating and recruiting youth. After completing the first interviews with students the researcher outlined the four themes that emerged from the data collections and is the basis of the results from question one, see Figure 4.1.

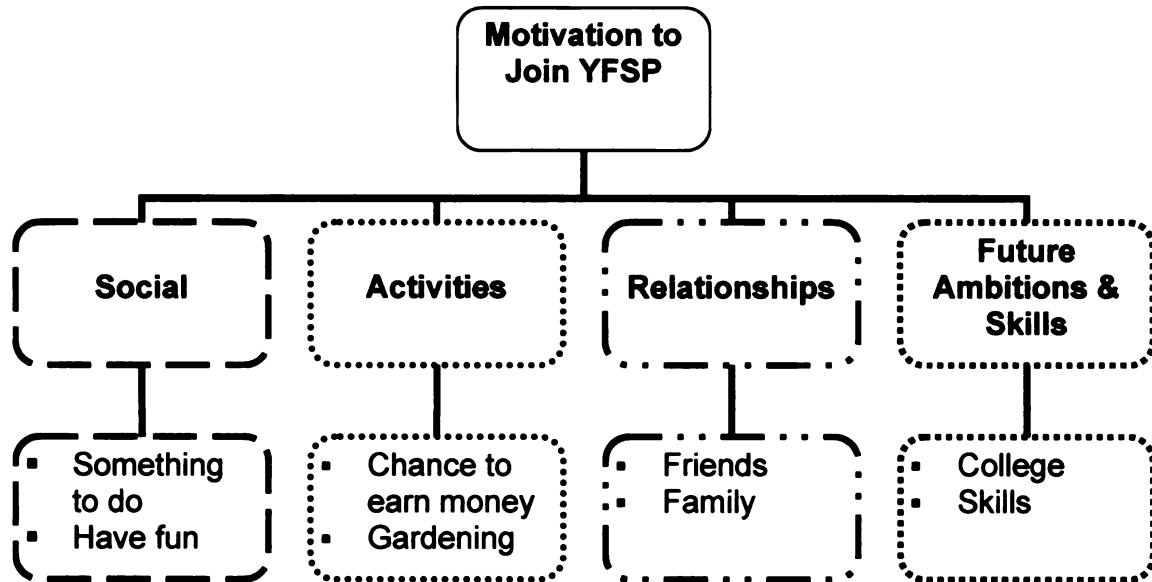


Figure 4.1. Conceptual framework of why youth joined the farm stand project.

*Social: Something to Do*

For many youth, interest in joining the farm stand project stemmed from its uniqueness and offered something to do. Many youth expressed they were not involved in any other activities and did not have after school commitments. Youth simply said it was something to do; Jordan mentioned, “I don’t really do anything else so I just figured I do something with my time.” This trend continued across five sites, and mentioned by at least one participant at each site.

[Taylor:] Yeah it was mainly just being outside, working, having something to do. I mean because I don’t do any sports, at least at Coldwater cause I can’t run cross country or swim so. I didn’t find softball or basketball attractive so I wanted something to do and I like flowers and planting and organic stuff to eat

[Jesse:] Being busy and always having something to do, I wasted my whole summer last year and I thought about that this year and I’m not wasting my

summer sitting on the couch doing nothing, I'm going to do something, so now I've got something to do

For some youth it was a project after school and that meant they did not have to go home,

Sam said: "it's just something to do cause I don't really like going home and I like keeping myself busy."

[Charlie:] After Sam and Corey told me about it, like the details, it kinda got interesting so I just decided to go, it was kind of on a whim, I was just like ok I don't want to go home, so I just went, it was something to do

Although youth mentioned YFSP as something to do, results highlight other reasons for participation.

### *Social: Having Fun*

A couple students stated they joined the farm stand project because they perceived it as something fun. Cameron expressed, "I thought it would be fun and exciting so I just joined." Being outdoors and having fun was cited by a number of youth participants as an appealing aspect of the project. Chris mentioned, "it just sounded like fun learning how to do a business plan and learning how to budget and grow stuff and all that, it just sounded kinda fun." Chris also stated it sounded fun and was a project to keep her out of trouble. Corey said, "it sounded kinda fun and I didn't really have a busy schedule and it was kinda the beginning of the year and I didn't really do anything last year." Almost every youth respondent indicated some project aspect to be perceived as interesting or fun.

Elgin site operated their farm stand during school hours and this appealed as a fun part of the day.

[Morgan:] the fact that we got to get like outside because Elgin is already like a very different environment then most high schools and then in addition we get to go outside and plant and stuff and make money doing it, we're like the only club here that get to actually do that, I thought that was fun and interesting too

Applegate site also incorporated youth farm stand programming into regular class hours, giving participating students a different learning opportunity and one appealing to the students.

[Jamie:] The opportunity to work with like help out my fellow students to take the produce to other farmers markets and the chance to build the actual farm stand in this class, my first hour class, ag mech tech, just sounded like a lot of fun really

Even though not all youth fully understood what the farm stand project was about when they joined, they perceived the project to be fun.

*Activities: Chance to earn money*

The farm stand project offers incentive to earn money. After the project was described and the researcher saw a trend in motives for participation, it was concluded YFSP offered students a summer job experience and one youth seen as motivation for participating. Potential to make a profit while participating in YFSP was a motive for some students; however, throughout interviews it became apparent there were additional reasons to join and they did not solely join because of earning potential. Making money was promoted by a couple sites as a way to recruit students into the project and coordinators thought it was a main selling feature and thought of motive to encourage participation.

[Morgan:] Well the first thing that really caught my mind was that we get paid to do it like personally, the money's not going towards the school or anything but part if it is going towards charity so I thought that was good that some of it's going to charity and we got the rest. About 80% of the profit went to us and I believe 20% went to charity of our profits

Although many youth understood the opportunity to make money, they expressed other interests in the project. Many students thought money was an added project benefit not so much a perceived interest to join.



[Shannon:] Well basically what honestly caught my interest besides the educational properties of growing plants was the money. Because according to the people last year, a bunch of people made a good amount of profit. It's annual income which means that I'll be getting it at the end of the year which kinda shows that I'm not exactly in it for the money, but hey it's an added bonus, you know, it's cool

[Kelly:] So I decided like I should give it a shot because there seems like there's going to be a money making opportunity as well as a business opportunity for me to gain too in this program

Another student had the same feeling; they were interested in making money but also saw the opportunity the program had to connect them with agriculture.

[Jesse:] Other than making money, I'm always about making the money so if I can find a good way to make money and it's an agriculture thing so it will help me learn more about my agriculture so I like learning

Jamie also commented, "well obviously there is a profit to be made from the project...you know selling your own produce."

When asked about why they joined, some students related their answer to what coordinators communicated about the project and thus why they joined. Students from every site understood the project in part as a way to make money during the summer.

[Kelly:] They said it would be a project about business, marketing and give us a chance to make some money and stuff like that, so I was alright because I'm interested in business anyways. Yeah well they started telling us how much money we could make and the money that we were getting was a grant so it wasn't like we could go in the hole, it was only like we could make money

Although money was mentioned by at least one student from each site, some youth did not mention the chance to earn money, and Taylor even said, "she mentioned money, that there could be some money, but I didn't really care too much about the money because I have enough." This was atypical of discussions surrounding money with interviewed youth.

With the opportunity to earn, youth felt importance for money to be divided equally dependent on responsibilities youth had and commitment shown to the project.

[Corey:] She mentioned that if we ever go a profit from it, it would be split evenly like there were some kids who came and then they wouldn't come and they'd just sit around and to me it didn't really sound fair and it happened before so she mentioned that it would be split evenly with all the responsibilities

Through observations, dividing profits fairly and amongst those individuals putting effort in at meetings and at farm stand days was an apparent youth concern. During an observation at Applegate, an in-depth record keeping system was explained by one participant outlining the system to evenly split profits made amongst participating youth.

#### *Activities: Gardening*

Many youth involved in the project had prior gardening experience. Cameron said, "I joined because I wanted to help out with the garden since I already know how to do gardening and I want to encourage and help them try to start there own garden when they grow up." This was an appealing point of the project as participants felt they already had established gardens and experience making this project ideal and one worth pursuing. For some students learning how to garden was appealing and for other students already having established gardens was attractive.

[Alex:] I've had a garden at my grandpa's house too that I helped take care of. Since I was a little girl, I can remember always having a garden and it's a good way for me and my dad to spend time together

[Jamie:] Well, I lived with my grandparents for eight years, about six of those eight years we moved from farm to farm and we always had gardens and animals to take care of and I was already really good when it came to plants and animals so I figured it be something I already know how to do so it wouldn't be a difficult project

Gardening together with other students interested one student who had a garden at home. Corey said, “yeah cause normally like at my house I’m the only one who does it so to do it with lots of other people who like the same stuff interests me more.”

Interested students gardening usually mentioned an influential person with gardening experience or who had exposed them. Shannon stated “and my dad is a green thumb so I’m pretty good at growing plants and various herbs and flowers and what not.” Bailey made mention about interest in gardening, “sorta, I’ve helped my mom with her garden sometimes throughout the years.” Other students expressed interest in gardening because of parents experiences.

[Lee:] I just like planting stuff and farming because my daddy he’s a horticulture expert and he does sod and different things and my mommy her garden is like so pretty and she has all these flowers and all this stuff and my daddy grew up on a farm and so I don’t know I just like it

[Sam:] Just being able to plant stuff because my mom was a migrant worker and stuff so she got to plant stuff and pick stuff all the time so she wants me to get interested and we plant stuff at home all the time and just the idea of having a garden here or having a chance of dealing with produce and stuff got us excited I guess

Students expressed interest in learning how to grow their own food through a gardening experience, by cooking with produce from gardens. Sam said, “and I guess with making salsa and stuff, the different recipes I like cooking, and the gardening stuff, I have to learn more about it because my mom’s like an expert.” A couple of students made mention importance of learning to grow and prepare food.

[Shannon:] So basically I joined because I thought it would be cool to learn how to grow plants because when it comes down to it if you can grow your own food, hey you can live anywhere, you know you don’t have to be like stuck

[Corey:] Well like dealing with produce and all that she that we would plant and we use like the garden out here and that we could try like they talked about like

they made lots of food like they cooked a lot and that sounded fun because I love to cook

By interviewing site coordinators, it became more apparent which youth were motivated by gardening. Every site had a gardening component and through project description, students understood the farm stand project providing opportunity to garden. The following comments were made by site leaders at the end of the project regarding youth motivation to garden.

[Coordinator E:] I think there initial motivation was to just have a garden, from what I understand, and really I think that's still the same motivation. I think they just love being out there, watching things grow, planning them and just taking care of it, I really think that's it

[Coordinator A:] But he lives out in a rural area so for him having his own garden was a big motivating factor, he could actually do some of the stuff on his own at his own house, some of which he already did and I think her really enjoyed in throughout the whole year

Another site had students not motivated to participate in gardening activities. During initial interviews, interest in other aspects of the project prevailed, in particular business and having fun. In contrast to other sites, these youth did not have experienced gardeners.

[Coordinator B:] To be honest with you that was the hardest part, it was hard getting the kids to do want to water and do actual dirty work. They want to participate in the fun activities and the actual farm stand; they don't mind picking the vegetables either but definitely it was hard to get them out there. There were only a handful of kids that would actually you know water and do some other things that were necessary to keep up the garden, other kids really didn't want to do it

For students with gardening experience or an interest in learning how to grow food, the gardening component was a motivating factor to join. Upon joining, over half of involved students were interested in the gardening part of farm stand project.

### *Relationships: Family and Friends*

Relationships with others are seen as an important part in a young adult's life, from friends and family to teachers and classmates, youth are exposed to many different people throughout their adolescent years. Through YFSP, relationships were emphasized in youth interviews; they perceive the project as an opportunity to build and foster relationships with friends, family, and coordinators.

As with most projects youth are attracted to, YFSP offers opportunity to work with friends and classmates. Half of the interviewed students were influenced to join by their friends and classmates. However, other students did not mention friends were involved in the project and joined for other reasons, most of which have been previously cited. Many youth mentioned they went to the meeting because friends were going. Jamie expressed, "a couple of my friends are in it and a couple of my friends were originally interested in it." A couple of students influenced some other participants to join. Morgan mentioned, "I wanted them to join because they are like my best friends here so I wanted them to join with me." Students from Coldwater and Applegate sites also mentioned they hoped for new friendships by participating in farm stand project; most of these students did not associate with each other prior to project involvement.

Beyond influence of joining, spending time with friends was cited by many youth as a secondary motivator.

[Alex:] I get to hang out with my friends, I know a couple of my friends are going to do it so it's a good way during the meetings to hang out and we come up and sell the produce on our one or two days a week, I get to hang out with my friends too is another positive

When speaking about potential to earn money, Lee indicated she is not really interested in the money she is happy doing it with her friends.

For many project sites, conflicting schedules and prior engagement did not allow youth to interact outside class time; this was especially true for youth at the Bell site. Jordan said, “we don’t have a lot of interactions with a lot of the students that go here and when we do we usually tend to have a lot of fun.”

Although common with three students, working with family did not emerge as a primary motivator for most participating students. Three students from Applegate felt strongly about farm stand project providing opportunities to work with parents and grandparents. Students from Applegate gardened and worked independently at home. Applegate students understood working at home was a way to connect with family. Jamie said, “it’s going to be a great way for me you know to hang out with my grandparents and my cousins I don’t get to see very often because I don’t make it out there very often.”

[Alex:] Especially with my dad because he loves doing things outside, he hates wintertime because he can’t be outside, he hates it. So this is going to be one thing that he’s going to enjoy because I don’t have to go anywhere so it saves gas money for him. We can just do it right at our house and he’s going to love that

It was apparent through first interviews students joined farm stand project to interact with friends and in the case of Applegate, students wanted to spend time with family. Whether it was influence of friends or opportunity to work with and build new friendships, each participant mentioned interacting with friends and family as a motivating reason to join.

When asked about the influence advisors and leaders had on decisions to join, different responses emerged. Some indicated they would have joined if it were a different leader while others had an already established relationship with the coordinators. Alex spoke about the leader, “I’ve become very very close with her, it’s almost like she doesn’t take on an advisor role with me and some other students, it’s like she’s a big sister to us. That’s what we really like about her.” On the contrary, Sam spoke about a

leader, “we’re not close but I do a lot of after school activities and she’s the director or whatever of it and I end up doing a lot of what she does all the time.” It can be said youth did not join the project on the sole influence of leaders and for most youth this was not a factor.

### *Future Ambitions and Skills*

Although not prevalent motivators, at least one student from each site indicated joining the farm stand project to influence their future or benefit their resume or college ambitions. Some youth saw potential skills they would gain as useful in future work and life in general. Applegate was affiliated with the FFA chapter and students had opportunity to complete a Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) through the farm stand project.

[Alex:] I think my main motivation was adding another SAE to my resume. Because being a state officer, I know that I’ve said that over and over again, but that’s a really really big goal of mine to be a state officer next year. I just really want to build up my resume so that it’s at that level when I can become a state officer. I think this SAE or more SAE hours is what really attracted me to the farm stand project

A few youth mentioned the farm stand project as a resume enhancement. Shannon stated, “yeah for one I get to put this on my resume and I’m proud of that because this has been granted by Michigan State University and that’s the university that I want to go to.”

Future ambitions were secondary motivators for most students; they saw the good the farm stand project would provide, yet joined for other primary reasons. Secondary motivators are identified as those that youth mentioned but not predominant reasons for participating. Business skills, customer service, cooking skills and skills utilized in college applications were cited by some youth as beneficial.

[Morgan]: I mean like it's always good to know something extra like even if you don't really end up using it in the real world or making a career out of it or anything but it's always good to know something else cause like I said it's always something extra you can put on a college application like I was part of a garden club in high school or a job application or something you know

The researcher asked a direct question about skills youth would like to gain from participation. Many could not answer or were hesitant. Common responses indicated youth were not joining farm stand project to their futures. Or youth could not connect what they would be learning with future ambitions.

Bell youth made mention by participating in farm stand project it is positively perceived in court and in the eyes of their probation officer. Kelly articulated, "the fact that I'm doing something productive instead of going out and getting in trouble, I'm like doing something that will help me in the future instead of something that will get me not very far." Coldwater youth were offered high school credit to participate in the project and although interviewed youth were not primarily motivated for class credit, they believed other students were participating as an opportunity to earn credit.

#### Summary of Why Youth Joined the Youth Farm Stand Project

For many youth reasons to join the project were because it was something to do and it was fun. Overall, interviewed youth joined the farm stand project based on their perceptions of what the project was about. What leaders emphasized to students during recruitment as opportunities to join were usually reiterated by youth as project benefits. Students with gardening experience saw opportunity to do something they were already involved with while helping fellow classmates garden. The influence of others, including friends, family and leaders was perceived by most students as a secondary motivator to participation; however, some youth joined on the whim their friends said it would be fun.



Lastly, most youth saw the farm stand project as a way to benefit future ambitions or to develop skills. However, overall, most youth did not make the connection that farm stand could possibly benefit them in future work situations and ambitions.

#### Question 2: Positive Attributes of Youth Farm Stand Project Structure

Youth farm stand participants expressed many enjoyable activities associated with the project. From initial participation to project end, youth participated in activities including gardening, farm stand management, marketing, nutrition education through cooking demonstrations, and teambuilding activities. Positive comments regarding project structure and logistical components emerged through interviews. Youth perceptions about how the project was run contributed to overall satisfaction and interpreted as reason for continued participation. Beyond activity enjoyment, youth expressed other enjoyable aspects including decision-making authority, shared responsibility, engaging teamwork, and caring coordinators. Coordinators stated youth felt they contributed to the farm stand when granted ability to make decisions.

Coordinators often took an advisory role rather than an authorize role.

[Coordinator D:] I tried not to do everything for them, I tried to allow them to do everything, I would guide them and direct them as needed, but I let them take charge and I think that was really important and that's what made them feel that they were really needed, because somebody had to do this and somebody had to do that

Other coordinators expressed similar feelings. They also noted that help was granted when necessary, especially with technical assistance and making connections.

#### *Decision Making*

Most decisions were made as a group. Students expressed positive comments about decision-making abilities and its valued importance to participation in YFSP.

During both first round interviews and second round interviews, students shared similar feelings about advisors role in decision-making. One student, Jamie from Applegate, expressed unhappiness in the way the coordinator managed decision-making. During first interviews, students had little experience with the project and the way in which decisions would be made, but comments indicated decision-making contributed to participation.

[Kelly]: You know I didn't really want to do it if it were more like you guys are doing this, this and that, like go do your business plan, like if they had to much control, they have a lot of control over a lot of thing so it's nice to do a business and to have our own say like count much more in our project, you know we don't want to work on it if you guys tell us what to do, you can work on it

Understanding YFSP as student-run with help from teachers and coordinators appealed to other students. A couple students expressed coordinators took the lead, yet independence was granted and everything was voted upon inclusive of group opinions. Students understood coordinators were ultimately in charge but believed youth input was an important part of farm stand experience. Students commented on the advantageous way decisions were made inclusive of everyone when necessary voting or consensus was needed.

[Sam:] we vote on it, like we give ideas, and there aren't any rude kids there, pretty much under control and we just give ides, there is a treasurer and people like that and there is a person that writes down everything that is said and then at the end we review and vote, it's pretty much fair

Ensuring decisions were made fairly was mentioned by a number of students; if fairness was perceived in the way decisions were made students felt opinions mattered.

Working together to accomplish group goals required decision-making amongst many groups. During second interviews youth highlighted the ability for their groups to work together to make decisions and follow through with needed steps to fulfill decided upon tasks.

[Alex:] We decided as a group, if there was something that needed to be decided we would have a meeting and we would sit down together and talk about what needed to happen and then we would figure out a plant of action and carry it out

Youth stated that being an active member to assist in making group decisions was valuable to participation.

[Corey:] I like how whenever anyone or I had an idea about the cooking or what we were going to sell they always said oh yeah we can do it, we never said that we couldn't do the, we always said that we could and I like how we cooked and we gardened and we got to set-up the stand, and like she just put it on us, and we kinda felt important like we had a job to do

Contrary to Corey's comments, Jamie expressed:

the fact that many good ideas, not only from myself but from others, were simply shot down because Ava has put it, it was only out first year and they weren't going to try and do that yet, even though it would have helped us more

A second interview was conducted with Jamie; however, his participation in the latter part of the project was sporadic. Through other comments and actions it became apparent Jamie was not happy with project structure or the leader's coordinating style.

### *Teamwork*

As observed through observations and cited during interviews, some youth did not know each other prior to involvement in YFSP. This was expressed by Applegate, Bell and Coldwater youth. Although friends were influential in recruitment, it was usually only one or two students who knew each other prior to project activities. Even when students knew each other, teamwork and group identity was an important aspect noted by several youth and coordinators. Throughout the project, coordinators noted group identities forming, and Coordinator C commented her group was like a family working together. They further stated, "I think they've really, through this process, they're now motivated by kind of a commitment to the group."

[Coordinator D:] I tried to make them feel like they were needed and were an integral part of the group, that we needed them you know. Even when they went on a doctor's appointment or something they came back, after they were done they came back in a hurry. I tried to make them really feel like part of a family, because I think they just loved being together too, I think they became a little family

Coordinators and youth alike made convincing comments about opportunities to work together and form a cohesive identity with each other and their small community sites.

[Jamie:] Me and the others when it came to being in school, we never talked, we weren't anywhere near each other, but once we started doing this farm stand project there has been a lot of comradely formed and everyone has become a lot closer

From regular programming and class work, YFSP offered unique opportunities to participate, especially for very structured programs. Coordinator B stated, "so this was kind of a project that was outside of that and we had fun working together, just like I said it was like a team feeling, a team atmosphere." Lee expressed similar feelings about teamwork, "the people and the teamwork and the fact that we got to go out there and do something instead of being here at the school all the time, we actually go out and try to sell our own stuff." Participating as a group and working with other students during farm stand activities was cited by a number of youth as an enjoyable experience.

[Morgan:] I've gained, well I know that teamwork, how much more important teamwork is to get something done so I mean before you already have to work in a team at classes and stuff but now we're actually working physically as a team and we're getting the reward out of it in the end

Each group worked together to achieve common goals. Although doubt over teamwork was conceived by a couple of students in the beginning, their preconceived perceptions were alleviated by working together throughout and building a collaborative relationship amongst one another.

### *Caring Adults/Mentors*

Sites had one or two adult supervisors also known as project coordinators. The projects' successes relied heavily on coordinator influence and ability to manage activities and supervise students. It was apparent through observations that coordinators played an integral part in mentoring students in building skills and connecting with each other as a team. Students appreciated project ownership. Alex articulated, "she'll let us run it and then she'll come back when it's over and help us tear down and take stuff back up to the school so she makes us feel good, she trusts us to run it." Coordinators also saw ownership as an important project component. Coordinator D said, "I think eventually they became more competent in their skills and competent in what they were doing, they began to take charge and I was just there to supervise and help." Taking the project lead and making the project their own was named by several students as a participation factor. Yet, supervision and guidance by coordinators was important for most students as they understood the advice was necessary for success.

[Morgan:] I like having to see her all the time and having straight forward direction even though we kinda know what to do on our own, like just having someone there to help us is really good and it's motivating because like I said that's what she does for a living

Beyond guidance and supervision, some students commented on connections made with coordinators. Shannon expressed, "she's nice, she's caring, shoot, she's given me rides to my house, she's given me rides here, take me there, I went to the Commissioner's board with her, she's cool. She's like the backbone of this project." However, during second-round interviews, a couple students expressed concern over coordinator expectations.

[Sam:] Individually I was busy; I couldn't come to every single one of them. So if I didn't come she would like come over and talk to me about it and I have other stuff to do and I tried to tell her that and she doesn't seem to get that now I'm in

high school and I can't always come over here and I have Marching Band and It's just a whole lot of stuff. And eventually she's going to have to let go of us and actually depend on someone else

Corey and Charlie, both from Duffy, shared similar comments. They felt being the older students and being most committed allowed the coordinator to rely on them more, even when schedules did not allow, especially during summer months. Students at Elgin made positive comments about personal connections made with Coordinator E. Lee mentioned, "it's been a pleasure working with Coordinator E and getting to know her." Alex commented on her relationship with Coordinator A, "I think she's a great advisor, when she becomes a teacher, she's going to be a great teacher." Overall, students felt confident in help received by coordinators regarding farm stand logistics and activities. Some students felt commitment pressures while other students positively commented on formed relationships and coordinator support. Commitment pressures from coordinators were expressed by youth at Duffy as hindering the relationship formed between youth and adult mentors.

#### Summary of Attributes of Farm Stand Project Components

Youth cited project structure and attributes as important factors to participation. Students and coordinators felt it necessary to make the project student-run and allow for ownership and decision-making. Although some youth felt overwhelmed with time commitment expected by coordinators, youth positively accepted coordinators leadership style and project commitment.

#### Question 3: Youth Engagement – Sustained Project Involvement

YFSP was designed as a year long initiative to involve youth in planning, growing or procuring, and running farm stands. From project onset, some sites had continuous

participant turn-over. Engagement in certain aspects of the project may have happened. Overall project engagement did not result. Barriers to sustained participation was addressed from the coordinators standpoint and illustrated in the final research question. For the purpose of this section, factors encouraging engagement of eight students, interviewed twice, is reported. Two of eight students sporadically participated through summer months and availability for a second interview was not problematic. This was not the case for seven students who did not complete.

As a way to report youth engagement results, three topics are addressed: (1) change in youth perceptions, (2) reasons for staying involved, and (3) engaging activities. Coordinators' views on youth engagement are reported amongst the findings. Because sites focused on different project aspects, comments vary, yet similarities resulted and are the basis of this portion of results.

#### *Change in Youth Perceptions*

One incentive communicated through recruitment was possibility to earn money by participating in YFSP. From initial interviews, this was motivation for a number of students to participate. Throughout the growing season, most sites were not making money. One student at Coldwater stopped participating because of lack of financial award. However, at project end, Coordinator C said, "at the beginning it was all about credits and all you, you know 'are we gonna make any money?'" And now as the season's winding down, the group has really formed an identity." By interacting with students at Coldwater it was apparent earning profit did not have bearing over continued participation. Interacting with Coldwater youth proved changed perception from making money and earning credits to completing a project they started and developing gardening

skills. Other students who initially wanted to make money continued participation, even when money was not earned.

[Jamie:] In the beginning I came here just because it was something to do and I'd make a little bit of spending cash and eventually I just came down here to hang out with the others and just chill out at the farm stand, if people stopped hey cool, if they didn't, whatever

Coordinator B said her youth were involved to make money as an incentive at the beginning, but students who joined later were not aware of the possibility and continued participation for other reasons. Bell programming required students to work.

[Coordinator B:] The way it's set up now that school has started, they have a choice to either work or participate in the project, and quite a few of the kids choose to participate in the farm stand project even though they are not getting paid like they would if they were working

Elgin students said they thought they would earn money, but participating in YFSP project was fun so it did not bother them not having made money.

Students interested in gardening remained interested and engaged through the summer and youth who did not originally cite gardening as a motivating factor for involvement saw gardening as an engaging project component.

[Corey:] In the beginning I came because I wanted to cook more, I wasn't really interested in gardening and when she said that we were going to grow stuff I was like ok. She really encouraged us to grow stuff so I planted some of my stuff and then it just grew and grew and then I wasn't there to just cook anymore I was there to garden

A student from Elgin had the same feelings, yet at the end of the project referred to gardening as the most fun part of farm stand project.

[Lee:] It started with we had cooking forum and gardening forum, I was in cooking forum and they got rid of cooking and it was just going to be gardening. I didn't want to do that because I don't know I just didn't want to cause when we walked outside they garden was smelling really bad so I didn't want to do it at first



Some youth did not change their perceptions about the project. Alex from Applegate saw an opportunity to participate in an FFA project through YFSP. Duffy youth saw an opportunity to cook and Elgin youth continued believing in fun activities the project offered outside normal school programming.

### *Reasons for Staying Involved*

During second interviews and observations, youth continually commented on the importance of completing a project they started and seeing YFSP to the end. Among other reasons, youth engaged until the end by planning, planting and caring for a garden, and managing a farm stand. Attending activities through summer was an obstacle for some youth. Transportation, other commitments, and lack of desire to go to the school during summer were mentioned. Charlie expressed, “I really didn’t want to come over the summer, come back to school, but I did it anyway because if you’re a part of something you should stay a part of it, not just quit.” Charlie further commented, “I’m not really involved in much over the summer so I’m really bored over the summer so to do something to get out of the house I guess is what kept me coming and plus my friends of course.” It became apparent through coordinator interviews that they believed youth retention was not a problem. Both coordinators at Duffy and Elgin felt they did not have to do much to retain their youth through summer months. Coordinator D said, “I don’t really feel like I had any obstacles this year, I retained them very well.” Coordinator A acknowledged scheduling conflicts and summer commitments as reasons youth could not always participate in programs.

A couple students saw the good in what participation was doing by helping communities and providing produce access to low-income residents through farm stands.

[Morgan:] I've been there every Sunday and I just wanted to go so I can see all the hard work that me and my group have done to like see it sold and make a profit off of it and that's what pretty much kept me with it because it shows what I did is important to somebody and they really like what I am doing

Youth enjoyed working at the stand and seeing efforts realized. Duffy and Applegate youth said they stayed through the project to work at the farm stand and socialize with other participants and community members.

[Corey:] I like to work at the garden, I like to work at the stand but I like to work at the garden more and so when I did that I knew that we were going to put it in the stand so it was equally important as working in the stand. I like putting it up and watching people come in the shop and seeing my handy work and arranging everything

One student participated before summer and was disappointed with not being able to participate during the summer due to family commitments and summer school. Cameron stated, "and I was disappointed that I couldn't come over the summer because I felt like I was missing out on everything and the garden." Each student stayed for different reasons, having something to do during the summer was named a number of times.

### *Engaging Activities*

Along with initial motivation to join YFSP, students expressed activities or interests enhancing involvement. As defined, youth had to engage in meaningful activities and sustain participation beyond the good of himself or herself. During second round interviews, students revealed activities surrounding YFSP proved engaging. Much like motivational factors, dominant engaging factors included: (1) having fun while spending time with friends, (2) gardening, (3) working at farm stands and (4) having something to do. Secondary activities included: (1) cooking, (2) gaining business skills, and (3) interacting with customers. Although individual students expressed these

activities as engaging, they were only noted by one or two students. Therefore they are not seen as most engaging as compared to the four reported activities.

Spending time with friends at the farm stands and while gardening was noted by a number of students as enjoyable. When Charlie was asked about the best part of the project, it was mentioned, “my friends, cause we only see each other during the school day so being after school and them being there too, I don’t kinda do anything that they’re in.” Although students did not necessarily know each other at the start, by interacting and working together to accomplish project goals, new friendships emerged.

[Coordinator A:] I think that you take student who probably weren’t hanging out with the popular girls and then put them down here at the farm stand and they have to sit and help customers for a few hours twice a week and I think created some really good friendships

Besides new friendships forming, several students and coordinators noted having fun together as the most enjoyable part of the project. Coordinator B said, “I think it ended up just being fun working together, doing something different in the program.” When asked about engaging activities, Coordinator B expressed, “I really didn’t have to do anything, the kids that seemed to be motivated stayed motivated, I didn’t really have to do anything to keep the kids on board. I think they enjoyed doing it.”

Participating in fun activities was mentioned, including activities as gardening, cooking, and farm stand marketing. Morgan said, “I like how everyone was so nice about it and everything and how it was interesting to learn how to like I said just do something that you enjoy doing and then make a profit off of it so I thought it was fun.” Youth and coordinators expressed ability to work with fellow students, coordinators and community members were enjoyable. The number one indicator for sustained engagement was the projects’ social aspects. Coordinator A commented, “I think for them this market time

here, between eight and noon and five and eight on Wednesdays, that was the part they enjoyed the most, that was the social aspect.” Corey said, “it was the same amount of kids and it was every time, yes we talked seriously about it and then we got to work and had fun.” Interviews and observations concluded that having fun while participating in activities was reason for sustained engagement. Youth interested in making money at the beginning continued to participate when the activities proved exciting and fun.

Several coordinators and participants mentioned gardening and farm stand activities as engaging. Comments centered on customer interaction and watching gardens grow and flourish. Youth mentioned they saw their hard work devoted to the project as they worked at the farm stand and sold produce they spent time growing.

[Lee:] I don’t know that was just fun, you get to meet people, people walk up and they’d ask what is it and you get to tell them about it and they are like oh ok and they decide to buy something based on that, we’re the YFSP from Elgin

Coordinators shared similar feelings. They were surprised that youth found joy in watching gardens grow and working at a farm stand. Coordinator C stated, “and actually what was kinda cool, and I didn’t really expect this out of kids that age, they were really excited about the progress of the garden.”

[Coordinator E:] I would say just having fun. The girls that were able to come to the farmers market with me, we had a blast, you know just being there, even in the garden they have fun, they really just enjoy being outside and they don’t mind getting dirty and they don’t mind the hard work and I think they enjoy it

As witnessed through observations, the experience of working at a farm stand and interacting with customers was engaging for some students. Marketing and the experience of working outside was noted by students as sometimes challenging but beneficial. Corey mentioned coming up with new ideas for each season and creating and

selling new products. She said the experience made her look forward to the next season.

Most students expressed the experience farm stand offered them was rewarding.

[Morgan:] Yeah but I mean the main part of it was like the outdoor experience and learning stuff I never really knew before and how things grow in different seasons and everything so the profit was good but the experience was better of how to do it

Although some youth articulated experience YFSP gave them, some youth continued to express the project as something to do and did not provide specific experiences that were gained. Initially youth joined because it was something to do and remained engaged for the same reason. However, youth communicated engaging aspects of the project.

[Jamie:] I've always enjoyed growing vegetables and produce, I lived on a farm with my grandparents for a few years and we grew everything from corn to beans and all that and it just sound like something fun to do

Participants, especially those at Duffy thoughtfully communicated engaging activities they took part in through YFSP, but when asked about sustained involvement Sam commented, "I didn't have anything else better to do pretty much." Even Coordinator D touched on this, "well I think it was a fun and interesting thing to do at school for them because there aren't, well there aren't many things for them to do." Also, coordinators at Bell and Coldwater alluded to their participants not having opportunity to participate in other activities and YFSP offered something to do during the summer, beyond ordinary programming or daily activities.

#### Summary of Youth Engagement – Sustained Project Involvement

Availability of eight youth allowed the researcher to conduct second round interviews during the last month of the project. Two of the eight students participated sporadically during summer months and their comments provided useful data.

Coordinators provided perspective on engaging activities and changed perceptions youth

showed throughout the project. Results showed opportunity to earn money was not an engaging factor and since many sites did not make money, it was not a reason for continued participation. Knowing that work was attributed to the greater good of the community was noted by some students as a beneficial aspect to participation.

Coordinators and participants cited having fun and spending time with friends as an enjoyable aspect of the project. Gardening and working at the farm stand were seen by several participants as reasons for continued involvement and engagement. Participants remained engaged in YFSP for the experience offered and the notion that it was an avenue to spend time with friends while having something to do.

From initial interviews until project end, some students' motivation to participate and remain engaged in YFSP changed. Other students did not complete the project for reasons beyond their control. Table 4.2 illustrates reasons for joining and staying involved in the project. It also outlines trends, changes and barriers to participation. The table summarizes youth interviews and initial participation to sustained involvement.

Table 4.2

*Summary of youth interview data*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Reasons for Joining</b>	<b>Reasons for Staying</b>	<b>Trends/Change/Barriers</b>
Alex - Applegate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in FFA project</li> <li>Complete SAE</li> <li>Garden at home</li> <li>Spend time with father and FFA advisor</li> <li>Make addition to resume</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in FFA project</li> <li>Complete SAE</li> <li>Spend time with farm stand participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ill during summer which prevented participation in other activities</li> <li>Did not garden too much at home</li> <li>Interested in FFA and SAE component of project</li> </ul>
Jamie – Applegate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spend time with family</li> <li>Chance to earn money</li> <li>Garden experience</li> <li>Something to do</li> <li>Student-run project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spend time with friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflict with coordinator resulted in sporadic participation</li> <li>Spending time with friends promoted some involvement</li> </ul>
Jesse – Applegate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garden with grandparents</li> <li>Connect to an agriculture experience</li> <li>Spend time with friends</li> <li>Chance to earn money</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not complete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision made by family to discontinue participation</li> </ul>
Kelly – Bell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business skills</li> <li>Perceived participation to be beneficial in court</li> <li>Chance to earn money</li> <li>Leadership skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not complete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ended program at Bell</li> </ul>
Jordan – Bell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Something to do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not complete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ended program at Bell</li> </ul>

Table 4.2 (con't)

Chris – Bell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Something to do</li> <li>▪ Something to keep out of trouble</li> <li>▪ Sounded fun</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Did not complete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ended program at Bell</li> </ul>
Taylor-Coldwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Something to do</li> <li>▪ Sounded fun</li> <li>▪ Learning to garden</li> <li>▪ Gain friendships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Did not complete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family moved</li> </ul>
Bailey – Coldwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chance to earn money</li> <li>▪ Influenced by mother to join</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Did not complete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coordinator did not express why student did not continue participating.</li> <li>▪ Son of site coordinator.</li> </ul>
Shannon – Coldwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gardening experience</li> <li>▪ Chance to earn money</li> <li>▪ Something to do</li> <li>▪ Addition to resume</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Did not complete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mother moved</li> <li>▪ Really interested in the project – as noted by coordinator</li> </ul>
Corey – Duffy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sounded fun</li> <li>▪ Something to do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cooking</li> <li>▪ Something to do</li> <li>▪ Teamwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At the beginning was interested in cooking but in the end really enjoyed gardening</li> <li>▪ Enjoyed farm stand activities</li> <li>▪ Liked decision making process</li> </ul>
Sam – Duffy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gardening</li> <li>▪ Helping community</li> <li>▪ Something to do</li> <li>▪ Friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Farm stand activities</li> <li>▪ Cooking</li> <li>▪ Something to do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disappointed with gardening activities</li> <li>▪ Felt commitment pressures from coordinator</li> <li>▪ Gained customer service skills</li> <li>▪ Enjoyed spending time with new friends</li> </ul>



Table 4.2 (con't)

Charlie – Duffy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Influenced by friends to join</li> <li>Something to do – didn't want to go home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chance to earn money</li> <li>Something to do</li> <li>Spending time with friends</li> <li>Project commitment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not want to go to the school during the summer but wanted to finish the project</li> <li>Interested in making money but enjoyed spending time with friends</li> </ul>
Morgan – Elgin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chance to earn money</li> <li>Working in the garden outside</li> <li>Sounded fun and interesting</li> <li>College applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interesting and fun</li> <li>Spending time with everyone at the farm stand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interested in profit but had fun even without money being made</li> <li>Enjoyed gardening component</li> <li>Pleased with project organization</li> </ul>
Cameron - Elgin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gardening experience</li> <li>Getting out of class</li> <li>Encouraged by friends to join</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gardening</li> <li>Felt like she was missing out during the summer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not participate a lot in the summer because she went to summer school</li> <li>Helper her grandmother after knee surgery</li> <li>Participated when school started again in the fall.</li> <li>Disappointed she could not participate in the summer</li> </ul>
Lee - Elgin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gardening</li> <li>Chance to earn money</li> <li>Spend time with friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Had fun even when little money was made</li> <li>Spending time with friends</li> <li>Teamwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Had fun while participating.</li> <li>Interested in teamwork and spending time with friends</li> <li>Very pleased with coordinator and project organization</li> <li>Transportation was sometimes a problem</li> </ul>

#### Question 4: Barriers to Participation

YFSP was a year long initiative, yet seven of 15 initial students who started the project and interviewed did not complete for various reasons. Rather than speculate why they did not complete, interviews were conducted with coordinators to gain a better understanding of why youth did not complete or continue participation. Main participation barriers faced by youth included transportation, family commitments and program completion. Table 4.3 illustrates barriers faced by youth and are categorized by sites. Coordinators and youth participants expressed these barriers. Beyond control of project parameters, these obstacles are discussed in detail.

Table 4.3

*Barriers impacting youth participation in farm stand project.*

<b>Study site</b>	<b>Participation barriers (beyond project parameters)</b>	<b>Students' decision to discontinue or disengage from project</b>
<b>Applegate</b>	▪ Decision made by family to discontinue participation	▪ Conflict with coordinator
<b>Bell</b>	▪ No longer affiliated with host program	▪ N/A
<b>Coldwater</b>	▪ Transportation to project site ▪ Family moved during project ▪ Enlisted in Marines	▪ Student was not earning money
<b>Duffy</b>	▪ Family moved during project	▪ Commitment pressures of coordinator towards youth

Table 4.3 (con't)

<b>Elgin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family illness</li> <li>▪ Summer school</li> <li>▪ Transportation to project site</li> </ul>	▪ N/A
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One interviewed student did not complete the project because of dissatisfaction with parts of YFSP. Bailey stopped attending and expressed to the school social worker, “well it wasn’t really worth it, I didn’t make any money.” Mid-summer Jamie stopped participating. Coordinator A commented, “I think part of that was not having as much support as he may have needed and I think that was a place where the coordinators could have done more to retain him throughout.

[Jamie:] With Coordinator A not hovering over our shoulders nit picking about every little thing it went a lot smoother. And then there were a couple of bad times, we had a couple of arguments about stuff being grown and people not showing up as much as they should and stuff like that and reasons, just all kinds of stuff

Although Jamie did not remain active through the summer months, he participated periodically. Jamie and Bailey were the only students who did not remain active out of their own choice. Other inactive students were faced with barriers beyond their control.

Interviewing coordinators provided the opportunity to report on why the students did not continue participation throughout the summer months and thus did not remain engaged. Coordinators also alluded to students who were not interviewed but were part of the YFSP and did not complete because of external obstacles. At Bell site where youth were court ordered to participate in programming, three students initially interviewed did not complete the project.

[Coordinator B:] The kids that did not finish or complete the project, I do not believe it was in control of whether they wanted to or not, either a) they were no longer in our program and they were not allowed back because of circumstances, cause this is a court ordered program, so either the court said they couldn't participate in this program or something else happened they had to go to another program or b) they were just done with our program and then other things in there lives just kinda took over, whether it was work or school or there was absolutely no way for them to participate any longer, but I don't believe it was because they didn't necessarily want to. I have no reason to believe that it wasn't because they wanted to, if they were still enrolled in programming, I believe those same kids would still be participating

As the coordinator said, the reasons participants did not complete the project were not the fault of YFSP logistics or programming matters. They did not complete because of other factors in their life and new commitments.

Almost every coordinator cited family commitments as reasons why youth did not complete the project. Shannon initially very interested and attended almost every meeting had to leave the program when his mother moved.

[Coordinator C:] A lot of these kids, several of them that left the project, they moved. You know, and it wasn't like a traditional move like we would think. A lot of them weren't living with both of their parents or even any of their parents. We had kids that were living with grandparents, kids that were living with friends, kids that were living in foster care, kids that were living by themselves

Coordinator D also said two students who did not complete her project had moved out of the area. These were students that were not interviewed at the Duffy site. Beyond making a family move, one student at Elgin made a commitment to care for her sick grandmother throughout the summer and was not able to participate in YFSP. Outside pressures from family members resulted in Jesse not participating.

[Coordinator A:] We really wanted Jesse to do the project because he was a really, at the beginning of the project he was really motivated and excited about what was going on. I think that he got some other outside pressure and decisions that were made by his family, I think we could have retained him but it would have been a fight on all sides to do that and making it not a comfortable situation for either the coordinators or for the student

As mentioned, Jesse was very motivated at the beginning, but family pressures attributed to his lack of participation.

Most sites faced transportation barriers. Although students continued participation in the summer, it was often sporadic and a challenge for students and site leaders alike.

[Coordinator C:] Over the summer I think transportation was a big thing, like a huge thing. It was very, most of the kids, well, I would say none of the kids had their own transportation, a majority of them, their parents had no transportation. And, you know, Coldwater is still a fairly rural area. We don't have public transportation so, I did all the transporting of the kids to the site which is fine, but you can't, you know, when I can only fit four kids in my car that limits how many kids can participate on any given day that was a real limiting factor. We could have ten kids out there, but I can't get them all there

Transportation was a limiting factor at Elgin. Participants who were able to arrange their own ride participated. When asked how youth were retained throughout the project, Coordinator E commented, "that was difficult, the ones that were able to go to the markets and be able to be here when school wasn't in were here, I didn't really have to do anything, it was all about transportation."

[Coordinator D:] there are a couple of kids that I do have to take and it takes me probably a little more than 45 minutes to pick them up take them back, you know it's just another hour plus in my day, it's getting to be very time consuming

Providing youth transportation to participate in the project was not advantageous, yet some coordinators provided rides when necessary.

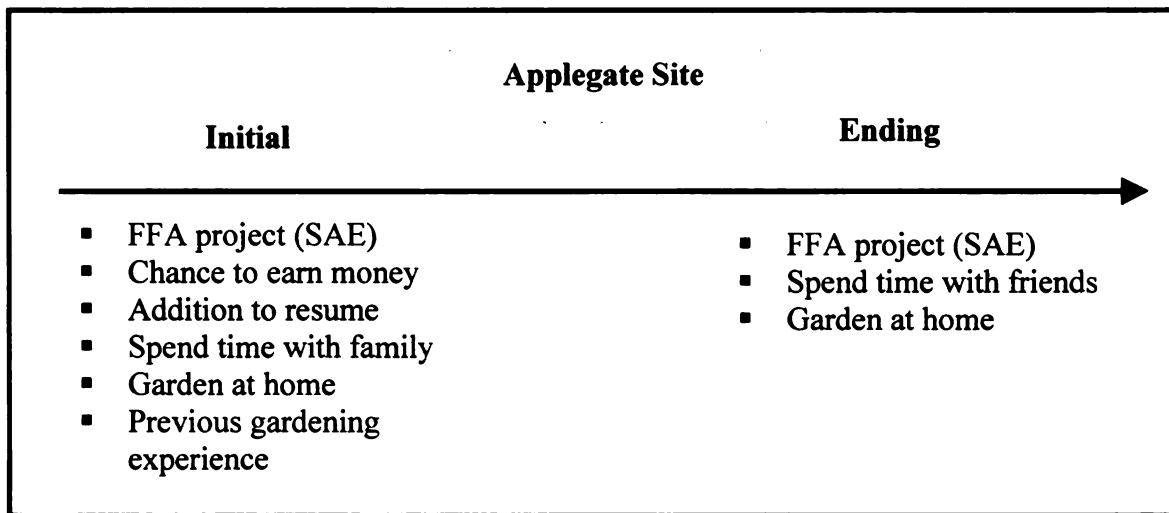
### Summary of Barriers to Participation

Programming constraints, family commitments and transportation barriers were faced by youth who could not continue participating in the summer. When school was in session and programming was integrated into class work or after-school, participation was likely. Sporadic participation occurred throughout the summer months and students

who could get to the project site participated. Main reasons for discontinued participation resulted by barriers beyond student control. From student and coordinator comments, two students disengaged from the program, one youth was not pleased with the coordinator, and the other was not happy with the little money made.

#### Overall Summary: Results

After examining the data and reporting results on each research question, it is apparent youth joined and engaged in YFSP for different reasons. The site diversity attributed to this finding, as trends existed amongst youth from like sites. Figures 4.2 through 4.6 summarize initial reasons for joining and staying involved in YFSP. Figures are comprised of data expressed by youth and coordinators. Each figure reviews results concluded in this chapter.



*Figure 4.2.* Illustration of initial motivation to ending participation for Applegate students.

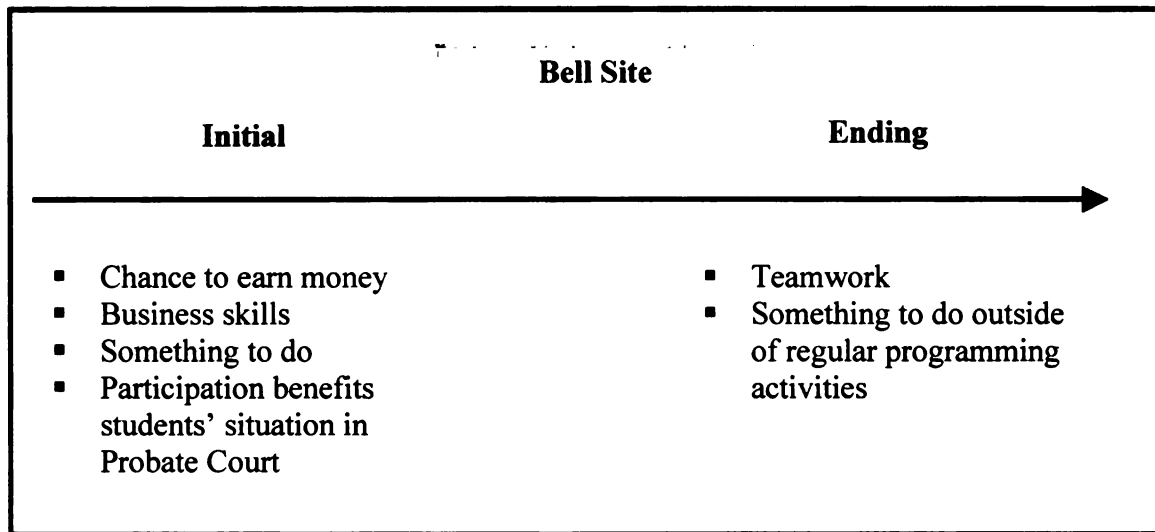


Figure 4.3. Illustration of initial motivation to ending participation for Bell students.

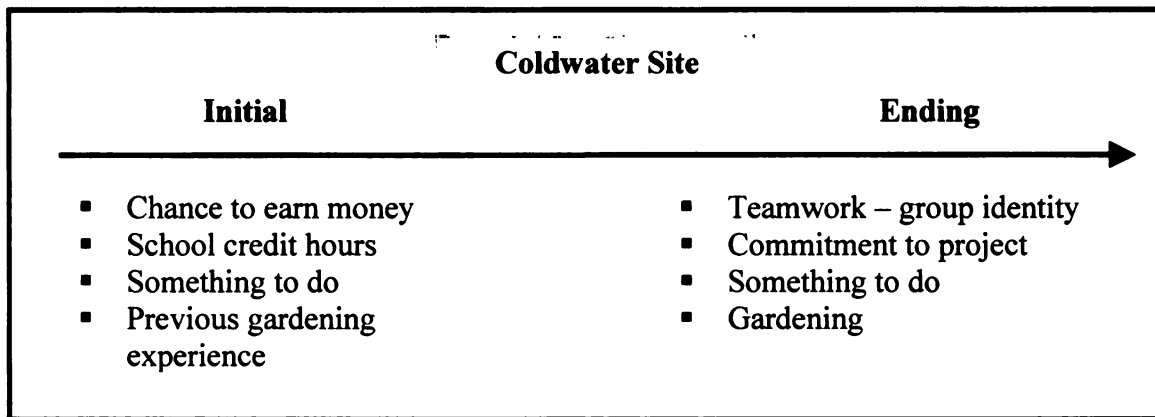


Figure 4.4. Illustration of initial motivation to ending participation for Coldwater students.

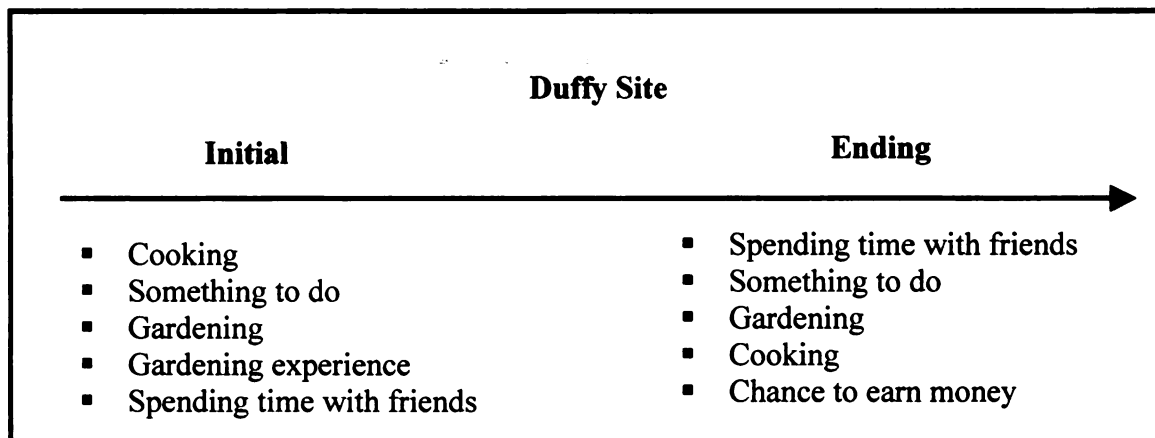
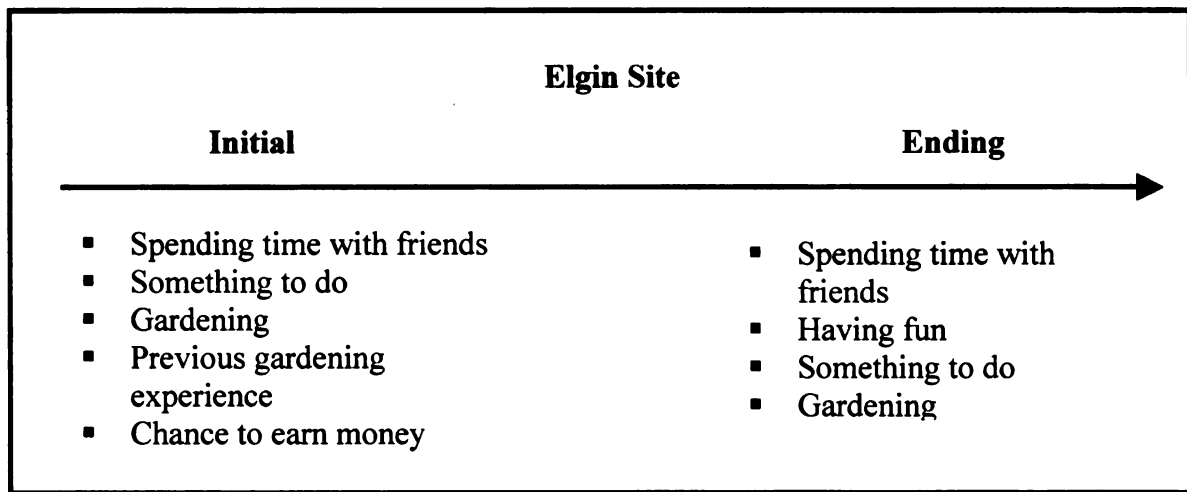


Figure 4.5. Illustration of initial motivation to ending participation for Duffy students.



*Figure 4.6.* Illustration of initial motivation to ending participation for Elgin students.

As Figures 4.2 to 4.6 illustrate, the most common theme expressed by youth and coordinators was YFSP offered ‘something to do’ initially and throughout the summer. YFSP attracted some students as opportunity to make money; however, during final interviews some of those same youth mentioned not making money but still participating because it was fun. The gardening component attracted and sustained youth participation. By growing and interacting in the garden, many students expressed the perceived fun they were having. Overall, youth were initially extrinsically motivated to participate for reasons such as making money and school or court credit. As time passed, it became apparent, youth continued participating and were motivated by intrinsic factors, including, spending time with friends and having fun. Most students experienced movement from motivation to engagement, even when external barriers prevented continued participation. External barriers included, transportation, family commitments, and withdraw from host program. Results conclude youths’ reasons for sustained engagement differed from their initial motivation indicating movement along the continuum when outside obstacles did not prevail.



## 5. DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

This section synthesizes and discusses study results. It highlights insights into the findings while connecting the study with past research done by Pearce and Larson (2006) among other motivational and engagement studies. Further, discussion surrounds theoretical implications and suggestions for future practice. By evaluating YFSP through the lens of motivation and engagement, the study was designed to gather participant perspectives with coordinators contributing supplemental information in order to best answer the research questions. From the data, motivational factors and project engagement varied amongst participants. The small nature of the study indicates results can not be generalized across a large population; however, study outcomes contribute to YFSP research knowledge.

### Researcher's Insights into Results

Results concluded farm stand project programming continually changed throughout. From initial meetings, youth faced barriers resulting in discontinued or sporadic participation causing necessary adjustments. Although some programs incorporated programming during school day activities, student involvement was voluntary. Voluntary participation attributed to some irregular involvement; however, eight of 15 initially interviewed youth engaged in some aspect of YFSP from beginning to end. Some students chose not to participate fully throughout the summer, or were not able because of barriers beyond their control. Similar to findings of Saito (2006) and Lauver et al., (2004), summer months caused havoc for some participants. Barriers included family commitments and transportation problems.

The nature of some programs youth affiliated with caused participant turnover. In particular, Bell and Coldwater cater to at-risk youth in which stability and family support are sometimes in jeopardy. Initially students at Bell and Coldwater were keen to participate in the project and demonstrated motivating factors during conversations. Bell students discontinued participation when their time at the Bell program was complete. These students either finished the program or went back to their comprehensive high school or other life factors prevented participation. Students who engaged at the beginning were not the same youth who participated during summer months and into project end. Caused not by YFSP programming but the inherent nature of Coldwater, the original youth did not complete the program. From conversation with the coordinator, it was beyond individual youth capacity to continue participation. Although sustained engagement did not happen, it is perceived youth would have continued participating if external barriers did not persist. Referring back to the definition engagement, youth did not continually participate but when possible remained in the project. Youth were engaged when they were able to participate.

It was articulated by coordinators, youth at Bell and Coldwater wanted to continue participation. Because of constant youth turnover, coordinators continually recruited youth. Although sustained engagement was a contingent part of the study, results show the difficulty continuous involvement causes for at-risk youth. It is important to realize that although youth did not necessarily continue participation through the one-year initiative, they showed signs of engagement in aspects of the project, including business planning and gardening. Further, Bell and Coldwater youth commented on the valuable relationships formed with coordinators and the opportunity to

participate in a program outside regular programming parameters. Marczak et al., (2006) found youth were motivated by caring adults and was influential in retaining participants. Findings from these sites attribute to the research findings and emphasize factors to consider when recruiting and retaining participants.

Youth cited many motivational factors when choosing to participate in YFSP. For many youth, something to do was an attraction. One may interpret this factor to be puzzling —would students be just as interested in joining if YFSP was not the program offered and another was presented? Through observation and subsequent data collection, other factors contributed to initial YFSP involvement. Although youth may have said the project gave them something to do, they also communicated other motivating factors, including the opportunity to make money, garden and spend time with friends. Youth are not mandated to participate in organized activities. Spending time with friends or other social activities after-school could take precedence over participating in YFSP. Students saw the inherent possibilities of participating in YFSP. Some cited it as something to do and the importance in participating in a group activity.

Even though YFSP was grounded in providing low-income communities with increased access to fresh produce, it was apparent youth participated beyond reason of helping others. Contrary to Joselowsky (2007), the over arching theme of helping others was not highlighted by participants as a reason for joining or staying involved in YFSP. Serow (1991) studied college student motivation to participate in service learning initiatives with 80% noting helping others as important. Perhaps participant age and lack of initial program understanding attributed to YFSP participants not citing helping others and involvement in community as engaging factors. Conversely, coordinators

communicated that youth understood the impact they made in the community and as a result of YFSP, participants are now more active in respective neighborhoods.

As Pearce and Larson (2006) explained, participants join projects for inherently different reasons by which they engaged. Their research on youth action was designed using Ryan and Deci's (2002) self-determination theory. Pearce and Larson (2006) suggested motivation to engagement as represented by a continuum of amotivation to intrinsically motivate. Moving along the continuum highlights the processes of youth motivation to engagement in organized activities. Although participants in the Pearce and Larson study made a continual movement from motivation to engagement, YFSP participants did not make such strides in comparison. YFSP students joined for several different reasons, including opportunities to earn money. As an extrinsic motivator, and classified as a reward, the opportunity to make money is externally regulated and completed to satisfy an external demand. Very few students joined solely as an earning opportunity, yet almost each student mentioned the possibility participation could result in profit earning. As the season went on, participants did not realize earning potential, yet youth continued for the fun the project was providing. Earning potential was not realized for participants, yet youth continued involvement for the fun the project was providing. Harackiewicz and Sansone (2000) determined extrinsic motivators (ex. rewards) can simultaneously initiate processes that result in greater intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, depending on the activity or the individual. Although students were not earning monetary rewards, other intrinsically motivating factors such as fun and enjoyment occurred.

Students interested in the project for the inherent benefits provided to them can be seen along the continuum as identified regulation. Still motivated for personal goals, such

as state FFA officer or possibility of adding to college applications and resumes, participants show a higher degree of autonomy towards the project. This is understood for students who joined the project for the fun and enjoyment and who saw the personal benefits gained through participation.

Ryan and Deci (2000) explain integrated regulation as the most autonomous and self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. Integrated regulation is understood by one's personal goals and outcomes aligning with the values and goals of the project in question. From the YFSP, expression of such regulation was not found in the data and thus this stage of the continuum did not result. However, youth did experience enjoyment from the project and as defined by Ryan and Deci (2000), intrinsic motivation resulted. Although youth moved along the continuum, to what degree regulation and self-determination resulted can not be concluded from the study. The difficulty in interviewing adolescents is the visible cause of not fully understanding youth movement from motivation to engagement, in the context of Ryan and Deci's (2002) self-determination theory. Lack of in-depth conversations resulting in vague participant details attribute to this problem. Bassett et al. (2008) also found difficulty engaging students in conversation beyond one or two word answers.

Outside of explaining YFSP as something to do and something to have fun with, youth had difficulties clearly articulating reasons for continued participation. Although students did not express cause for engagement, it does not indicate youth engagement failed. Moreover, the research determined each participant completing both interviews engaged in the project. Even though two students sporadically participated, comments revealed certain proponents as engaging. Vandell et al. (1999) noted intrinsically

motivating factors of fun, enjoyment and interest contributed to youth engagement.

Similar results found YFSP participants finding personal engagement in the project were intrinsically motivated by fun, enjoyment, and interest in activities. Providing enjoyable activities, such as gardening, managing farm stand, and interacting with friends indicated youth took pleasure in their work and continued participating in such efforts. Jones & Hill (2003) also found spending time with friends was a social motivator to participate in after-school activities. With the apparent factor of spending time with friends and socializing while having fun, YFSP participants proved participation was beyond rewards gained or benefits sought. One may consider project content would not matter, as some youth would participate anyways because of the 'something to do' aspect the project offered. However, the gardening component proved as an additional reward for many youth, especially those with prior experience or vested interest.

Ryan and Deci (2000) state intrinsic motivation is attributed to need for autonomy and competence. A foundational proponent of YFSP was its natural inclination as a youth-driven initiative with support and guidance from caring adults. Coordinators encouraged youth participation in the decision making process. Youth expressed satisfaction in ability to express opinions and take project ownership. This youth-driven model was acknowledged by Carlson (1998) and Pearce, Larson and Walker (2005) as most effective in creating youth-adult partnerships. YFSP adapted this style of programming and youth appreciated opportunity to make decisions. Through observations, it became evident youth took significant pride in their work and their perceived actions showed ownership. This competence and autonomy contributed to levels of engagement in project activities. Similarly, Deci and Flaste (1995) concluded

when one is autonomous they are willing to do what they are doing and they embrace the activity with a sense of interest and commitment. Interest was noted during farm stand activities and youth identified ownership with activities they were in charge of. For example, Duffy youth felt ownership in making and providing salsa for sale at weekly farm stands. Perceived competence in performing this task excited participation and made youth feel connected to YFSP.

Participation and activity choice were enjoyable aspects of YFSP. By making participation voluntary, youth experienced choice resulting in alleviated pressures of having to complete tasks. The non-regimented schedule provided flexibility and choice in activities. The degree of choice each site gave youth varied, yet each offered some selection in activities. This choice may have attributed to overall youth satisfaction. Carter and Nelson (1984) suggest an important part of participating in an activity is the youth's responsibility in choosing the action in which to take part. Youth enjoyed project aspects in which they had choice. Further determination in completing the project may have stemmed from the importance they felt in the project and its ownership. Ryan and Deci (1985) suggested this to be true —people persist at activities that provide them opportunity to make choices and control their own outcomes. This proved correct in YFSP. Youth desired choice and continued participation, recognizing importance in project completion.

A main component of farm stand activities was gardening. Youth planned, planted and maintained a garden through the growing season. For many youth opportunity to garden enhanced motivation to participate and further engaged them in the project. Additionally, youth with gardening experience felt existing skills would benefit

participation and some expressed growing as something they were good at. Adolescents often participate in activities because they feel competent and related experience may benefit the given tasks. For youth with gardening experience, the chance to show others their skills and use already gained ability to succeed in the project was a noted factor by those youth with gardening knowledge. Patrick et al. (1999) identified similar findings — youths' perceptions of what they are good at attribute to commitment and involvement in activities. Conversely, even youth without prior gardening experience showed interest in this component. It is not accurate to attest YFSP only attracted youth with prior gardening experience. Importantly, gardening and seeing plants grow and flourish recruited participants. Youth enjoyed opportunity to learn and interact in the garden.

Although youth faced participation barriers and some did not complete the project, interviews and observations attest each participant engaged in some project aspect. Different reasons emerged for initial participation in YFSP. Factors influencing engagement varied across youth and sites. Results showed only two students not happy with the project outcomes —one monetary barrier and the other difficulty with the coordinator. Overall, youths' positive recollections of farm stand activities and evidence of engagement highlighted the desire to participate in a community-based food systems initiative. Participants' lack of expression over helping others and providing produce for low-income communities identifies a gap between program recruitment and program objectives. Examining results recognized this gap and although assumptions drawn from youth showed they did not fully understand the program objectives at the beginning, a conclusive statement is not possible. From the researcher's perspective, if coordinators more adequately communicated project objectives to youth, participants may have



recognized the impact they were making on communities and resource-depleted neighborhoods. In the future, better articulation of objectives to youth during recruitment may connect participants to the impact they are making through their involvement.

Motivation, including gardening, earning money, and spending time with friends initially captured youth participation. Although half of original youth faced participation barriers, second interviews and observations indicated sustained engagement resulted when youth felt project commitment and ownership and were interested in project activities. These noted engagement factors may positively encourage youth development and support sustained involvement in after-school activities. Without supportive environments, youth do not have potential to gain beneficial skills. As evidence shows, YFSP was an after-school community-based project providing youth opportunities to influence their future successes.

### Theoretical Implications

Pearce & Larson (2006) reported youth reluctantly participate in the beginning of projects in which they are mandated to participate. By interacting and participating in the project, “Youth Action” students engaged for reasons beyond having to participate; even though mandatory involvement ended after three months. Pearce and Larson explained this phenomenon using Ryan & Deci’s self-determination theory suggesting motivation to engagement can be seen through a continuum from amotivation to intrinsic motivation, with each level more engaging. Mandated participation in YFSP was not required and therefore movement along the continuum was not as dominant. Initially youth were more motivated by extrinsic factors, such as earning money and receiving class credit.

However, at project end, participants expressed continued participation for enjoyable activities and spending time with friends.

In addition, one of the dominant themes communicated by youth and coordinators was YFSP emerged as something to do. This was a different finding from Pearce & Larson (2006) and perhaps this explains why youth may not have moved noticeably along the motivational continuum. Further, because the program was not mandatory and barriers prevented continued participation for over half of the initial students, engagement at different levels was not noted. More precisely, most students were extrinsically motivated at the beginning, but at the end they were intrinsically engaged by the social interactions and fun that was happening.

Pearce & Larson (2006) found the self-determination theory adequate in defining youth motivation to engagement. Even though YFSP did not exhibit the same degree of movement, self-determination theory has potential to influence other studies as a lens to capture youth moving towards sustained engagement. Particular challenges face low-income communities and some of these barriers were noted during the study, including, transportation, family commitments, and program change. Similar to findings by Lauver et al. (2004), program flexibility allows for increased youth participation. By promoting this finding to other such programs, program developers can enhance probability of continued participation leading to sustained engagement.

#### Unanticipated Findings

Although YFSP was in its second year, it was in its first full-year of operation beyond the pilot. Relatively new, YFSP introduced youth to a community-based food system while exposing them to an entrepreneurship experience. Founded in nutrition

education, project objectives may have skewed emphasizing a more entrepreneurial experience than originally planned by the campus team. A positive attribute portrayed by YFSP creators was advocacy for no prescribed steps in implementing the program in communities. Although limited boundaries offer flexibility and ability for communities to identify important project aspects, it also gives opportunity for loss of intended objectives. Related to motivation and engagement, it may be that earning potential was cited by so many youth as motivation to join because it was emphasized during recruitment. Attraction to earning opportunities is a natural inclination for people, especially youth. By instilling nutrition education as the project foundation and not promoting earning potential youth motivation results may change. With lack of prior research, the researcher did not anticipate opportunity to make money as a dominant theme throughout the project; however, this unanticipated finding attempts to suggest ways not to recruit youth.

The researcher did not anticipate lack of continued participation from project start to finish. Barriers faced by participants, especially those of at-risk youth were not predicted by the project coordinators or the researcher. Because the project was new, these barriers were unanticipated and impacted the overall project outcomes and study findings. Transportation and personal family commitments were barriers beyond project scope. These findings suggest youth participation is sometimes not an individual's decision.

Research design focused on evaluating participation from start to finish; however, many youth sporadically participated or did not complete the project. The researcher at the beginning of the project did not consider this unforeseen obstacle. Through

qualitative methods, design was altered and research was adapted and changed to best answer the research questions. Although unpredicted, these findings draw conclusive results about participation barriers that were not expected at the project onset. The findings may show the number of youth discontinuing does not indicate they never engaged, it better outlines barriers faced to continue involvement.

### Implications for Practice

Through the study and yielded results, several implications for practice emerge with application for use in future farm stand projects and work with youth and community food systems. By examining trends materializing from results and implementing change, the C.S. Mott Group can improve the farm stand project and continue developing youth-driven collaborations surrounding community food systems. Many findings indicate YFSP positively impacts youth, adults, and low-income communities across Michigan. Results show potential to foster further development and influence more youth and engage more communities in food systems work. Implementing improvements may enhance the project and impact youth motivation and engagement.

Understanding project objectives and articulating them during youth recruitment is important to ensure youth understand the positive impacts their involvement has for personal growth and community enhancement. Having clear objectives rather than broadly describing the project can entice youth making them more aware of their role and the benefits offered through involvement. By understanding objectives youth may be influenced by the proposed outcomes and continue participation beyond a couple of meetings or irregularly throughout the summer. Developing goals and expectations, students have opportunity to gauge interest and continue involvement realizing their

stated outcomes. Although not always feasible, involving youth in the action planning process, contributes to early exposure of objectives and funding expectations may embrace students' interest and increase engagement.

Although one aspect of farm stand project is the opportunity to participate in an entrepreneurial experience, coordinators should avoid promoting monetary gain through participation. Rather than recruiting youth with intent to earn money, highlighting skills and connections youth may gain is more appropriate and better aligns with program objectives. Such examples include teamwork, leadership, community involvement and transferable job skills. Such job skills can provide resume additions. If profits are made, providing youth a portion may act as a reward for their efforts and act as a pleasant surprise. By not guaranteeing earning potential, youth do not have preconceived ideas about making money and therefore enroll in the project for other possible benefits.

Evidence from the study indicates youth desire decision making authority contributing to project ownership and sustained engagement. Working together and making group decisions encourages participation making youth feel connected to group impacts and project outcomes. By allowing youth input and supporting ideas, participants engage and strive for project commitment not to miss out on opportunities. Even though youth desire to make decisions, they understand the authority coordinators have and appreciate the flexibility provided. Beyond YFSP, decision-making and ownership are important aspects to youth development and should be encouraged through other youth programming initiatives.

An emerging theme throughout the project was inconsistent and sporadic participation, including youth not finishing the project. Although motivated, barriers

beyond their control forced youth to discontinue participating. While youth may have wanted to continue participating, obstacles prevented participation and hindered sustained engagement. Low and inconsistent participation is often reality for many after-school programs. This is more prevalent in low-income communities (Berkeley Policy Associates, 2005). At times participation in YFSP was sparse. Projects were grounded in resource-depleted neighborhoods resulting in transportation barriers, conflicting schedules and other pressing commitments. Ensuring farm stand projects are flexible and willing to adapt to participants needs is crucial to encourage participation and sustained engagement. Without flexibility, youth feel pressure to attend regularly and thus fail to remain active because of added commitment demands. If YFSP coordinators better understood commitment barriers to adjust programming, more participants may join the project. Providing learning opportunities at each meeting ensures youth have access to valuable information even if they discontinue.

Continually checking youth interest and engagement in activities makes certain coordinators are providing significant opportunity for youth to engage in opportunities they find interesting and meaningful to future ambitions. When coordinators are more aware of student interest, whether it is gardening, cooking, or farm stand management, they have ability to cater programming fostering project engagement. One of the prominent themes in the study was youths' desire to spend time with friends and have fun. Ensuring a balance between learning and social interactions may encourage student participation to retain participants. With little access to friends outside school hours, programs like YFSP offers an appropriate means to interact socially.

The study found youth were motivated for a variety of different reasons. These motivating factors show YFSP offered diverse opportunities and youth see the project in multiple ways. Such ways include social opportunities, participating in gardening and farm stand activities and as something to do. The diversity offered by YFSP should be maintained to encourage a varied group of student participants. A variety of interests makes the project unique and offers interaction between students with dissimilar interests, yet ability to work on a common community project. Reasons for engagement also varied, yet an overwhelming majority of students noted a commitment to the project an opportunity to interact with peers. Keeping YFSP community-based while promoting to diverse youth audiences will contribute to project success and allow youth to interact with those they do not normally associate with. Other youth programs can learn from YFSP model by incorporating diverse youth interests to make a successful community-based project surrounding gardening and food systems. The model also promotes youth involvement and networking with local farmers for produce procurement and marketing. Further interactions result from networking with farm stand customers during market days. These opportunities provide youth valuable skills and impact their personal development. Such skills and opportunities attribute to the YFSP project model. Replication through other food system initiatives should be recognized.

#### Additional Research & Conclusion

Interacting with youth can be challenging, especially when conducting in-depth interviews. Beyond scheduling, if youth do not provide adequate conversation, data can be limited. Some of the data proved limiting because youth were not conversational during some parts of the interviews. However, emerging data provided adequate

information to inform the research questions. By considering other collection methods, such as surveys, researchers may build on data collected through YFSP sites in 2006-07. Rather than asking youth in-depth questions, using this year's data, one can design surveys to collect similar findings by asking closed-ended questions. Further, the entire YFSP participant population could be included in the sample by using a less resource demanding method. A sample of participants could still be interviewed to provide in-depth dialogue not obtainable through closed-ended questions. Surveying, observing and interviewing youth may better represent the youth sample and encourage data triangulation.

Although it was concluded that youth engaged in farm stand project, the study design did not examine intermittent project points to better decide the extent at which youth engaged. The two interviews, one at the beginning and one at the conclusion did not observe the students who did not sustain engagement. Even though coordinators were interviewed and provided perspective on students who did not sustain participation, it was difficult to understand engaging project activities. More intermittent and less extensive data collections would allow researchers to better gauge motivation and engagement in YFSP. More frequent participatory observations and opportunities to interact with youth may provide further observation notes reflecting project engagement and prove students moved along the continuum of motivation to engagement.

Further research should build on the study conducted this year. By using results to guide research questions researchers can develop areas that best suit the needs of the C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems and the YFSP organizers. Recruitment efforts and retention success can be influenced by the findings of the study.



Recommendations and further programming can be integrated to meet students' needs.

YFSP has the potential to reach a greater number of youth and impact their present and future work in their communities and the food system. More importantly, by finding opportunities to motivate and engage youth, sustained participation may lead to positive development while enhancing skills benefiting future success and commitment.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **1st Interview Guide - Students**

1. Can you explain how you heard about the youth farm stand project?
  - You mentioned you heard about the project through a \_\_\_\_\_ (leader/friend). Can you recall what they said about the project?
  - I want to understand more about how the farm stand project was advertised; can you explain how the project was presented?
2. Think back to the first time you became involved with the project, can you explain what happened? Perhaps you can tell me about how you got involved?
  - First you heard about the project, then you...
  - You mentioned an influential \_\_\_\_\_ (activity, event, person). Let's talk more about this. Can you recall the activity or conversation?
3. What attracted you to get involved with the youth farm stand project? Were there particular things that sounded interesting or fun?
  - What were your initial thoughts about the project?
4. I'd like to understand more about the youth farm stand project that you've been involved with, can you describe the project for me?
  - The project is designed to last through the fall; can you talk me through the plans for the remainder of the project?
5. All the activities sound like a lot of work, can you tell me about how the responsibilities are divided?
  - To help you, maybe you want to think about the meetings you have been having and tell me about who has been doing what.
6. The activities you have been doing sound really great, I'd like to know more about how the group decides on the activities. Can you tell me about how the group decided on \_\_\_\_\_ (use a mentioned example/activity)

## **APPENDIX B**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Interview Guide - Students**

1. I'd like to understand more about the youth farm stand project that you were involved with this past year. Can you start from the beginning and tell me about the project?
  - a. What were some of the activities that you have done throughout the year?
  - b. How were the decisions made amongst the group?
  - c. What role did the advisor take in this project?
  - d. How did you feel about the structure of the project? (why)
  
2. Thinking back to the start of the project, can you remember why you joined? In other words, what interested you in the project?
  - a. Throughout the project, did these interests remain?
  - b. What other parts of the project influenced your decision to remain a part of the youth farms stand project?
  
3. During the course of the year, how were you involved in the project?
  - a. What was your role in the project?
  - b. What were your responsibilities?
  
4. Are there things that surprised you about the project? Or more precisely, what happened during the project that you did not expect?
  - a. Think about skills that you developed
  - b. What about the people in the project (other students, community members, advisors)?
  
5. Now that the project is finishing for this year, what have you experienced?
  - a. What have you gained through your participation?
  - b. What has disappointed you through the project?
  - c. How did you change your diet preferences?
  
6. A lot of other activities are offered through the summer. Can you tell me what kept you coming to the youth farm stand project?
  - a. Did these reasons change from the beginning of the project until now?

7. Thinking about the project for next year, are there things that you would change or make different?
  - a. What did you like about the project?
  - b. What were some of the obstacles that you faced (individually and as a group)?

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Interview Guide for Coordinators (Motivation & Engagement)**

1. You had a variety of youth engaged in the project. Talk about the youth who participated in your project – background, interests, group they were affiliated with, etc.?
2. Thinking back to your initial work with the project, can you explain how you recruited the youth who participated in the YFSP?
  - a. What incentives, if any, did you communicate to the youth?
  - b. Throughout the project, how did you retain the participants?
  - c. What obstacles/challenges did you face in retaining youth?
  - d. How did you continue to recruit throughout the project?
3. I understand that some of your youth did not complete the project. From your perceptions and from what the youth communicated to you, can you talk about their reasons?
4. I'd like to understand the youth motivation for participation. What do you think the reasons were for your youth to participate in the YFSP?
  - a. Can you comment on their initial motivation and how it changed from the beginning of the project until the end of the project (if it did)?
5. How did you engage them in different activities and how do you feel they were engaged?
  - a. What aspects of the project do you think that the youth were most engaged with?
  - b. What parts of the project were least engaging?
  - c. Can you explain the initiative of the participants? Comment on their initiative to take control of the project and make it their own (self-directive)
6. Are there key components of the project that motivated and engaged your students throughout the project that you would suggest using in future years?
  - a. Now that the project is coming to a close for this year, can you offer suggestions on how to motivate and engage students next year

## APPENDIX D

Table D:  
*Checklist matrix of research question themes and sub-themes as related to the coding scheme*

	Reasons to Join	Enjoyable Project Components	Sustained Engagement	Barriers to Participation
Something to do	X		X	
Having fun	X	X	X	
Chance to earn money	X			X
Gardening	X		X	
Relationships (friends, family)	X	X	X	
Future ambitions and skills				
Decision making		X	X	
Teamwork				
Caring adults/mentors		X		X
Change in perceptions				
Commitment			X	X
Helping communities			X	
Farm stand marketing			X	
Transportation				X
Family problems				X

Illustrating the coding scheme used to help answer the research questions. The themes on the left are matched with the research question categories at the top as they relate to the data in the results and discussion. Note that some codes were used to answer more than one research question.

## APPENDIX E

Table E:  
*Conceptually clustered matrix*

	Interview 1 with students	Interview 2 with students	Observations	Interview with coordinators	Summary
<b>Chance to Earn Money</b>	Most projects were advertised as being a chance to earn money. Although money was indicated as an incentive, it was not a primary motivator for joining the project. The majorities of students understood the project as a way to make money but were interested in other components. A couple students did not join with the intent to make money.	Few students experienced earning potential. Those who did not make money expressed other engaging project aspects such as having fun and spending time with friends. Students were committed to other aspects of the project, and making money was not a priority for most.	Students felt a need for any profits to be divided equally and showed competence in record keeping. It was not apparent students were participating to make money; gardening and working at the farm stand were noted as engaging project components.	The project was advertised by the coordinators as a way to earn money over the summer, and they recruited students using this tactic. At project end some coordinators expressed youth were motivated at the beginning to make money but in the end were happy to spend time with friends while having fun. Some felt youth were still interested in earning money.	Youth and advisors saw opportunity to make money during YFSP. When little money was made youth continued to participate because they enjoyed the activities and felt commitment to the project. Although earning was an attraction, youth sustained engagement for other reasons.

**Summary Statement:** The theme 'Chance to earn money' concludes initially youth were motivated to join the project as a way to earn money while having a summer job. However, even though few youth made money, they still continued participation. In the future coordinators should avoid recruiting youth through means of making money and focus on other project outcomes. Earning potential may be used as a bonus rather than a driving force behind participating in YFSP.

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