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The Relationship Among Washington State County Commissioners Knowledge and Perceptions of Washington State University Extension and Their Willingness to Fund WSU Extension

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THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG WASHINGTON STATE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS OF WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND THEIR WILLINGNESS TO FUND WSU EXTENSION

by

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Abstract

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The Relationship among Washington State County Commissioners' Knowledge and Perception of Washington State University Extension and Their Willingness to Fund WSU Extension

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The study determined the relationship between perceptions that the Washington State county commissioners' hold of WSU Extension and their knowledge of WSU Extension. In addition, the study determined whether their perceptions, knowledge, and/or understanding of Extension are related to and thereby may have predictability to their willingness to provide the essential local funding to continue the educational programs Extension delivers. The study addressed the interest Washington State county commissioners/county council members have in funding WSU Extension, which directly affects the critical element of maximizing Extension's impact on society.

As a publicly funded educational organization, WSU Extension faces an uncertain fiscal future as funding partners face financial stress. Without funding from the key partners, such as county government, WSU Extension would not be able to continue to provide educational programming and nor would society benefit from the verifiable impacts that Extension has imparted for the past 100 years.

An electronic census was administered through a variety of methods to insure sufficient response. There were 43 responses representing each of the 39 counties in Washington State.

County commissioners have knowledge of Extension and the educational programs delivered to constituents. Respondents attend Extension programs, read Extension produced newsletters, join Extension educational organizations such as 4-H and access the web resources that Extension produces. Commissioners report that they are willing to continue to fund Extension in both times of financial adequacy and insufficiency.

Based on the data, county commissioners in Washington State believe that WSU Extension is effective; the programs that Extension delivers are of good quality and beneficial to their constituents. Extension services are considered to be a good value for the level of county expenditure.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Extension Program

Public outreach or non-formal, community based education is a core educational concept of the land grant university. This outreach is embodied in the institution commonly called Extension. Extension is the outreach, service or community based education agency of the land grant university.

Extension Program Impacts

Washington State University (WSU) Extension's educational programs are accessed every day by countless individuals, groups and agencies through a variety of methods that include personal appointments, classes and seminars, print media, electronic media and organizational meetings. The public often views Extension programs as only the program area that the individuals use most often. Consequently, the most visible programs often define Extension. These programs often include programs such as 4-H and Master Gardener. In rural areas, the Agriculture and Natural Resources programs are often central to the success of the local economies that are agriculturally based. The other broad program areas that Extension provides non-formal education to its constituents include Family Consumer Sciences and Community Development.

The impact on society by Washington State University Extension's educational programs is well documented through annual reporting to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). These reports document that clientele of the agency and society

benefit through the non-formal educational program that is presented in all 39 counties in Washington (Fox, 2004).

An example of program impacts is represented by the low income nutrition program, Food $ense. This program reached over 29,000 low income people in FY 2003 throughout Washington State. The educational goal of this program is for participants to live healthier lives and be productive members of society. Of the program participants, 90% were motivated to increase the variety of foods in their diets, which is an indicator of quality nutrition (Fox, 2004).

Another of Extension's impacts on society includes the number of youth involved in the informal educational program commonly known as 4-H. In Washington State 1,186,498 youth were 4-H participants (BoyEs, 2006) in FY 2003. Current research has shown that 4-H club members are more likely than their peers to succeed in school and earn higher grades (Astroth & Haynes, 2002). 4-H members help community members in need, are regarded as role models, and are more involved as leaders in their schools and the communities (Astroth & Haynes, 2002). The traditional 4-H Youth Development program also is seen as a positive factor in the development of a workforce for the agriculture sector of the economy. A study at the University of Idaho indicated that 60% of incoming agriculture students had been heavily involved in 4-H (Riesenberg, 1987).

Other impacts on Washington State's society include the number of people reached by the Master Gardener program. During the 2003 program year, 3,100 volunteers donated 66,000 hours of time valued at nearly $1 million (Fox, 2004). The volunteers, as a program delivery method, taught a variety of skills based in horticultural

to 298,000 adults and 15,000 youth. These program participants indicated that they reduced the environmental impact of their gardening practices by reducing pesticides and/or water use (Fox, 2004).

A final example of a program impact by Extension in Washington State is from the Sustainable Agriculture program. Throughout fiscal year 2003, more than 5,500 agricultural producers have adopted decision support systems that recognize and evaluate the economic, environmental, and social implications of alternative plant and animal production systems. These agricultural producers manage 2,600,000 acres under improved sustainable steward practices (Fox, 2004).

Documentation of Impacts on Society

These examples of program impacts are summarized in a cumulative manner from individual educational efforts offered in each county. Program emphasis on the local level is determined through advisory input provided by clientele, and local societal and economic need. The delivery of the county-based program is dependent on the resources available for the program development, the skill and expertise of the local Extension faculty member, and identified needs within the county. Each of the 39 individual county-based programs provides educational programming impacts that are encapsulated in the referenced Washington State Extension reports, which are then summarized with all of Extension's impacts through USDA and its agency, the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES).

WSU Extension's impacts on society are well documented. The agency provides non-formal education to clientele in all 39 counties in Washington State, meeting locally

identified educational needs. The contributions of Extension are critical to the stakeholders of the agency. These stakeholders recognize that without the educational programs that Extension provides, the impacts on society, as identified, would be diminished (McDowell, 2004).

Problem Statement

Funding Sources

Funding for WSU Extension is secured from five major sources. The federal partner, USDA through its agency CSREES, provides 10% ($4. 88 M) of the funding for WSU Extension. State government provides 31% ($15. 30 M), Grants and Contracts provide 17% ($17. 85 M) and fee for service provides 8% ($4. 24 M) of the funding. The 39 counties in Washington provide 12% ($5. 77 M) of the funding (Fox, 2006). Beyond the funds provided to WSU for Extension services, county partners provide support staff, office space, and operating funds (New Commissioner Handbook, Municipal Research & Services Center of Washington, 1998).

As a funding partner, county government provides pivotal funding for the county-based Extension program. According to the enabling legislation of Washington State statute (RCW 36. 50. 010), Extension is a non-mandated service that is funded at the discretion of the county governing body. Funding is secured on an annual basis through a Memorandum of Agreement (Spokane County, 2006) that is signed by each county's representatives, the county commissioners, and the University's representative, that is, the Director of Extension. The county commissioners make decisions in funding levels of operational funds for the county-based Extension faculty. The county government also

provides office space, administrative support, program staff, and a portion of the faculty's salary. In accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement, if the county does not provide funding, office space, support staff and faculty salary, Extension cannot exist in that particular county.

Funding Partner Financial Stress

Washington State counties are under considerable financial stress through the passage of past tax revolt initiatives. Legislative Bulletin #3 (2000) states that counties will not be able to fund essential public services because of I-695, an initiative that limited funding for counties by reducing automobile licensing fees. That reduction of county revenue coupled with voter approved limits on property tax increases and unstable sales tax bases are responsible for counties seeking replacement funding for criminal justice, public health, and public transit program funding (Legislative Bulletin #3, 2000).

The revenue and spending restrictions placed on Washington counties along with the funding increases in mandated programs such as criminal justice and public health care threaten the continued funding of non-mandated programs such as WSU Extension. On a statewide basis, law and justice expenditures account for 70% of county general fund expenditures (Fallquest & Morris, 2004). Washington counties have settled into a steady pattern of cutting services to balance their budgets (Fallquest & Morris, 2004). Examples of county budget cuts to WSU Extension budgets include a 38% reduction in the Whatcom County Extension budget from FY 2001 to FY 2006 (Kremen, 2006) and 64% decrease in King County Extension budget from FY 2000 to FY 2004 (Gaolach, 2004).

Loss of Extension Funding

WSU Extension cannot continue to deliver non-formal educational programs to the citizens of the 39 counties of Washington State without funding support from the county governmental partner. Extension programs in any particular county cannot exist without the local partner's funding contribution. All Extension programs, such as 4-H Youth Development, Food $ense, and Sustainable Agriculture will not be provided to the nonparticipating county's residents.

Without funding at the county level, the impacts of Extension's programs will not continue to be realized by society. The 29,000 low-income people would not have learned the basics of quality nutrition. Over one million youth in Washington State would not have enhanced their education through the 4-H Youth Development program in program year 2004 and millions of acres would not be managed with the present level of environmentally improved methods.

Stakeholder Concern

Concerns for the future of WSU Extension directly affect Extension stakeholders. Stakeholders understand the impacts the agency has made and societal issues the agency could address (Warner et al., 1996). These stakeholders include the clientele of the public education agency, its staff, faculty, and members of the public. The concerns for the future of Extension impact all non-mandated, community-based educational organizations that rely on public funding for their existence.

Local decision makers believe they may discontinue to partially or totally fund Extension's non-formal educational programs. Throughout the country there are several

examples of Extension not being funded. In Oregon, Multnomah County has discontinued funding for the Multnomah County Office of the Oregon State University Extension Service. The office ceased operation on July 1, 2003 (http://extension.oregonstate.edu/multnomah/index.php). Similar threats to county funding bases exist in Okanogan County, Washington (Partridge, 2002) and Mecklenburg County, North Carolina (Richardson, 2005).

Without the organizational structure of Extension, the documented successes of the agency's benefits and potential benefits to society will be lost and governments, even if they are able to rebuild an infrastructure that can duplicate the known benefits of Extension, will not be able to do so without at least an investment equivalent to the savings they are trying to realize at the present time.

Research Question

What is the relationship among the perceptions held by Washington State county commissioners of WSU Extension with their knowledge or understanding of Extension, and their willingness or inclination to fund Extension?

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between perceptions that the Washington State county commissioners' hold of WSU Extension and their knowledge of WSU Extension. In addition, the purpose is to determine whether their perceptions and knowledge or understanding of Extension are related to and thereby may have a causal relationship to their willingness to provide the essential local funding to continue the educational programs Extension delivers. In conclusion, the purpose

addresses the level of interest of Washington State county commissioners/county council members have in funding WSU Extension, which directly affects the critical element of maximizing Extension's impact on society.

Importance of the Research

County commissioners in the State of Washington represent the constituents from the district that elects them. They also determine funding on the county level for Extension and the educational programs the agency provides to those constituents. The funding county commissioners provide is crucial to the continuation of the educational programs provided by WSU Extension in each county. Therefore it is essential to understand why these local decision makers support Extension and the educational programs the agency delivers.

Without the continued fiscal support of the local governmental or county partner of WSU Extension, the agency will not be able to continue to provide the non-formal educational programs for their constituents. Additionally the funds that WSU Extension brings to the individual counties would not be available to serve as social and economic stimuli within the local governmental unit.

The implications for this research are of importance to the stakeholders that receive the benefit of Extension's educational programs. WSU Extension and the other funding partners for Extension's educational program will benefit in understanding the stability of the local funding source. In addition, other Washington State, community-based educational organizations that rely on local funding may view the findings as significant when forecasting their future.

Definitions of Terms

Agricultural Programs. A variety of planned teaching methodologies used to improve agriculture production, agribusiness, conservation, and the use of natural resources.

County Commissioner. The title used to identify an elected member of the board of county commissioners, a local governing body. The board is also known just as commissioners. There are three commissioners in 36 of the counties in Washington. Three counties have elected to use a charter form of government and have five, seven and 13 county board members, respectively. The involvement with Extension is primarily as a funding partner.

The County Department Head. The individual charged with administering the county-based Cooperative Extension program.

Extension. An agency created by federal legislation and state statute to provide educational opportunities to improve the quality of life for its clientele. The agency has three governmental partners. The federal partner is the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and its sub-agency, the Cooperative States Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES). In Washington State the agency is known as Washington State University Cooperative Extension or Washington State University Extension. County governments often refer to the agency as Cooperative Extension.

Extension Educators. Ranked faculty members of Washington State University who provide non-degree-based education to clientele in each of the 39 counties of the

State of Washington. Extension Educators have been known as County Extension Agents.

Extension Clientele. Individuals, groups of individuals, organizations, and business firms who are served by Cooperative Extension. Extension Programs. A planned series of events coordinated and/or taught by Extension Educators to accomplish the Cooperative Extension objectives.

Family and Consumer Science programs. Teach nutrition, diet, health, safety, financial management and parenting to individuals and families. Food $ense is a branded name of foods and nutrition programming that utilizes Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) funding and Food Stamp Education (FSN) funding. The source of these funds is USDA.

Formal learning. Identified as being classroom based and highly structured. Formal learning follows chronologically graded and hierarchically structured programs that offer credits, grades and diplomas to document learning and achievement.

4-H Youth Development programs. Teach various life skills to youth audiences. These programs use a variety of educational methods, which include: community-based clubs, school based programs, projects, events, and contests to meet educational objectives.

Master Gardener program. The name for a horticultural based educational program that utilizes volunteers as the delivery source.

Nonformal learning. Is defined by activities outside the formal learning setting, characterized by voluntary as opposed to mandatory participation. In nonformal learning

the learners hold the objectives for learning with the means controlled by the educator or organization.

Perception. As defined by Hilgard (1957), the purpose of becoming aware of objects, qualities, or relations by way of the sense organs. While sensory content is always present in perception, what is perceived is influenced by set and prior experience impinging on sense organs (p. 51). This definition is consistent with definitions in contemporary literature.

Stakeholder. A person or organization with a legitimate interest in a given situation, action or enterprise.

Summary

Chapter One discussed the agency, Washington State University Extension, provided examples of programmatic impacts that the agency's programs impart on society and introduced the financial difficulties that the agency's funding partners are currently facing. Additionally this chapter shared information regarding the research and definition of terms. The proceeding chapter will discuss literature that is germane to the subject of Extension, its educational programs and impacts that the agency delivers through these educational programs. Chapter Two provides a synopsis of the research that supports this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Background

"I would have learning more widely disseminated," said Justin S. Morrill, the Vermont legislator and author of the land-grant movement (Morrill, 1887). Morrill's dream of non-formal learning has been instituted throughout the country by an intergovernmental partnership of the federal government, land-grant universities, and county government. In addressing the Morrill Act of 1862, Abraham Lincoln reflected, "Our institutions should be 'the public's universities," (NASULGC, 2000). Collectively, Lincoln and Morrill's vision for public education included the opportunity for everyone to learn practical skills. These land-grant universities or the public's universities, in fulfilling Lincoln and Morrill's vision, have brought formal and non-formal education to the public for over one 125 years. Since 1862, the land-grant university has been embodied with a tripartite mission of education, research, and service. While the scholastic and investigative aspects of the mission are spread through all colleges within the university setting, what is commonly called public service, service, or outreach is often represented through Extension.

Enabling Legislation

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 formalized the structure of Cooperative Extension within the land-grant institutions by enabling the federal government, state government and county governments to collaborate to provide non-formal education to every citizen in the country (Smith-Lever Act, amended 2002).

Congress created the extension system nearly a century ago to address exclusively rural, agricultural issues. At the time congress created the extension system, through the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, 50% of the U. S. population lived in rural areas, and 30% of the workforce was engaged in farming. Extension's engagement with rural America helped make possible the American agricultural revolution, which dramatically increased farm productivity (Rasmussen, 1989).

This productivity is well documented. For example, in 1945 it took 14 hours of labor and two acres of land to produce 100 bushels of corn. In 1987, three hours of labor and just over one acre were needed to produce the same amount of corn (Rasmussen, 1989). By 2004, the national average for corn production was 160 bushels per acre (Veneman, 2004).

That increase in productivity has allowed fewer farmers to produce more food. Fewer than 2% of Americans farm for a living today, and only 10% of Americans now live in rural areas. Yet, Extension still plays an important role in American life—rural, suburban, and urban. With its unprecedented network of faculty/educators placed in most of the nation’s counties and in all of Washington State’s counties, Extension assists clientele by, as the Smith-Lever Act states, diffusing useful and practical information (Smith-Lever Act, amended 2002).

Extension has a presence in each state through land-grant universities. Currently 103 institutions are charged with the tripartite mission as legislated through the United States Department of Agriculture’s agency, the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES). Land-grant status has been provided to institutions in

various years of federal legalization. The 1862 land-grant institutions are the traditional land-grant universities that received funding from the sale of federal lands to create their existence. The 1890 land-grant universities are the traditional African American-serving institutions of the south and the 1994 land-grant institutions serve the Native American population on reservations. Each land grant university continues to receive federal formula funding as outlined through the amended Smith-Lever Act. These federal funds insure that the tripartite mission of the land grant university system is upheld. Federal funds supplement funding that is provided through the individual state and county governments.

Each county governmental unit in the nation has the opportunity to participate in providing non-formal education to its citizens through Extension. This is enabled on the federal level through the Smith-Lever Act. In Washington State, the enabling legislation for Extension is Revised Code of Washington (RCW 36. 50. 010, 1963. Prior: 1949, c 181). This states that any board of county commissioners of any county and the governing body of any municipality are authorized to establish and conduct extension work in cooperation with Washington State University (RCW 36. 50. 010, 1963. Prior: 1949, c 181).

Stakeholder Participation

As announced in the Federal Register (2004), CSREES, the federal funding partner of the Extension system requires stakeholder input in program planning and development. Without sufficient advisory input, the federal formula funds or Smith Lever 3(d) funds will not be distributed to states for use by their Extension organizations. This

stakeholder input may be received through state and county advisory councils, surveys, and focus groups and is part of the educational program planning efforts that are undertaken on the county and state levels of Extension.

In his textbook on Extension education, Pesson (1966) acknowledged that Extension advisory committees serve several purposes. By involving representative lay people, advisory groups (a) accelerate educational change among the target clientele, (b) result in "better" program decisions than those made by Extension agents on their own, and (c) provide a beneficial learning experience. He maintained that advisory groups also have several useful functions: (a) giving advice to Extension professionals regarding programs, (b) analyzing and interpreting the local situation to identify needs and problems, and (c) legitimizing and communicating program decisions among the community. Extension programming was conceptualized as advisory committee involvement in program planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Advisory systems can drive the type of educational program that is offered by the county Extension faculty. The advisory system is important in determining the educational program that is presented on the local level, yet the county commission member may or may not be aware of how the program priorities are set on the local or county level. Stienbarger (2006) found that two of sixteen commissioners in six counties in southwest Washington State indicated that they provide advisory input into program planning.

Programmatic History

World War I

Extension became a viable educational entity during World War I as it helped the nation meet its wartime goals (Rasmussen, 1989). Goals as discussed by Rasmussen included the increase of wheat acreage from 47 million acres in 1913 to 74 million in 1919. Extension helped USDA implement its new authority to encourage farm production, marketing, and conserving of perishable products by canning, drying, and preserving. Extension helped to address war-related farm labor shortages at harvest time by organizing the Women's Land Army and the Boys' Working Reserve. Rasmussen further explains that Extension's role in WWI helped expand its reputation as an educational entity to one that emphasized service for individuals, organizations, and the Federal Government (Rasmussen, 1989).

The Depression

During the Depression, state colleges and USDA emphasized farm management for individual farmers. According to Rasmussen, Extension was responsible for teaching farmers about marketing and helped farm groups organize both buying and selling cooperatives. Concurrently, extension home economists taught farm women, who traditionally maintained the household, good nutrition practices, surplus food preservation, gardening, poultry production, home nursing, furniture refinishing, and sewing. These skills helped many farm families survive the years of economic depression and drought (Rasmussen, 1989).

World War II

During World War II, the extension service again worked with farmers and their families, along with 4-H club members, to secure the production increases essential to the war effort. Each year for five years, total food production increased. In 1944, food production was 38% above the 1935-1939 average (Rasmussen, 1989).

The Victory Garden Program was one of the most popular programs in the war period, and extension agents developed programs to provide seed, fertilizer, and simple gardening tools for victory gardens. An estimated 15 million families planted victory gardens in 1942 and in 1943 some 20 million victory gardens produced more than 40% of the vegetables for that year's fresh consumption (Rasmussen, 1989).

Contemporary Extension

Between 1950 and 2002, the number of farms in the U. S. declined dramatically, from 5.4 million to 1.8 million (Veneman, 2004). Because the amount of farmland did not decrease as much as the number of farms, the remaining farms have a larger average acreage. During the same period, farm production increased from one farmer supporting the food needs of 15.5 persons in 1950 to one farmer supporting 100 persons in 1990. By 1997, one farmer supported the food needs of almost 140 U. S. citizens.

Increased productivity, despite the decline in farm numbers, resulted from increased mechanization, commercial fertilizers, new hybrid seeds, and other technologies. Extension played, and continues to play, an important role in technology transfer to U. S. farmers and ranchers by delivering the results of research conducted through the land-grant universities.

Extension Program Impacts

While there is a continuing decline in the size and economic importance of rural America, the national Cooperative Extension System remains an important player in American life. It has adapted to changing times and continues to address a wide range of local educational needs in urban and rural areas. USDA CSREES indicates that today, on a national level, Extension works in six major areas: (a) Agriculture, (b) Community and Economic Development, (c) Family and Consumer Sciences (d) 4-H Youth Development (e) Leadership Development, and (g) Natural Resources.

Urban Extension Impacts

Extension has a long record of success in teaching clientele skills in agriculture and natural resource management and enhancing the lives of youth and families in rural areas. Because of Extension's strong rural history, urban-based Extension faculty or county Extension educators face an additional challenge of convincing decision makers that Extension is relevant in urban areas.

Extension impacts individuals in urban areas through specific programming. Nutrition education programs and youth development programming are two examples of targeting urban audiences with specific program emphases. One of the Extension nutrition education programs, EFNEP targets urban based low-income individuals. The program offers both behavior change and knowledge base modification through participant evaluation. Of the adult participants in 2003, 80% of the 100,000 program graduates improved in one or more food resource management practices such as

comparing prices, or is "food secure," which means not running out of food (CSREES, 2004). Total participation in EFNEP is well over 1 million participants nationwide.

The youth development program has long been a hallmark of Extension programming. Beginning with boys' corn and girls' canning clubs as early as 1902, 4-H has grown to the largest youth development organization in the nation (Federal Register: September 29, 2004; Wessel & Wessel, 1980). In 2003 over 7 million youth enrolled in youth programs with Extension on a national basis (Kress, 2004). Of this membership, 38% lived in urban environments. Each individual state Extension program is charged with the documentation of impacts. One notable study in Montana showed that youth involved with 4-H programs were statically more likely to have higher grades, be more involved in their community and less likely to participate in hazardous behavior than their non-4-H peers (Astroth & Haynes, 2002).

4-H Impacts on Classroom Academic Standing

Historically, most studies of the effects of 4-H Youth Development programs have centered on examination of reflections by 4-H alumni. Ladewig and Thomas (1987) found that 4-H alumni had higher levels of educational attainment and high school academic achievement than non-participants. Participants attribute the achievement to real-world experiences that enhance classroom learning.

Recent studies in Montana and Idaho indicate that youth who are involved in 4-H Youth Development educational programs are less likely to be involved in a whole range of at-risk behaviors when compared with youth who were not involved in any out-of-school activities. In Montana, data collected revealed that the non-active students were

more likely to report that they drank alcohol, shoplifted, purposely damaged property, used drugs to get high, and smoked cigarettes, among other behaviors (Astroth & Haynes, 2002). The Idaho study showed that these non-4-H members were nearly twice as likely to drink alcohol, damage property, and smoke cigarettes and were twice as likely to use drugs and shop lift. Over and above all of this, non-active, Idaho (non-4-H members) students reported lower grades and were non-committal to completing school work in both studies (Goodwin et al., 2006).

The Montana study indicated that when the variables used in the survey were compared by grade, students at the 9th grade level who said they were not active in any out-of-school activities were found to be nearly two times as likely to smoke cigarettes, seven times as likely to have carried a gun to school, more than twice as likely to report that they have driven while drunk, nearly three times as likely to use drugs, and twice as likely to have shoplifted (Astroth & Haynes, 2002). These results were verified by the Idaho study with similar results (Goodwin et al., 2006).

The study showed that 17% of Montana youth are not involved in any out-of-school activities or programs, while 4-H members are very involved. Numbers collected showed that a remarkable 75% of all 4-H members were involved in up to four additional out-of-school activities in addition to their involvement in 4-H. Astroth and Haynes (2002), and Goodwin (2006), demonstrate that 4-H participants were more likely than other youth to succeed in school, getting more A's than other youth, be involved as leaders in their school and the community, be looked to as role models by other youth, and help others in the community.

The studies conclude that 4-H members felt that their contributions were more respected by their families, by other adults and by the communities in which they lived. Collectively, these attributes suggested that 4-H participants have a positive self-identity which gives them the poise to succeed in life. The surveyed 4-H members also felt more socially capable and self-assured than other youth. Finally, seven out of ten youth who had been in 4-H for a year or more said that 4-H is a safe place for learning and the 4-H clubs are supportive environments where they feel accepted for who they are.

Astroth and Haynes (2002) stated in their Journal of Extension article that 4-H is an established, research-based program that is making modifications in the lives of today's youth and families. They also indicate that contemporary 4-H clubs are designed to include eight critical elements necessary for positive youth development. These elements were first identified by Pittman (1991), and later adapted by the Cooperative Extension System as standards for 4-H Youth Development programs (Grégoire, 2004). The elements include: (a) positive relationships with caring adults, (b) opportunities for self-determination, (c) an accepting and inclusive environment, (d) opportunities to contribute through community service, (e) a safe environment for learning and growing, (f) opportunities to develop skills and mastery, (g) engagement in learning, and (h) opportunities to be an active participant in life.

4-H gives all parents the opportunity to provide their children a safe, nurturing, structured atmosphere during the after school hours. This setting promotes the initiative to learn and discover while encouraging solid values and ethics. 4-H gives young people the competence, confidence, compassion, and connections with caring adults to be able to

contribute to the vitality of their communities, now and in the future (Astroth & Haynes, 2002).

Priority Initiatives

A program, titled Priority Initiatives by CSREES, has assisted Extension to remain relevant in today's society. In the 1980's, Extension identified critical areas as national priority initiatives. Initiatives, as quoted by Myron D. Johnsrud, administrator of the Extension Service, represented "a redirection toward issue-oriented, action-teamwork to help people resolve critical issues of public concern." (Rasmussen, 1989, p. 321).

Issues Programming

Issues Programming is analogous to the concept of engagement by the land-grant university. The authors of *Returning to Our Roots: the Engaged Institution* (NASULGC, 1998) stated that "engagement" is more than public service or extending of research. Engagement is being connected to the community so closely that the work of Extension becomes finding solutions to the issues that beleaguer a particular community (McDowell, 2001). The educational process becomes more than providing an answer, but working together to discover what will work within a particular community on a particular issue. Through engagement in communities, local, county or state, extension educators teach through processes that address issues that affect particular communities.

Base Programs

All educational programs that are not initiative driven are categorized within Base Programs. Base Programs are defined as a set of dynamic, changing, results-oriented educational activities that receive significant resources throughout the System at the

national, state, and county levels. The Base Programs form the ongoing priority educational efforts of the System, involving discipline-based and multi-disciplinary subject matter content. These Programs can be thought of as the foundation of a building, with the National Initiatives rising from the Base Programs to receive special emphasis for a specific period of time (NASULGC, 2001). The concepts of National Initiatives and Base Programs blend with state and county priorities to address critical issues and make up the overall program of the Cooperative Extension System. These initiatives gave Extension's federal partner, USDA-CSREES control of funding by particular program and hence local programs in a broad sense.

Public Policy Program

Public policy education plays an ever increasing role in Extension program delivery. The land-grant university in general and Extension in particular, are concerned with the problems of people and are committed to using the knowledge of the university to improve people's well-being. An increasingly important part of what affects people's well-being is decided in the public arena, through policy decision on matters such as international trade, farm programs, welfare reform, abortion, nutrition policy, education, and land use planning. In the best Jeffersonian tradition, if the democratic process is to survive, the people must be reasonably well-informed and able to participate in the decision-making process (Barrows, 1984). Extension educators are often called upon to provide educational programs on a specific policy issue. The preferred methodology, which has been used since the mid-50s is to apply the knowledge of the land-grant university to public issues that assists citizens to make better-informed policy decisions

(House, 1981). Successful public policy Extension educators do not serve in an advocacy role for any side of the issue (House, 1981).

Extension Funding

Funding of Extension can be thought of as a three legged stool. Without one leg, the organization cannot continue to serve its constituents. Extension is a publicly funded, non-formal educational organization that builds on a partnership with county-based government, the land-grant university and with the federal government, through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and its agency, Cooperative States Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES). The authorization of this tripartite relationship was formalized with the Morrill Act of 1862 and signed by President Lincoln to form the land-grant university system in each state to educate citizens in agriculture, home economics, mechanical arts, and other practical professions. The enabling legislation of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 formed what is known as Cooperative Extension (Rasmussen, 1989).

The federal partner provides educational program leadership and funding to the state partner, the state land-grant university. The federal level funding is provided through USDA-CSREES to the state land-grant university. The state legislature funds the state land-grant university. In Washington State, the land-grant university is Washington State University. This university hires faculty and staff, both county and campus-based, who teach practical skills to the state's citizenry.

County government is the third partner in funding Extension. In the State of Washington on the county level, Extension is a non-mandated service, funded at the

discretion of the governing county body. Funding is secured on an annual basis through a Memorandum of Agreement that is signed by the county's representatives, the county commission, and the University's representative, the Director of Extension (2006). County commissioners make decisions in funding levels of operational funds for the county-based Extension faculty. County government also provides office space, administrative support, program staff, and a portion of the faculty's salary.

Extension is charged with providing information and educational opportunities to all residents in the communities in which they live (Nelson & Schertz, 1996). The Congressional authorization that establishes Extension does not restrict programs to particular groups of people or geographic locations. As the demographics of the United States and the State of Washington have changed from primarily rural to an ever increasing urban setting, Extension has also evolved. Washington State University Extension, like other state's extension systems, now provides non-degree education specific to its urban and suburban clientele as well as the traditional rural base. Educational programming that addresses youth development (4-H), human nutrition (Food $ense), and urban horticulture has provided records of accomplishment with urban audiences (Fox, 2004).

Washington State University Extension is administrated as an independent institution with its Dean and Director, and locus of tenure for Extension faculty. While partnerships exist with several colleges at WSU, the College of Agriculture, Home Economics and Natural Resource Sciences has the longest and richest history with Extension. Extension was fully integrated into that college until the naming of the first

Dean of Extension in 2001 (Fox, 2003). At that time, WSU Extension became a separate college within the university. Washington State University has an educational presence in all 39 counties in the state. One hundred fifteen county Extension agents or Extension educators provide educational programs to citizens throughout the state, with program delivery in each county. The priorities of individual communities set the direction or emphasis of these educational programs.

Perceptions of Extension

In fulfilling its mission, Extension uses local leadership that is representative of program areas, agencies, organizations, local governing bodies, and state governing bodies in planning and implementing its educational programs. In order to maintain a cooperative relationship with these various groups and individuals, it is important to know and understand the relationship among perceptions that Washington State county commissioners' hold of WSU Extension, their knowledge or understanding of Extension and their willingness to fund Extension. This is particularly important with county commissioners in the State of Washington, since they provide a large percentage of support for the agency through direct funding and in-kind assistance.

Perception

We all hold perceptions of the world around us. It has been said that an individual's perception is his or her reality. That may very well be so. Many different individuals have defined perception in many ways, but the concept is similar in each definition.

Matlin (1983) likened perception to the way information is gathered and interpreted. Everything an individual knows about the world is based upon his or her perception. We are so accustomed to using our senses; to touch, taste, and smell, see, and hear, that we take perception for granted.

Virtually all philosophical and psychological systems use perception as a major and primary form of intelligence generation. To increase learning, the student must combine raw or new data with existing information that has been built up from past learning (Friedman, & Carterette, 1996).

Sherif and Sherif (1956) argue that perception is influenced by factors that are both internal and external. Internal factors are motives, emotions, attitudes, and effects of past experience. External factors are those stimulating situations outside the individual such as objects, events, other persons, and groups. Everyday life experiences are paramount in influencing the establishment of perceptions (Sherif & Sherif, 1956).

The definition of perception as stated by Hilgard is relevant and encompassing for this particular study because it references influences on perception as set by prior experiences. As stated in the definition of terms, this definition is used as the basis for this study. Hilgard (1957) stated, "while sensory content is always present in perception, what is perceived is influenced by set and prior experience so that perception is more than a passive registration of stimuli impinging on sense organs" (p. 51).

Clausen (1973) wrote that "the perceptions of constituency interests and views" is a factor affecting the policy decisions of legislators (p. 4). Clausen used the word perception in reference to constituency interest. This supports another condition of

decision making in which Clausen proposed that state level decision-makers harbor their own judgments and values which can affect what they perceive. This lends significance to this study of the decision-maker on the county level. Questions surround the relationship among the perceptions of 2006 Washington State county commissioners' hold of WSU Extension their knowledge or understanding of Extension and their willingness to fund Extension.

Studies of Perception of Extension

Some studies have explored perceptions of the public and governing bodies regarding Extension. The most encompassing is a pair of corresponding studies of the general public study by Warner and Christenson that was undertaken in 1982 (Warner & Christenson, 1984) and reexamined by Warner, Christenson, Dillman and Salant in 1995 (Warner et al., 1996).

The 1995 study examined the perception of the public for the land grant university system and asked specific questions regarding Cooperative Extension. One of the study's objectives was to look specifically at awareness of and contact with Cooperative Extension and the programs it delivers. The program areas examined in the study included agriculture; home economics or, as defined in this study, family living programs; community development; and 4-H youth development. After hearing a brief description of what Cooperative Extension does 85% of the 1,124 adults who responded to the survey indicated that they were familiar with Cooperative Extension, 26% had used Cooperative Extension services or the programs that it delivers sometime in the past, and 8% had done so in the past year (Warner et al., 1996).

Warner, Christenson, Dillman and Salant also found that the public believed that additional funding should be spent to meet critical needs of society. Warner et al., (1996) further stated that there were significant priorities for funding different aspects of Cooperative Extension programs by specific demographic group.

Decision-making in Government

The writings of Graham T. Allison are generally considered "the most fundamental texts in American political science." Allison's third model, the Governmental Politics Model, is recognized as a standard in the rationalization of decision-making by public organizations. The decisions in government are more likely made through a collaborative process rather than by one rational person and takes into account the bargaining for self-interest that goes on between individuals or parties when decisions are made (Denhardt et al., 2002). The Government Politics Model is able to accommodate more than one decision-maker and takes into account that decision-makers consider multilevel and complex issues. The governmental model recognizes that all players in the decision-making process are influenced by their own perceptions.

An example of the Governmental Politics Model decision making process is employed by Weaver when explaining the process used by Montana in its Local Government Review: 1994-1996 (Weaver, 2001). Weaver showed that one of the most important findings from the survey of study commissioners concerned their perceptions of needed change. This study and numerous other studies recognize that perception is a deciding factor in making decisions with levels of government.

Funding Partner Perception

Most of the relevant studies regarding the perception of decision-makers toward Cooperative Extension centered on state legislatures. Miller found in 1988 that the South Carolina legislators' perception toward Cooperative Extension was associated with: a) knowledge of purpose and objectives of Extension, b) participation, and involvement in programs and activities, c) knowledge of basic program areas, and d) clientele usage of Cooperative Extension. Miller (1988) attempted to correlate this perception with seven selected factors: a) role in the legislature, b) years of legislative experience, c) political party affiliation, d) place of residence, e) character of district, f) age, and g) occupation. State decision-makers perceived Cooperative Extension in South Carolina as a rural and agriculturally oriented organization. Each of the selected factors was associated significantly with at least one or more area of perception. Miller (1988) found that place of residence and demographic characteristics of the legislator's district wielded the greatest influence on how the decision-maker perceived Cooperative Extension (Miller, 1988).

Adkins (1980) found that one-fourth of the Maryland General Assembly had no idea what Cooperative Extension was or what segment of society could benefit from Cooperative Extension programs (Adkins, 1980). The state level decision-makers from rural districts had a better understanding of the relevance Extension programs, which Adkins attributed to their use of the educational services provided by Cooperative Extension.

Hodson (1998) explored perceptions of Louisiana legislators toward Cooperative Extension and how those perceptions were influenced by the contacts that the decision-maker had with the organization. Participants in Cooperative Extension programs had greater levels of perception of significance of programs in which they had direct knowledge (Hodson, 1998).

Few studies have been published regarding the local funding partner for Extension programming, the County Commission. In the 1981 study of the perception of County Commissioners in Idaho, Shane found that the commissioners believed the role of Cooperative Extension was to "help people solve problems" (Shane, 1981, p. 48). Shane was also able to show that County Commissioners of Idaho in 1981 perceived that Cooperative Extension was adequately funded, even as those funds were being reduced significantly.

White and Brockett (1987) held that while Minnesota County Commissioners have positive perceptions of Cooperative Extension, the agency must continue to build its image with this constituent group (White & Brockett, 1987). White and Brockett also call for engaging County Commissioners in program, faculty and staff evaluations. The call to better market the impacts of Extension was a common thread through several studies (Hodson, 1998, White & Brockett, 1987, Adkins 1980).

One qualitative study found that within a group of county commissioners from six southwest Washington State, had favorable perceptions regarding WSU Extension if they were from rural counties and had agricultural ties (Stienbarger, 2006). Stienbarger further states that commissioners' responses are associated with the two primary program areas

that are promoted historically. These program areas are agriculture and 4-H Youth Development. While discussing the relationship with Extension with Stienbarger, only one commissioner said the relationship with Extension was "good." Conversely, one commissioner would prefer to eliminate Extension.

Stienbarger (2006) found that in the limited counties queried, Extension was not seen as linking programs to critical county issues. Stienbarger further concludes that commissioners express little ownership in programming and do not invest time in the relationship with Extension. Stienbarger (2006) states that this dysfunctional relationship with commissioners, threatens Extension budgets as discretionary funding at the county level shrinks.

While Stienbarger's study raises questions regarding the future of Extension in Washington State, it is limited by the scope of the study. There is no comprehensive study of the relationship among perceptions that Washington State county commissioners' hold of WSU Extension, their knowledge or understanding of Extension and their willingness to fund Extension

Funding Issues

Funding for WSU Extension is secured from five major sources. The federal partner, USDA through its agency CSREES, provides 10% of the funding for WSU Extension. State government provides 31 %, Grants and Contracts provide 17% and fee for service provides 8% of the funding. The 39 counties in Washington provide 12% of the funding (Fox, 2006). Beyond the funds provided to WSU for Extension services,

county partners provide support staff, office space and operating funds (New Commissioner Handbook, Municipal Research & Services Center of Washington, 1998).

In a time of reduced or stagnant funding, it is critical to articulate the mission to the general public and decision makers on all three levels of government regarding the impacts of Extension educational programs (ECOP, 1995).

Funding of Extension on all three of the governmental levels is a concern. John Paluszek, Chief Information Officer of Kethcam Public Affairs in New York, was commissioned to study Cooperative Extension. His report stated, "Cooperative Extension is swimming against some very strong currents. Federal funds are being redirected and state and local funds are under unprecedented pressure. " According to Paluszek's report, Cooperative Extension has done well on performance, but needs to significantly increase an awareness of the programs, how those programs can be accessed by customers, and the benefits those programs provide to individuals and communities (Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences, 1995).

Federal funds have been at best stagnant or reducing. In a study of Extension Directors, Payne found that 96% of the directors of state land-grant Extension programs experienced a 21% reduction in federal formula funds from FY 1993 to FY 2003 (Payne, 2004). These reductions are often taken directly from personnel budget lines, which reduce program delivery mechanisms.

Since the turn of this century, state governments have also faced difficult funding decisions. According to Kalambokidis and Reschovsky, states experienced an aggregate general fund balance drop from a concerning 8% of general fund spending in fiscal year

2001 to a projected disturbing 3% in 2006 (Kalambokidis & Reschovsky, 2006). The authors further indicate that states have few options to face in budget reductions scenarios. These options include reduced funding for Medicare, K – 12 education and higher education. Funding on the state level for Extension is through the state land grant university system and faces the same funding reductions as the entire university system.

Particularly hard hit can be educational systems. In Washington State a series of budget cutting initiatives exacerbated the issues. Funding shortfalls have affected all aspects of state government, including higher education. An example of reduction in state funding in Washington State was a 3% reduction in funding from the 2003 – 2005 biennium budgets from the 2001 – 2003 biennium budget (Benson &Mcintire, 2003). The percentage cut was in actual funds, not including increase in student numbers, operational costs and a slight inflation factor.

Throughout the nation the local funding partner is finding it difficult to continue to fund the non-mandated Extension programs. As an example, in Oregon, Multnomah County has discontinued funding for the Multnomah County Office of the Oregon State University Extension Service. The office ceased operation on July 1, 2003 (Oregon State University Extension Service, 2003). Similar threats to county funding bases have been seen in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina (Richardson, 2005), and Okanogan County, Washington (Partridge, 2002). The review of the literature suggests that while there are several county Extension offices throughout the nation that have faced elimination through reduction of county based funding, there are no identifiable trends.

In discussing its legislative priorities for 2006, the Washington State Association of Counties Legislative Steering Committee has requested funding relief which may or may not assist in the continued funding of Extension (Fallquest, 2006). The priorities of this county government lobbying group include improving county financial health, reforming law and justice funding, limiting county civil liability, and enhancing transportation funding. Separately and collectively these priorities could alleviate concerns of funding county government in Washington State. Would concentrating on funding priorities action stem the tide of reduced funding for Extension on the county level? History shows that that may not be case. Shane noted in his study of County Commissioners in Idaho in 1981 that funding at that time was dwindling even with high support for Extension's mission (Shane, 1981).

County Level Funding Partner Financial Stress

Washington State counties are under considerable financial stress through the passage of three tax revolt initiatives in the past. The revenue and spending restrictions placed on Washington counties along with the funding increases in mandated programs such as criminal justice and public health care threaten the continued funding of non-mandated programs such as WSU Extension.

Without funding support from the county governmental partner, WSU Extension cannot continue to deliver non-formal educational programs to the citizens of each of the 39 counties of Washington State. Without funding from each county partner, extension program in that particular county cannot exist.

The loss of Extension is of concern to stakeholders because stakeholders understand the impacts the agency has made and societal issues the agency could address. These stakeholders include the clientele of the public education agency, its staff, faculty and members of the public. The concern is also felt by all community-based educational organizations, because not funding Extension sets the precedent for not funding other non-mandated community-based educational organizations that rely on public funding for their existence.

Local decision makers believe they may discontinue to partially or wholly funding nonformal educational programs. However, without the organizational structure of agencies such as Extension and its documented successes, the benefit or potential benefits to society may be lost and governments may be unable to rebuild an infrastructure that can bring non-formal education to the greater population. It is imperative to the agency that the relationship between local decision makers and the organization be understood. Furthermore, how that relationship affects funding is of paramount importance to all agencies with a public education mandate.

Washington State county commissioners were selected to query in this study because current and future programs of the WSU Extension are directly affected by the relationship between county commissioners' perceptions of Extension programs and their willingness to fund the programs. Since members of the individual county commissions are formal legitimizers for Extension and are usually perceived as key influentials' within their respective counties, it is important to Extension and its clientele that the commissioners understand Extension programs and activities. Commissioners are under

continuous pressure for funds to support mandated programs. Programs such as Extension often feel the brunt of being non-mandated in county government with budget pressures. Therefore, the importance of understanding the relationship of Extension and county commissioners is critical.

Summary

Extension is the outreach, service or community based education agency of the land grant university. The agency is primarily funded on three levels: the federal, State and local or county level. The federal funding is provided through the United State Department of Agriculture and its agency, CSREES. Each state funds the state land grant university, which has Extension as one of its tripartite mission of service, education, and outreach. The local or county funding partner is county government with the county commission or county council being the key decision makers in providing this funding.

The impacts on society by Extension are well documented. These impacts are noted in rural, urban, historical and contemporary societies throughout the nation and in Washington State.

All levels of government have been experiencing budget deficits. In Washington State this has affected and can still affect local funding of Extension as the agency is a non mandated service on the county level. Without county funding, Extension cannot continue to fulfill its mission of providing practical and useful information to the public. This is true for any of Extension's three primary funding sources.

Several studies have explored the issue of how state level decision makers form their perception of Extension. Some of these studies have shown that individual state

legislator perceptions of Extension are directly linked to their participation in the non-formal educational programs taught by Extension faculty and staff (Adkins, 1980; Hodson, 1998; & Miller, 1988). Studies have called for Extension to promote their impacts to state decision makers and county commissioners to insure their financial support (Miller, 1988; White & Brockett, 1987).

While Shane (1981) found that Idaho county commission members support Extension's mission, there continued to be concern regarding the funding of the agency. There are few studies published of county commission members and only one part of Washington State, regarding the county commission or council members, and factors that affect their perception of Extension.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The literature has shown that the perceptions held by decision makers of the public education institution, Extension, often impact directly the propensity to fund the organization (Shane, 1981). Furthermore, these perceptions have been shown there was a relationship between the knowledge of and use of Extension's educational programs by the decision maker (Adkins, 1980; Miller, 1988). These studies have centered on the state level legislative decision maker. Few studies have examined the relationship between Extension and the local decision maker, the county commissioner.

This study explored the relationship between perceptions that the Washington State county commissioners' hold of WSU Extension and their knowledge of WSU Extension. In addition, the study determined whether commissioners' perceptions, knowledge, and understanding of Extension are related to their willingness to provide the essential local funding to continue the educational programs Extension delivers. This last factor directly affects the critical element of maximizing Extension's impact on society.

The research question was supported through the literature review and is important to the agency, the stakeholders and society. The question was: What is the relationship among the perceptions held by Washington State county commissioners of WSU Extension with their knowledge or understanding of Extension, and their willingness or inclination to fund Extension?

Research Design

The hypothesis of this study was of importance to WSU Extension and all non-mandated community based educational organizations. This proposed study centers on the relationship among perceptions of WSU Extension held by Washington State county commissioners', their knowledge or understanding of Extension, and their willingness to fund Extension.

This descriptive correlational study investigated components that may influence the perception that Washington county commissioners' hold of Washington State University Extension, the relationship between these perceptions, the commissioners' knowledge base of Extension, and their willingness to fund Extension at the local level.

The design of this study targeted the testing of relationships among several predetermined variables. The research model illustrates the multiple variables that were examined. The variables are without inference of dependency. One may also consider the variables to represent criterion and/or predictor variables. The Experimental design of this study is exhibited by the investigation of relationships among several predetermined variables. This relationship exhibited as Figure 1.1.

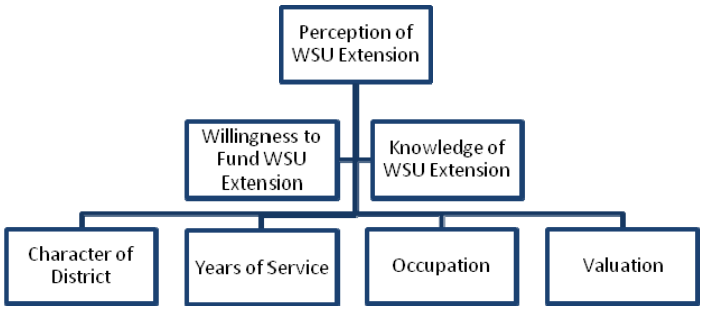


Figure 1.1: Experimental design.

Population

This study questioned County Commissioners of all 39 counties of the State of Washington. In the State of Washington, 36 of the counties have three County Commissioners. Three of the counties have elected to use a council form of county government; King County has 13 members; Pierce County has seven; and Snohomish County has five members making up its county council. The entire population of 133 county commissioners was utilized in this research.

Instrumentation and Materials

Data collection was conducted by a census. The census was delivered via electronic technology. In utilizing an electronic census approach to query the subjects, all members of the population can participate in a convenient format. This economy of time and convenience allows for an efficient means of determining the perceptions held by the Washington State county commissioners and council members of WSU Extension. Dillman (2000) states that electronic methods of inquiry allows for minimal inconvenience for the population studied, as well as rapid responses which accelerate the synopsis of results for potential decision making by the WSU Extension leadership.

The census was delivered through a commercial survey site on the World Wide Web. Commissioners were sent an e-mail message with a link to the WWW address to access the census. The web-based census was designed to include a wide variety of response options, which include check boxes and respondent generated answer completion responses. Upon completing the census the web site automatically notified

the respondent of completion. Each County Commissioner has office access to the necessary technology to participate. An accessible bank of email addresses are utilized by the Washington State Association of County Officials. For any reason that a county commissioner cannot access the census via the World Wide Web, a hard copy of the census was provided with a stamped pre-addressed envelope to submit the completed census.

The census was designed to examine specific knowledge of and perceptions of the effectiveness of WSU Extension programming. The census instrument, which was designed for this study, also investigated the perception of value of WSU Extension to Washington county commissioners and county council members, their knowledge of Extension and their propensity to fund the county portion of Extension.

The census used a series of questions that are described as completion, three point scaled, blank completion and demographic for the Washington county commissioners and county council members. The primary analysis of this study was to examine the relationship among two or more relevant variables.

The general population of the county elects these county commissioners or council members to represent individual geographic districts within each county. The county commissioners have broad discretionary power to set budgets within their individual county system.

The instrument's face and content validity was assessed through review processes by committee members Dr. Shawn Clouse of U of M School of Business Administration and Dr. Kelsey Gray, WSU Extension Organizational Development Specialist.

Additionally, WSU Extension administrators Drs. Linda Kirk Fox and Edward Adams reviewed the instrument for content validity. Furthermore, content validity was assessed through a pilot in which, five current and past county commissioners from Montana, Idaho, and Washington were asked to answer the questions and provide. Appropriate changes were made to the census instrument in response to their suggestions.

Sub Question One

What are the demographic characteristics of the 2006 Washington county commissioners and county council members?

Sub Question Two

What is the knowledge level that Washington State county commissioners/county council members have of WSU Extension's educational program areas and methods of educational program delivery?

Sub Question Three

What are perceptions that Washington State county commissioners/county council members hold of WSU Extension?

Sub Question Four

How willing are Washington State county commissioners to continue funding WSU Extension?

Sub Question Five

What is the relationship between the willingness to fund WSU Extension and perceptions that Washington State county commissioners hold of WSU Extension?

Sub Question Six

Is there a relationship among county commissioners' knowledge of WSU Extension and the perception that the county commissioners hold of WSU Extension?

Sub Question Seven

What is the relationship among the county commissioners' knowledge of WSU Extension and the willingness to fund WSU Extension?

Sub Question Eight

What is the relationship among selected demographic characteristics of Washington State county commissioners, their perception and knowledge of WSU Extension the willingness to fund WSU Extension?

Methods of Data Collection

The data collection was conducted by a census, as all members of the population were utilized in this research. House (2001) defines a census to be a complete enumeration of a population or group at a point in time with respect to well-defined characteristics. House indicates in the same article that a census consists of tallying up numbers from a complete enumeration and publishing that information in a variety of cross tabulations that add to the total.

In contrast, a survey as defined by Creswell (1994) as a numeric description of some fraction of the population – the sample – through the data collection process of asking questions. Creswell further states that this data collection, in turn enables a researcher to generalize the findings from a sample of responses to a population.

According to Goodwin and Woodfield (2006), census data are used as a reliable surrogate for extrapolating survey data.

There was no standardized instrument available for this study; therefore, it was necessary to construct a census instrument to adequately secure the required information. The census instrument contains sections, which include demographic information, the Commissioners' knowledge of and perception of WSU Extension, and their willingness to fund Extension.

The census was distributed via the World Wide Web. In following Solomon's (2001) recommendation for procedures for increasing participation in web-based census, the following procedures were used in collecting data:

1. The Dean of Extension sent a personalized e-mail letter to the subjects regarding the census. Included in the letter are steps used to insure anonymity of participants. The web based software for delivery and compilation of the census material was designed to provide filtered information to the researcher. The filtered information included only the responses to the research questions. No one was allowed access to the identity of respondents by the independent web base manager, thus anonymity was ensured. (Appendix C)
2. Reminders by e-mail were sent to each individual who has not participated within two weeks after receiving the email (Creswell, 1994). These reminders were generated by the web based census site to insure that the

participants remain anonymous. Completion of census notices were generated through the same web based census design program.

Variables and Level of Data

The variables included the willingness to fund Extension by the Washington State county commissioners and the knowledge of Extension by the Washington State county commissioners. The variables were categorized through a series of questions designed to indicate a degree of perception, knowledge and willingness to fund. The information was categorized as interval level data. In addition selected demographic information was secured.

Perception of WSU Extension

The degree of perception held by Washington State county commissioners of WSU Extension by was determined by their responses to a series of questions. The questions were scored. There was a potential of 23 points maximum for questions in this section.

Knowledge of WSU Extension

The degree of knowledge held by Washington State county commissioners of WSU Extension by were determined by their responses to a series of questions. The questions were scored. There was a potential of 18 points maximum for questions in this section.

Willingness to Fund

The degree of willingness to fund WSU Extension as held by Washington State county commissioners was determined by their responses to a series of questions. The

questions were scored. There was a potential of 23 points maximum for questions in this section.

Null Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was stated as: There will be no experimentally important or consistent correlation of Washington State county commissioners' perception of WSU Extension, knowledge thereof and willingness to fund Extension. Experimental importance was established at a Pearson's *r* of .5 and experimental consistency was set at an alpha level of .05.

A Priori

Use of a census allows an opportunity for participation by all members of the population. The assumption of normality was determined by a sufficient number of responses from the census.

Treatment of the Data

As a study of relationships, the procedure to be utilized in this study relied on the use of correlation analysis to define the relationships among the perception held by county commissioners of WSU Extension, the county commissioners' knowledge of WSU Extension and their willingness to fund extension. Statistical analyses were performed using statistical software. Specific procedures include utilizing the Pearson *r* to examine the correlation among variables, Multiple Regression, if appropriate for predictive purposes, and other analyses may be conducted as appropriate.

Limitations

The study was limited to examine the relationship between WSU Extension and County Commissioners in the State of Washington. Extension Services are not uniformly distributed across all counties due to demographic and geographic differences.

The study was also limited to the current paradigm of a local funder of Extension. Paradigm shifts in policy or funding could change how and where Extension programs are delivered throughout Washington State.

Delimitations

The proposed study is delimited to only 2006 Washington State county commissioners. The research is not generalizable to county commissioners who served in other terms of office.

Assumptions

The major assumption for this study is that the individual commissioner uses broad discretion in financially supporting Extension in Washington. Also assumed is that county commissioners base that support on their individual knowledge of WSU Extension, their individual use of WSU Extension educational program, interaction with their constituents and the relationship they have with the individual educational program areas.

County commissioners in the State of Washington are elected to represent the district from which they were elected. They also determine funding on the county level for Extension. As such, they provide an excellent resource in the attempt to determine the

perceptions regarding Extension and whether those perceptions drive county based funding for this non-mandated educational service.

Summary

Chapter Three exhibited the methodology that served as the impetus of this study. The data as collected by the census is presented in the proceeding chapter. Additionally, Chapter Four displays the analysis of the data.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between perceptions the Washington State county commissioners hold of WSU Extension and their knowledge of WSU Extension. In addition, the study examined whether commissioners' perceptions, knowledge, and understanding of WSU Extension are related to their willingness to provide the essential local funding to continue the educational programs Extension delivers. The willingness to fund Extension directly affects the critical element of maximizing Extension's impact on society.

Several procedures were used to secure the greatest response rate of the census. Email messages from the WSU Extension Dean and Director were sent to all Washington State county commissioners and their staffs through their official email addresses requesting they complete the questionnaire via the World Wide Web. The second request was sent two weeks later. Additionally, each WSU Extension county director was contacted via an email message encouraging them to contact the county commissioners in the county they represent requesting they complete the questionnaire. County Directors were again contacted by personal telephone call to insure that they had contacted their county commissioners regarding completion of the census. In some cases, the census was delayed until the county budget was signed with respect to the desire of the county director. County commissioners were personally contacted at their annual conference and

presented with a print copy of the email message, the census instrument and preaddressed, stamped envelope, with the request that they complete the census either online or the print. Copy and mail the census. Telephone calls were made to county commissioners' staff members to ask them to encourage the commissioners to complete the census. Follow up email messages were sent to staff members and county commissioners requesting that they complete the census. Additionally, telephone calls were made directly to county commissioners requesting the census be completed. There were 43 responses, representing each of the 39 counties in Washington State for a county representation response rate of 100%. The target population of the county commissioners was 133 individuals throughout all counties. The response rate from the county commissioners was 32%. This investigation sought to answer the following sub questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the 2006 Washington State county commissioners and county council members?
2. What is the knowledge level that Washington State county commissioners/county council members have of WSU Extension's educational program areas and methods of educational program delivery?
3. What are perceptions that Washington State county commissioners/county council members hold of WSU Extension?
4. How willing are Washington State county commissioners to continue funding WSU Extension?

5. What is the relationship between the willingness to fund WSU Extension and perceptions that Washington State county commissioners hold of WSU Extension?
6. Is there a relationship among county commissioners' knowledge of WSU Extension and the perception that county commissioners hold of WSU Extension?
7. What is the relationship among the county commissioners' knowledge of WSU Extension and the willingness to fund WSU Extension?
8. What is the relationship among selected demographic characteristics of Washington State county commissioners, their perception and knowledge of WSU Extension and the willingness to fund WSU Extension?

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using a variety of software applications. Analysis included Chi Square for goodness of fit and the resulting predictive value scores. Additionally, distribution frequencies of components were analyzed. Results were presented with frequencies of respondents by sub question, goodness of fit chi square responses and the resulting predictive value scores.

Results of the Study

Those who responded to the study were predominantly in their first years of service as a county commissioner. Most respondents were either from an agricultural or private business background and reported they represent either a rural or rural/suburban district. County commissioners often delegate the duty of completing surveys to their staffs. Of the census respondents 86% (36) were county commissioners. Six respondents

had the duty of completing the survey delegated to them. Of that number, 5% (2) were administrative assistants, 5% (2) were budget officers, 2% (1) was a county executive and 2% (1) was an administrative services director. One respondent choose not to answer this question.

Demographic Characteristics

The demographic information supplied by the 43 census respondents is summarized in this section and includes the range of years of experience, occupation of respondents prior to being elected as a county commissioner. The range of years of experience as a demographic characteristic of the 2006 Washington State county commissioners and county council members that participated in the study is found in Table 4.1. The range of experience for respondents was from one year to 35 years. The mean for years of experience for census respondents was seven years.

Table 4.1: *Range of Experience of County Commissioners*

Range of Experience	Frequency (n=43)	%
0 – 5	18	42%
6 – 11	15	35%
12 – 18	7	16%
19 (or over)	1	2%
No response	2	5%

County commissioners were asked to describe their career or chosen occupation prior to being elected. Census respondents indicated 26% of their occupation as being agriculturally based; private business was listed as the occupation for 23% of the responding county commissioners; 14% of the respondents selected “other” as their occupation. Those respondents who self identified as “other” included Department

Manager, Nurse, Project Manager, Consultant, and State Representative. Other occupations, indicated by the remaining 37% of the respondents included education, construction, military, and professional.

County commissioners were asked to describe the district they represent using one of the following descriptions: rural, rural/suburban, rural/urban, suburban, suburban/urban and urban. These designations as utilized in this study were assigned at the discretion of the respondent. Within Washington State, many counties have districts that represent urban, suburban and/or rural areas.

Figure 4.1 exhibits the description of represented districts as identified by county commissioners. Data is exhibited as a percentage of the total respondents (n = 43), frequency of responses is noted within the chart. The data from this share shows the self described demographic character of the district represented by the census respondents.

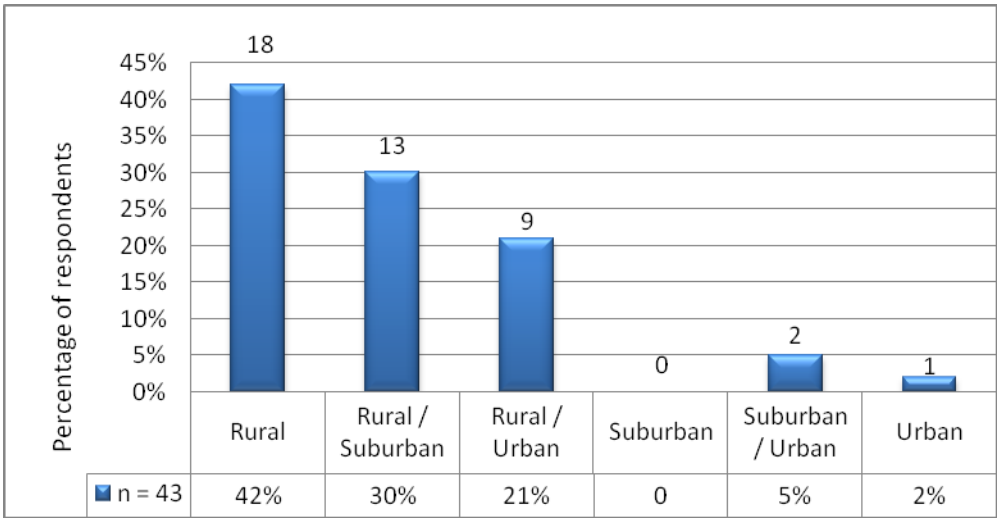


Figure 4.1: Description of district represented by census respondents.

Washington State county commissioners were asked to describe the relative economy of the district they represent. Figure 4.2 exhibits the description of the economy

of represented districts as identified by county commissioners. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), frequency of responses is noted within the chart.

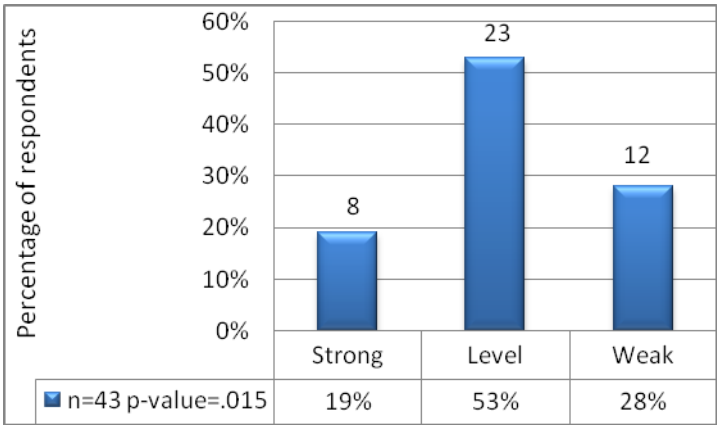


Figure 4.2: Description of economy of district represented by respondents.

County commissioners were asked to report the taxable valuation of their counties. The 34 respondents reported a range of taxable valuation from $286 million to $31 billion. The mean taxable valuation as reported by respondents was $6.2 billion.

Knowledge of WSU Extension

County commissioners reported their personal past experience by WSU Extension program area as an indicator of their knowledge of Extension. This information is presented as the number of participants that responded per program area and percentage of respondents by program area. Table 4.2 exhibits the personal past experience by Extension program area as an indicator of county commissioners' knowledge of Extension.

Table 4.2: *Personal Past Experience of County Commissioners by Program Area*

Program Area	Frequency	%	N
Agriculture/ Natural Resource	29	67%	43
Community Development	17	40%	43
Family Consumer Science	5	12%	43
4-H Youth Development	30	70%	43
Chi = 4.05, p-value = .00013			

County commissioners were asked to report how they had interacted with Extension as an indicator of their knowledge of Extension. Table 4.3 exhibits the method of interaction in which county commissioners had interacted with Extension. This data in this table shows the method of program delivery that Extension commonly utilizes and the interaction by census respondent for each of those delivery methods. This reported interaction serves as an indicator of the census respondents' knowledge of WSU Extension.

Table 4.3: *Method of Interaction by County Commissioners with WSU Extension*

Method of interaction	Frequency	%	N
Accessed website or listserve	8	19%	43
Attended workshop or meeting	31	70%	43
Read a brochure or newsletters	32	74%	43
Membership in Extension's educational organizations	10	23%	43
Personal consultation	27	63%	43

Chi = 8.9, p-value = .00005

County commissioners were asked to list, in their own words, program areas with which they were familiar. These responses were coded to identify the familiarity of Extension program by the respondents. The 43 respondents identified 86 Agriculture and Natural programs such as commercial agriculture, Master Gardeners, Small Farms Program, etc. Respondents identified 24 Community Development programs such as economic development, leadership skill training, etc. Census respondents identified 26 respondents identified Family Consumer Sciences such as Food $ense or parenting programs and 11 identified 4-H Youth Development programs such as 4-H Clubs, and after-school programs.

County commissioners were asked to identify, in their own words, the program delivery methods in which they were familiar. Responses were categorized into one of five different Extension methods. One-on-one consultation was identified by 22 respondents. Workshops and classes were identified by 39 respondents. Print media such as newsletters and brochures was identified by 20 respondents. Electronic media such as a listserve and World Wide Web was identified by 16 respondents. Clubs/Organizations were identified by 17 respondents. Examples of this category include 4-H Clubs and Master Gardeners.

Perceptions of WSU Extension

As a indicator of the perceptions that Washington State county commissioners or county council members hold of WSU Extension respondents were asked to identify whether WSU Extension provided a good value for the county expenditure. Of those county commissioners responding to the census, 93% (forty) indicated WSU Extension provided a good value, while 7% (3) indicated they had no opinion regarding the value of WSU Extension. No respondent indicated that WSU Extension was not a good value for the county expenditure.

Washington State county commissioners identified the relative quality of the various WSU Extension program areas. Census respondents identified whether their perception of the program area was good, adequate, and poor or had they possessed insufficient knowledge of the program area. The perception of relative quality of the various WSU Extension programs as held by census respondents is exhibited in Table 4.4. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents ($\underline{n} = 43$) and the frequency of

responses is noted within the table. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the table.

Table 4.4: *Perceived Quality of Extension Program Areas*

	Perceived quality of Extension programs as								
	good		adequate		poor		insufficient knowledge		
Program Area	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	n
Agriculture and Natural Resources Chi = 62.5, p-value = <00	35	81%	7	16%	1	2%	0	0	43
Community Dev. Chi = 3.6, p -value = .034	16	37%	13	30%	3	7%	11	26%	43
Family Consumer Sciences Chi = 3.6, p-value = .<00	16	37%	17	40%	0	0	10	23%	43
4-H Youth Dev. Chi = 57.6, p-value = .<00	34	79%	7	16%	0	0	2	5%	43

As an indicator of the perception that county commissioners hold of Extension, respondents were asked to identify whether WSU Extension is a cost effective expenditure for the county. Of the forty-three respondents, 84% (thirty-six) indicated that WSU Extension was cost effective; 16% (seven) indicated WSU Extension was cost neutral. No respondent indicated WSU Extension was not cost effective expenditure for the county.

Washington State county commissioners were asked to report their perception of the efficiency of the individual Extension program areas. Table 4.5 exhibits the perception that county commissioners hold of the efficiency of individual Extension program areas. One respondent chose not to answer the question in regards to efficiency of all the program areas. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the table.

Table 4.5: *Perceived Efficiency of Extension Program Areas*

	Perceived efficiency of program areas as									
	good		adequate		Poor		insufficient knowledge			
Program Area	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	n	Chi/p-value
Agriculture and Natural Resources	35	81%	7	16%	1	2%	0	0%	43	62.5/0.00
Community Dev.	11	26%	12	29%	3	7%	16	38%	42	1/0.037
Family Consumer Sciences	11	26%	18	43%	0	0	13	31%	42	.1/0.000
4-H Youth Dev.	31	74%	5	14%	1	4%	5	12%	42	44.1/0.000

County commissioners were asked to rate the level at which they believe WSU Extension is important and effective as an indicator of perception. Figure 4.3 exhibits the perception of importance and effectiveness that the census respondents hold of Extension. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), frequency of responses is noted within the chart.

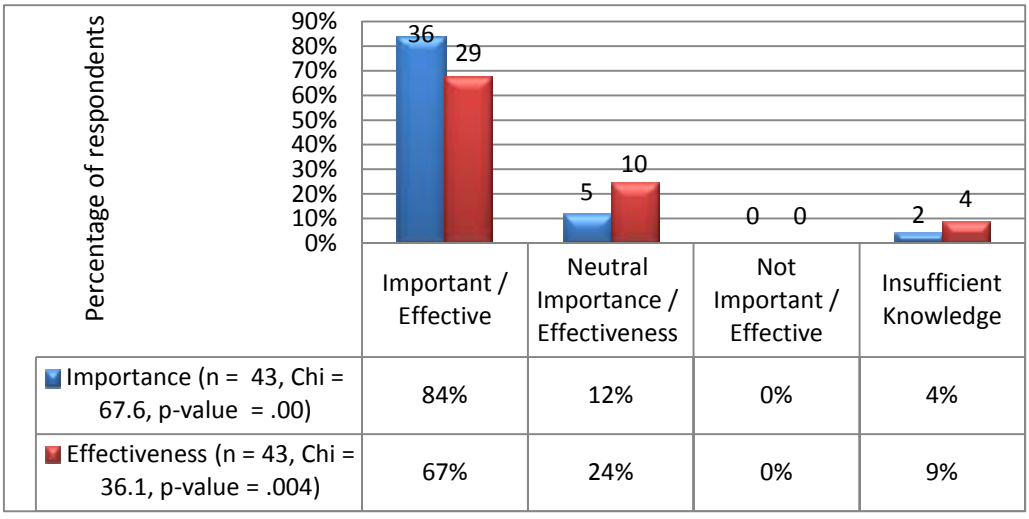


Figure 4.3: Perception of importance and effectiveness of WSU Extension by respondents.

Washington State county commissioners were asked to identify the level of benefit for WSU Extension delivery methods for their constituents. Table 4.6 displays the perception held by county commissioners of the benefit of program delivery methods. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the table. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the table.

Table 4.6: *Perception of Benefit of Delivery Methods*

	Perceived benefit of delivery methods as									
	beneficial		**neutral**		**not beneficial**		**insufficient knowledge**			
Delivery Method	freq	%	freq	%	freq	%	freq	%	n	Chi/p-value
One-on-one Consultation	31	72%	5	12%	0	0	7	16%	43	44.1/.00
Workshops	40	93%	2	5%	0	0	1	2%	43	90/.00
Print media	27	64%	13	30%	1	2%	2	5%	43	28.9/00
Electronic media	20	47%	13	30%	2	5%	8	19%	43	10/.001
Clubs and organizations	37	86%	5	12%	0	0	1	2%	43	72.9/.00

Willingness to Fund WSU Extension

County commissioners identified programs that merited continued funding. The 43 census respondents named Agriculture and Natural Resources programs in 41 individual occurrences as a program that merited continued funding. 4-H Youth Development was named as a program that merited continued funding on 37 occasions. Community Development programs were identified on 15 occasions and Family Consumer Sciences were identified on 18 occasions. Family Consumer Sciences were

identified on two occasions as an example of a program that do not merit continued funding. No other area was identified as programs that do not merit funding.

To indicate the willingness of Washington State county commissioners to fund WSU Extension several questions were asked. County commissioners responded to a question regarding their willingness to fund Extension with adequate county resources to fund all county obligations. Figure 4.4 exhibits the willingness of census respondents to fund Extension with adequate resources. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

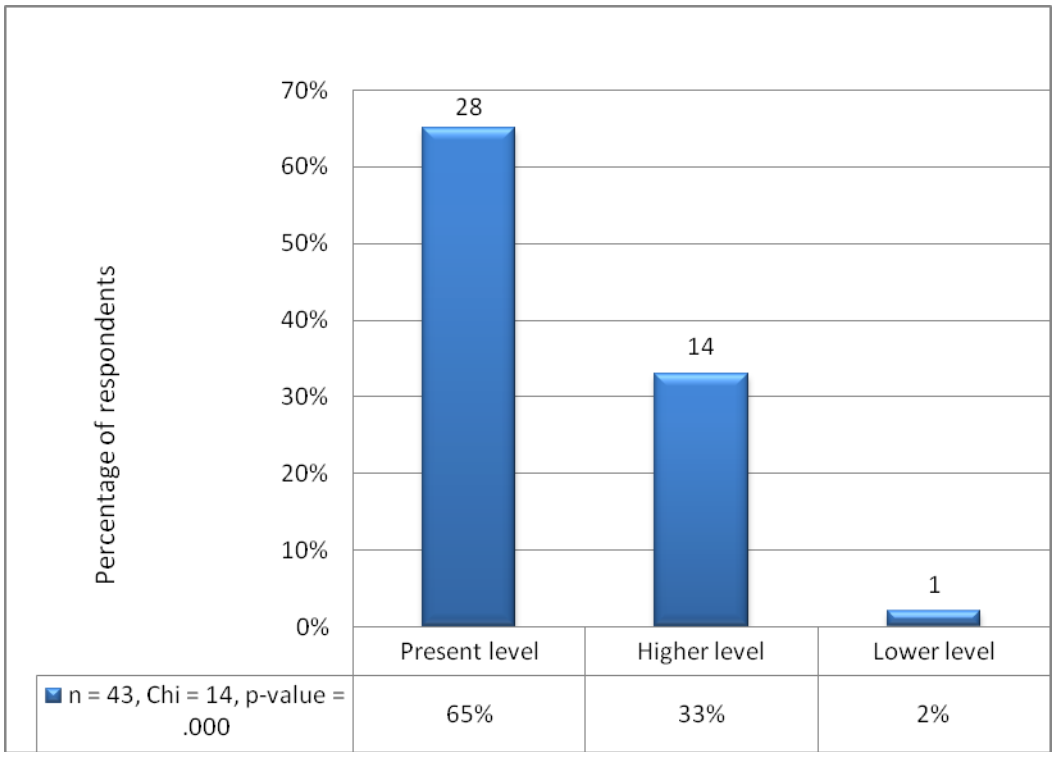


Figure 4.4: Willingness of county commissioners to fund WSU Extension with adequate resources.

County commissioners were asked their opinions regarding funding WSU Extension insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Figure 4.5 exhibits the willingness of census respondents to fund WSU Extension with insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43) and frequency of responses.

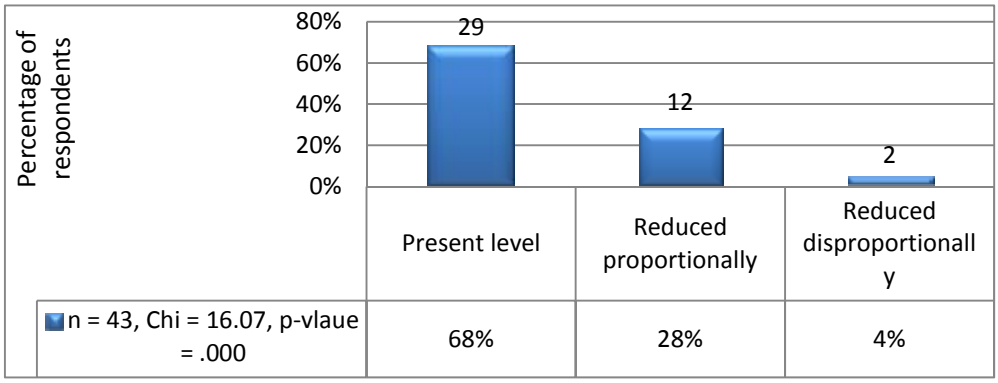


Figure 4.5: Willingness by respondents to fund WSU Extension with insufficient resources to fund all county obligations.

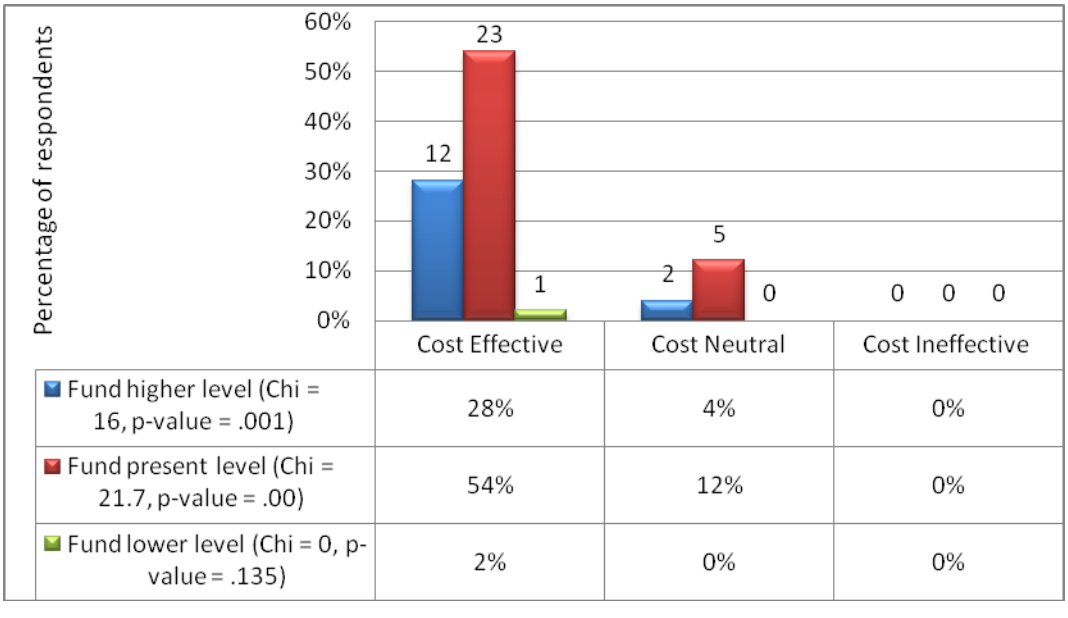
Under conditions of insufficient funding, in order to maintain quality WSU Extension programs, 84% (36) census respondents indicated they would help obtain outside revenue such as grants, 72% (31) respondents would lobby the State legislature for increased funding, 16% (seven) respondents indicated they were not willing to increase revenue. Of the respondents, 2% (1) indicated they would increase taxes and 7% (3) respondents indicated through indicating the "other" section and added the recommendation to "charge fees for service."

Census respondents identified the resource they rely upon for guidance in approval of WSU Extension funding. Personal knowledge of Extension program ranked

as the major source of guidance for 24% of the respondents. Participants of Extension programs ranked as the major source of guidance for 23% of the respondents, while 19% identified taxpayers as their major source of guidance. The remaining respondents (34%) relied on different positions of their professional staff for guidance.

Relationship between Willingness to Fund WSU Extension and County Commissioners Perceptions

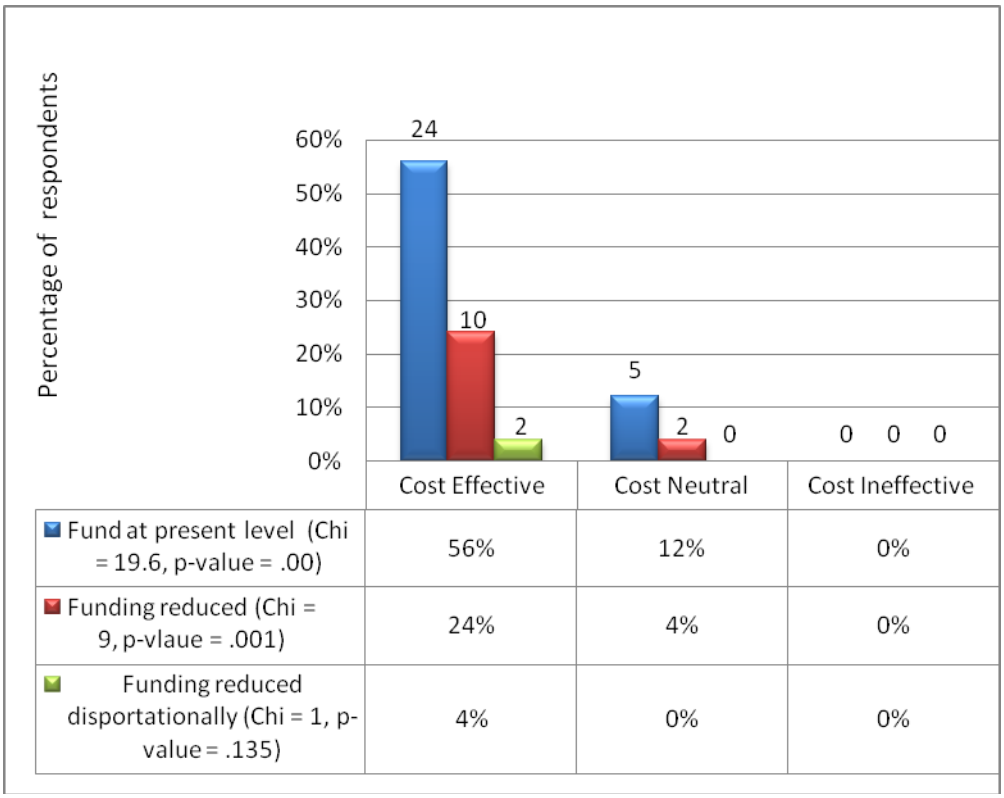
Comparisons were made regarding the perception of effectiveness held by Washington State county commissioners and their willingness to fund with both adequate resources in the county and insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Figure 4.6 exhibits the relationship between the perception of effectiveness of census respondents and their willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources to fund county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43).



	Cost Effective	Cost Neutral	Cost Ineffective
Fund higher level (Chi = 16, p-value = .001)	28%	4%	0%
Fund present level (Chi = 21.7, p-value = .00)	54%	12%	0%
Fund lower level (Chi = 0, p-value = .135)	2%	0%	0%

Figure 4.6: Comparison of perception of cost effectiveness of WSU Extension and willingness to fund WSU Extension by respondents with adequate resources to fund all county obligations.

Figure 4.7 exhibits the relationship between the perception of effectiveness held by census respondents and their willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources to fund county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.



	Cost Effective	Cost Neutral	Cost Ineffective
Fund at present level (Chi = 19.6, p-value = .00)	56%	12%	0%
Funding reduced (Chi = 9, p-vlaue = .001)	24%	4%	0%
Funding reduced disportationally (Chi = 1, p-value = .135)	4%	0%	0%

Figure 4.7: Comparison of perception of cost effectiveness of WSU Extension and willingness to fund WSU Extension with insufficient resources in the county to fund all obligations.

Comparisons were made regarding the perception of value as a county expenditure by Washington State county commissioners and their willingness to fund with both adequate resources in the county and insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Figure 4.8 exhibits the relationship between the perception of value held by

census respondents and their willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources to fund county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses, chi square goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is noted within the chart.

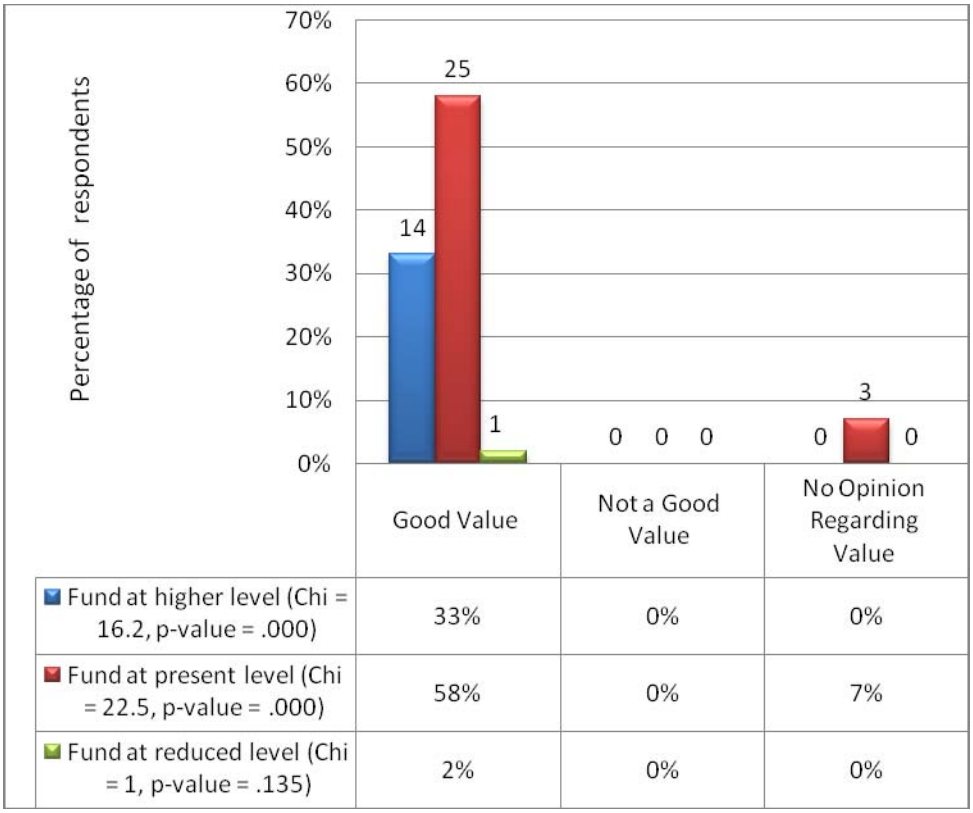


Figure 4.8: Comparison of perception of value of county expenditure and willingness to fund WSU Extension with adequate resources by respondents.

Figure 4.9 exhibits the relationship between the perception of value as a county expenditure held by census respondents and their willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources to fund county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43). Additionally, the frequency of responses, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

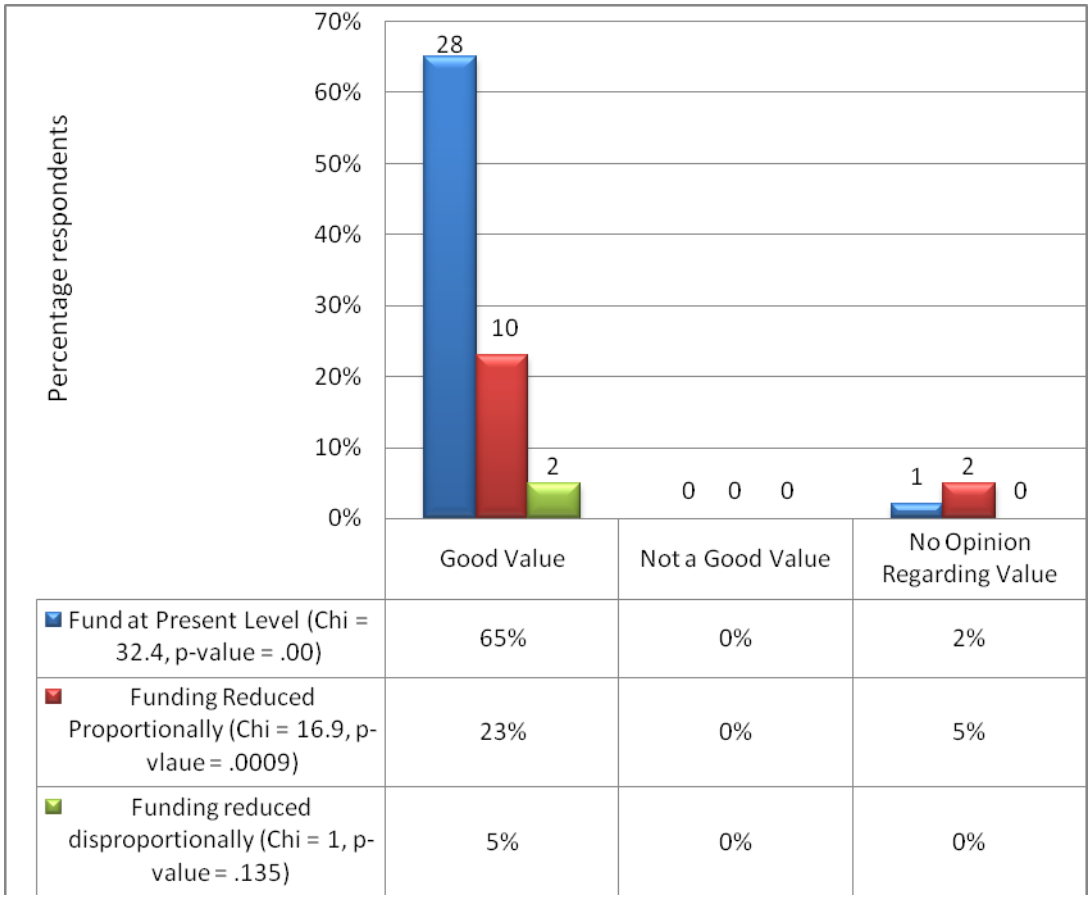


Figure 4.9: Comparison of perception of value of county expenditure by respondents and willingness to fund with insufficeint resources.

Comparisons were made between the perceived quality of the Extension program areas by Washington State county commissioners and their willingness to fund WSU Extension with adequate resources in the county. Table 4.7 exhibits the perceived quality of Extension programs by county commissioners and their willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources in the county to fund all county obligations. Census information is exhibited as number of respondents and percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the table.

Table 4.7: *Perceived Quality of Extension Programs and the Willingness to Fund Extension with Adequate Resources*

	Program Area							
Quality /willing to fund	**Agriculture / natural resources**		**Family consumer sciences**		**4-H youth development**		**Community development**	
Good	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%
higher	12	28%	6	14%	14	33%	7	17%
present	22	51%	10	23%	20	47%	9	21%
lower	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Chi/p-value	.09/.0001		.2/.008		.81/.000		.8/.015	
Adequate								
higher	2	5%	6	14%	0	0%	4	9%
present	5	12%	10	23%	6	14%	8	19%
lower	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%	1	2%
Chi/p-value	0/.066		.2/.027		2/.012		0/.05	
Poor								
higher	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%
present	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
lower	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Chi/p-value	1/.367		0/.000		0/.000		1/.367	
Insufficient knowledge								
higher	0	0%	2	5%	0	0%	1	2%
present	0	0%	8	19%	2	4%	10	23%
lower	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Chi/p-value	0/.000		.33/.005		1/.135		1.3/.0002	
n	43		43		43		43	

Comparisons between the perceived quality of the Extension program by census respondents' areas and their willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources to fund all county obligations were made. Table 4.8 exhibits the perceived quality of Extension programs by county commissioners and their willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources in the county to fund all county obligations. Data is presented as frequency of responses, chi square goodness of fit and the resulting predictive value.

Table 4.8: *Perceived Quality of Program Areas and Willingness to Fund with Insufficient Resources*

	Program Area							
Quality /willing to fund	**Agriculture / natural resources**		**Family consumer sciences**		**4-H youth development**		**Community development**	
Good	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%
present	24	56%	13	30%	24	55%	13	30%
proportionally	9	21%	2	5%	9	21%	3	7%
disproportionally	2	5%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%
Chi/p-value	12/.0		12.8/.00		12/.0001		12.8/.0002	
Adequate								
present	4	9%	11	25%	4	9%	10	23%
proportionally	3	7%	5	12%	2	5%	2	5%
disproportionally	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%	1	2%
Chi/p-value	2/.156		4.16/.011		2/.367		9/.004	
Poor								
present	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%
proportionally	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
disproportionally	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Chi/p-value	0/.367		0/.000		0/.000		1/.367	
Insufficient knowledge								
present	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	9%
proportionally	0	0%	5	12%	1	2%	6	15%
disproportionally	0	0%	5	12%	1	2%	1	2%
Chi/p-value	0/.000		3/.082		1/.606		33/.177	
n	43		43		43		43	

Comparisons were made between the perceived efficiency of the Extension program areas by county commissioners and their willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources in the county. Table 4.9 exhibits the perceived quality of Extension programs and the willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources in the county to fund all county obligations. Census information is exhibited as number of respondents and percentage of census respondents. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the table. One respondent choose not to answer this question.

Table 4.9: *Perceived Efficiency of Extension Program Areas and Willingness to Fund with Adequate Resources*

Program Area	**Agriculture / natural resources**		**Family consumer sciences**		**4-H youth development**		**Community development**	
Efficiency /willing to fund	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%
Good								
higher	10	24%	5	12%	12	29%	4	10%
present	17	40%	6	14%	19	45%	7	16%
lower	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Chi/p-value	.0003		.059		.0001		.034	
Adequate								
higher	2	5%	5	12%	0	0%	3	7%
present	8	19%	12	29%	5	12%	9	21%
lower	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Chi/p-value	.02		.005		.007		.005	
Poor								
higher	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%
present	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
lower	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%
Chi/p-value	.367		.000		.367		.367	
Insufficient knowledge								
higher	1	2%	3	5%	1	2%	4	10%
present	2	0%	10	2%	4	10%	12	29%
lower	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Chi/p-value	.367		.002		.074		.0009	
n	42		42		42		42	

Comparisons were made between the perceived efficiency of the Extension program areas and the willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources in the county to fund all expenditures. Table 4.10 exhibits the perceived efficiency of the Extension program areas and the willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources in the county to fund all county obligations. Census information is exhibited as number of respondents and percentage of census respondents. Additionally, goodness of

fit and predictive values of the data is included in the table. One respondent choose not to answer this question.

Table 4.10: *Perceived Efficiency of Extension Program Areas and Willingness to Fund with Insufficient Resources*

Program Area	**Agriculture / natural resources**		**Family consumer sciences**		**4-H youth development**		**Community development**	
Efficiency/willing to fund	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%	freq.	%
Good								
present	18	43%	9	21%	22	53%	10	24%
proportionally	8	19%	1	2%	8	19%	1	2%
disproportionally	1	2%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%
Chi/p-value	.003		.003		.0002		.0003	
Adequate								
present	7	17%	12	29%	4	10%	8	19%
proportionally	3	7%	5	12%	1	2%	4	10%
disproportionally	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%	0	2%
Chi/p-value	.078		.005		.074		.018	
Poor								
present	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
proportionally	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
disproportionally	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%
Chi/p-value	.367		.000		.367		1.00	
Insufficient knowledge								
present	2	5%	7	17%	2	5%	9	21%
proportionally	1	2%	6	14%	3	7%	6	14%
disproportionally	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%
Chi/p-value	.367		.036		.246		.046	
n	42		42		42		42	

Relationship between County Commissioners' Knowledge and Perception of WSU Extension

As an indicator of their knowledge, county commissioners were asked to report their personal past experience by WSU Extension program area. Figure 4.10 exhibits the past experience of county commissioners by Extension program area. The number of respondents to these questions and comparisons were 43 ($\underline{n} = 43$), the frequency of

responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

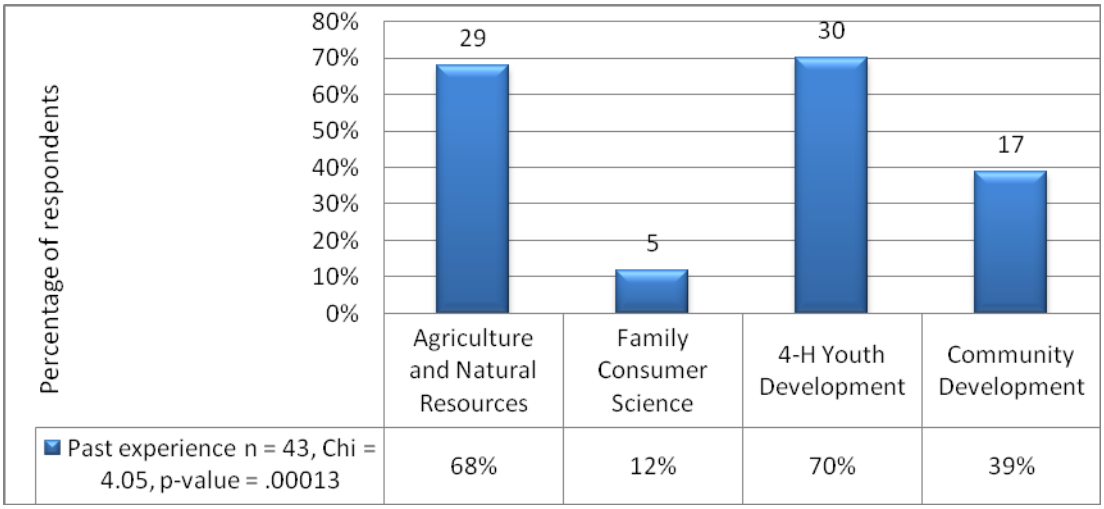


Figure 4.10: Personal past experience of respondents by WSU Extension program area.

To examine the perception that county commissioners hold of Extension, respondents were asked to identify whether WSU Extension provided a good value for the county expenditure. Figure 4.11 exhibits the perception of value held by the census respondents. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43).

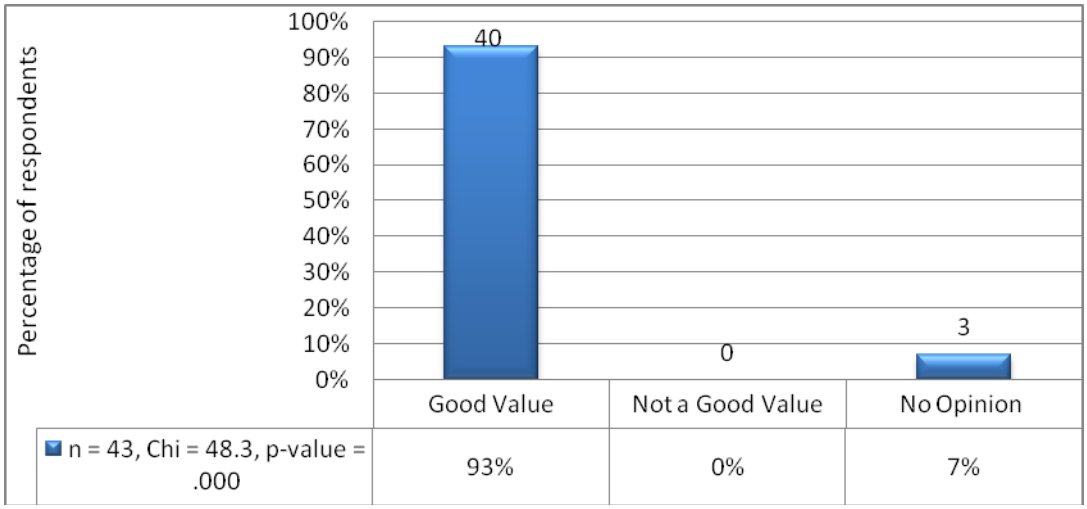
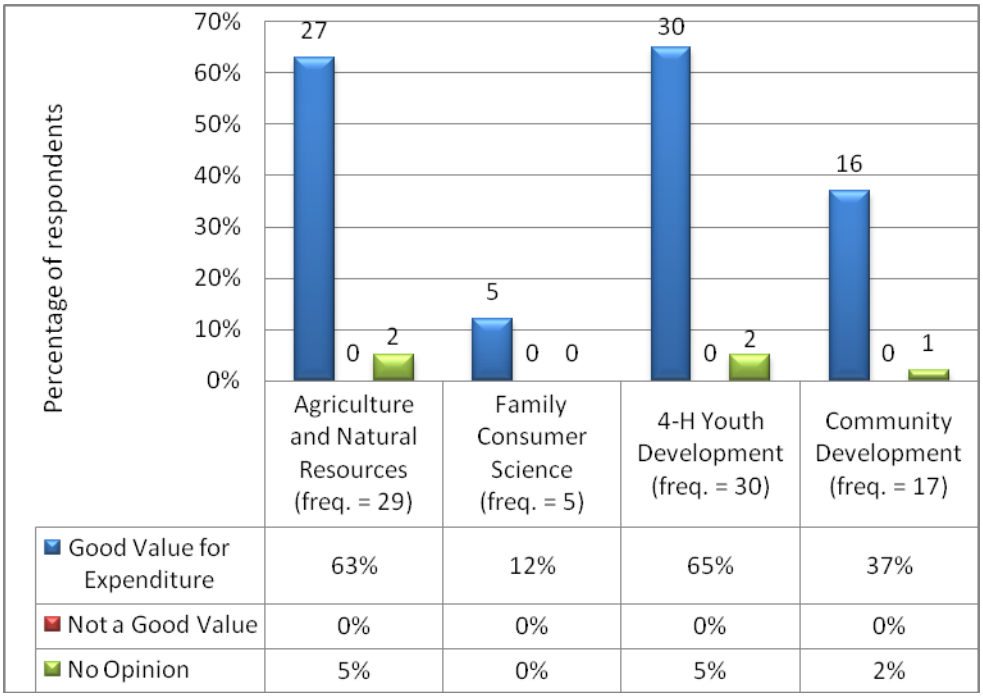


Figure 4.11: Perception of value of WSU Extension as a county expenditure by respondents.

Comparisons were made between the county commissioners personal past experience by WSU Extension program area and the corresponding perception of value of the expenditure for the county. Figure 4.12 exhibits the comparison between past experience by Extension program and perception of value of county expenditure by census respondents. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.



	Agriculture and Natural Resources (freq. = 29)	Family Consumer Science (freq. = 5)	4-H Youth Development (freq. = 30)	Community Development (freq. = 17)
Good Value for Expenditure	63%	12%	65%	37%
Not a Good Value	0%	0%	0%	0%
No Opinion	5%	0%	5%	2%

Figure 4.12: Comparisons between past experience of respondents by WSU Extension program area and perceived value of the county expenditure.

County commissioners were asked to identify whether WSU Extension is a cost effective expenditure for the county. Thirty-six of the respondents indicated that Extension was cost effective, while seven respondents indicated that Extension was cost

neutral. No respondent indicated that Extension was not cost effective. Figure 4.13 exhibits the perception of cost effectiveness by Washington State county commissioner census respondents. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart.

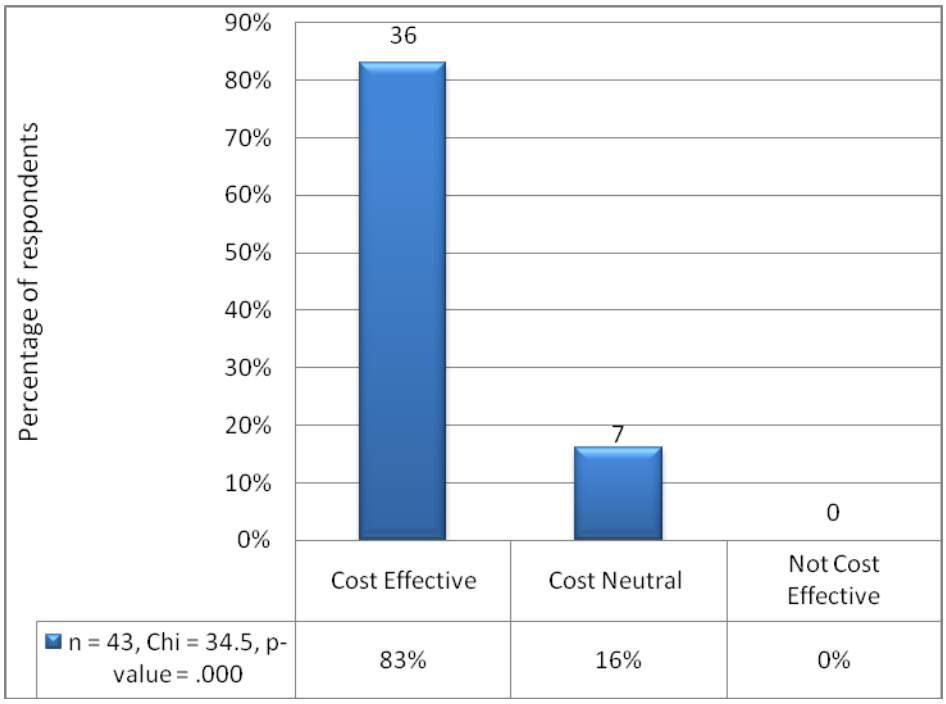
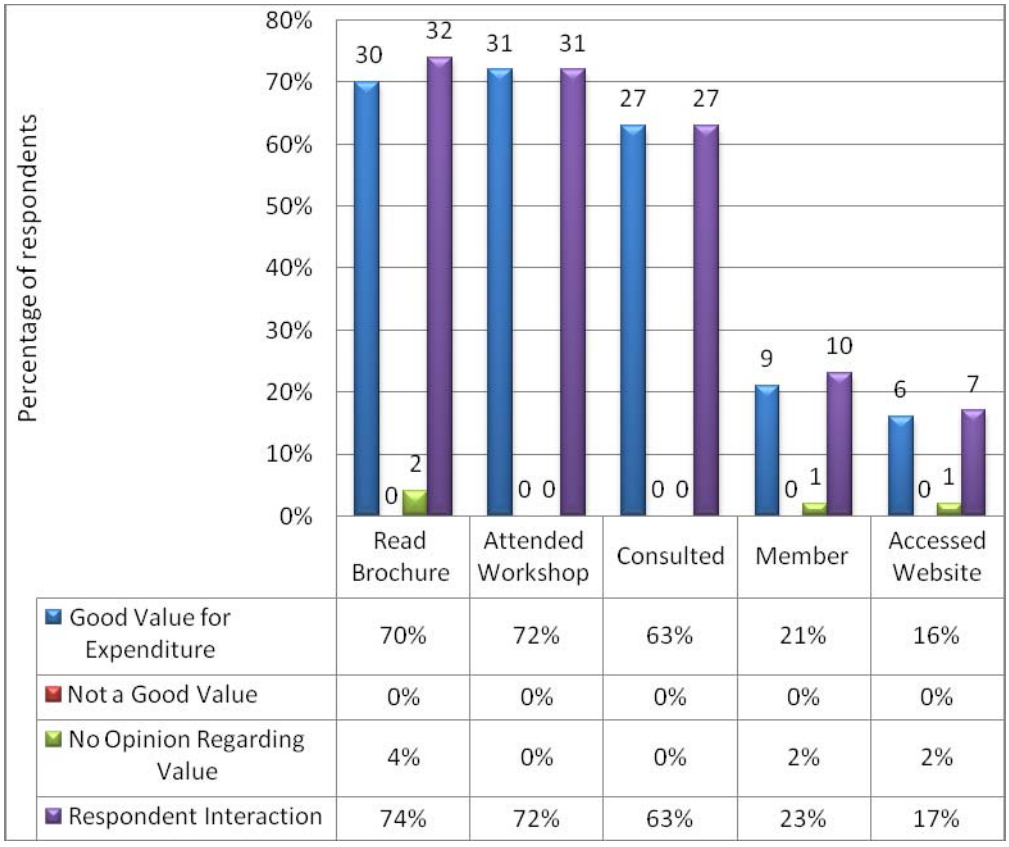


Figure 4.13: Perception of value of WSU Extension as a county expenditure by respondents.

Comparisons were made between how county commissioners have interacted with Extension through program delivery methods and the corresponding perception of value of the expenditure for the county. Census respondents responded to whether they had read a brochure or newsletter; attended a workshop or meeting; had a personal consultation with an Extension educator through a telephone call or private meeting; is a member or a family member is a member of an Extension educational organization such as 4-H; accessed an Extension website or listserve. Figure 4.14 compares respondent

interaction and their value of the county expenditure. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

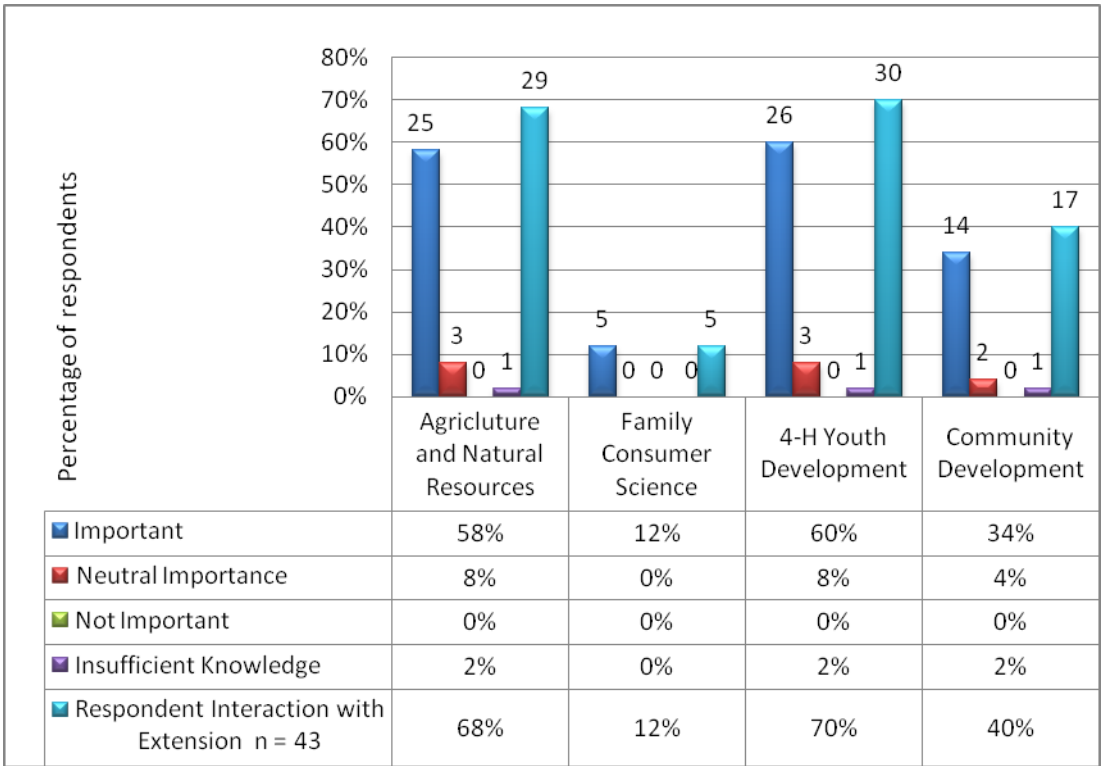


	Read Brochure	Attended Workshop	Consulted	Member	Accessed Website
Good Value for Expenditure	70%	72%	63%	21%	16%
Not a Good Value	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
No Opinion Regarding Value	4%	0%	0%	2%	2%
Respondent Interaction	74%	72%	63%	23%	17%

Figure 4.14: Comparisons of past experience of respondents by WSU Extension program method and the respondents' perception of value as a county expenditure.

In comparing the personal experience of Extension by the county commissioners and their perception of importance of Extension by program area the relationship between knowledge base of the county commissioners and their perception were explored. Figure 4.15 exhibits the relationship between personal past experience of census respondents and

the perception of importance of the program area. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally the chart includes goodness of fit and the responding predictive values.



	Agriculture and Natural Resources	Family Consumer Science	4-H Youth Development	Community Development
Important	58%	12%	60%	34%
Neutral Importance	8%	0%	8%	4%
Not Important	0%	0%	0%	0%
Insufficient Knowledge	2%	0%	2%	2%
Respondent Interaction with Extension n = 43	68%	12%	70%	40%

Figure 4.15: Comparisons between past experience of respondents by WSU Extension program area and perception of importance of WSU Extension.

Comparisons between the methods of interaction with Extension and the perception of the importance of Extension were made to show the relationship between knowledge base of the census respondents and their perception of Extension. Figure 4.16 exhibits the relationship between personal past experience of census respondents by Extension method and the perception of importance of the program area. Data is

exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses, goodness of fit and predicate values of the data is included in the chart.

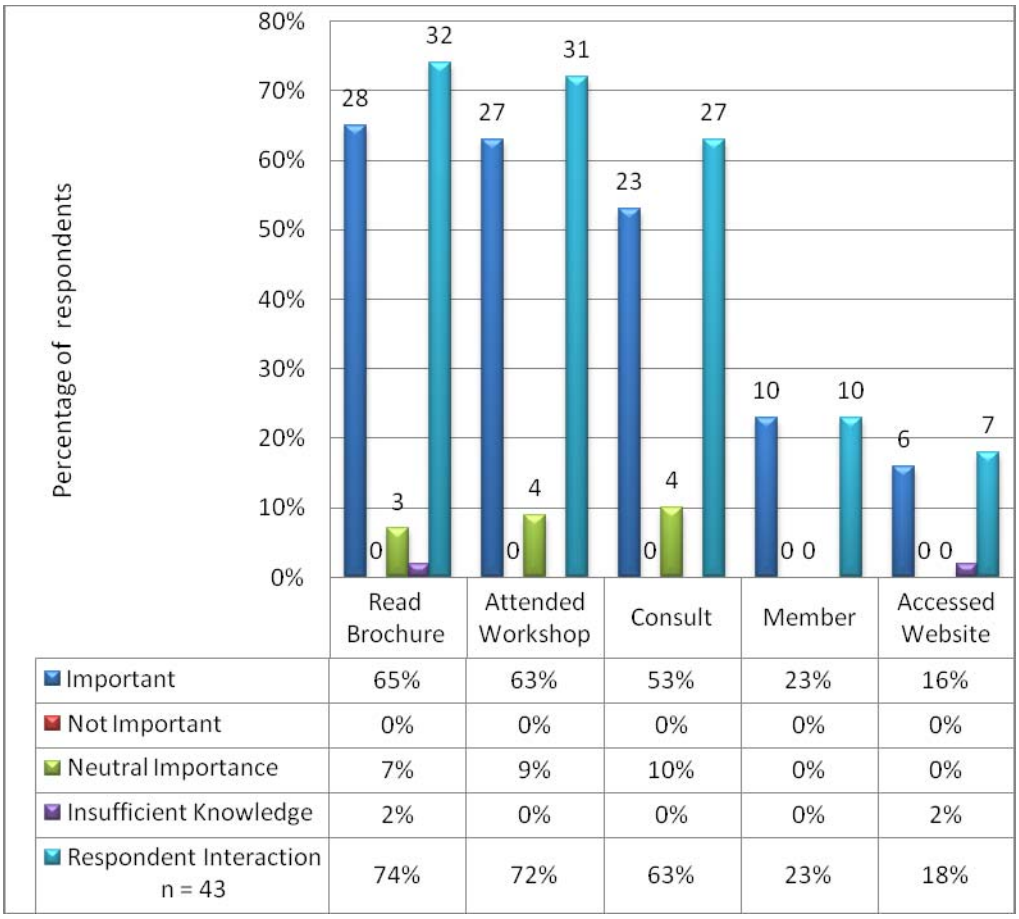
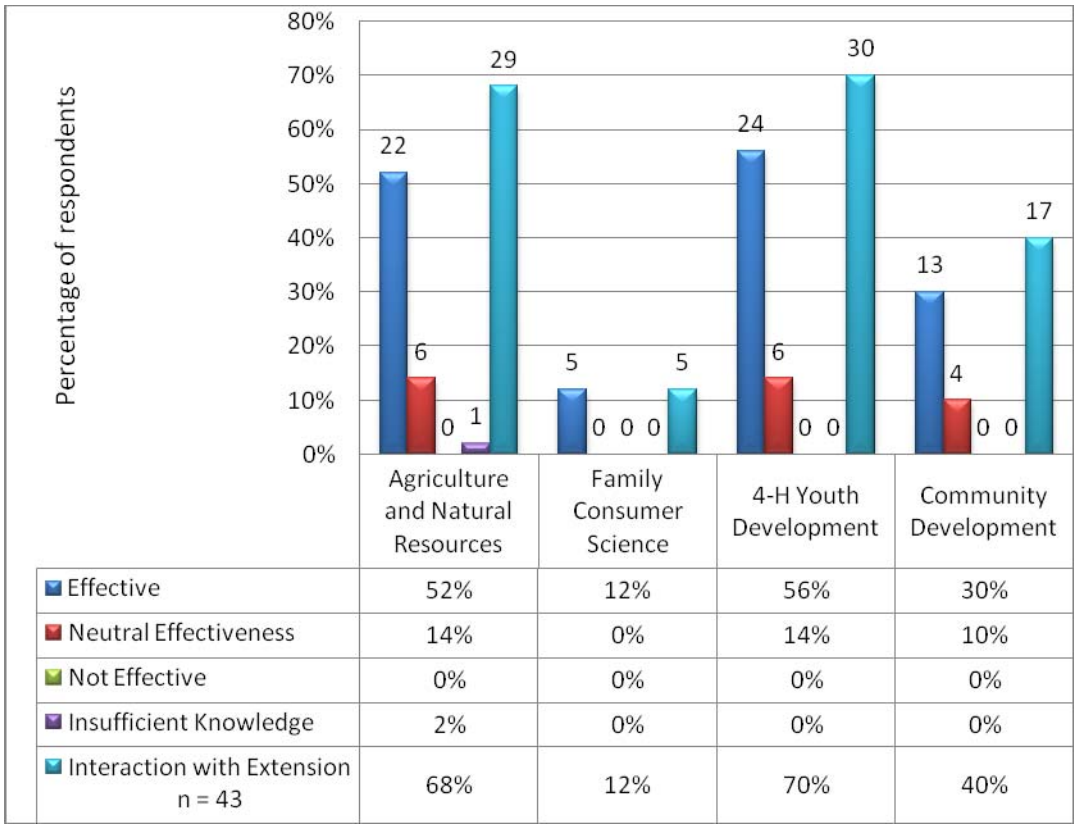


Figure 4.16: Comparisons between past experience of program method and respondents' perception of WSU Extension.

In comparing the personal experience of Extension by the county commissioners and their perception of effectiveness of Extension by program area, the relationship between knowledge base of the county commissioners and their perception were explored. Figure 4.17 exhibits the relationship between past experience by Extension program area and

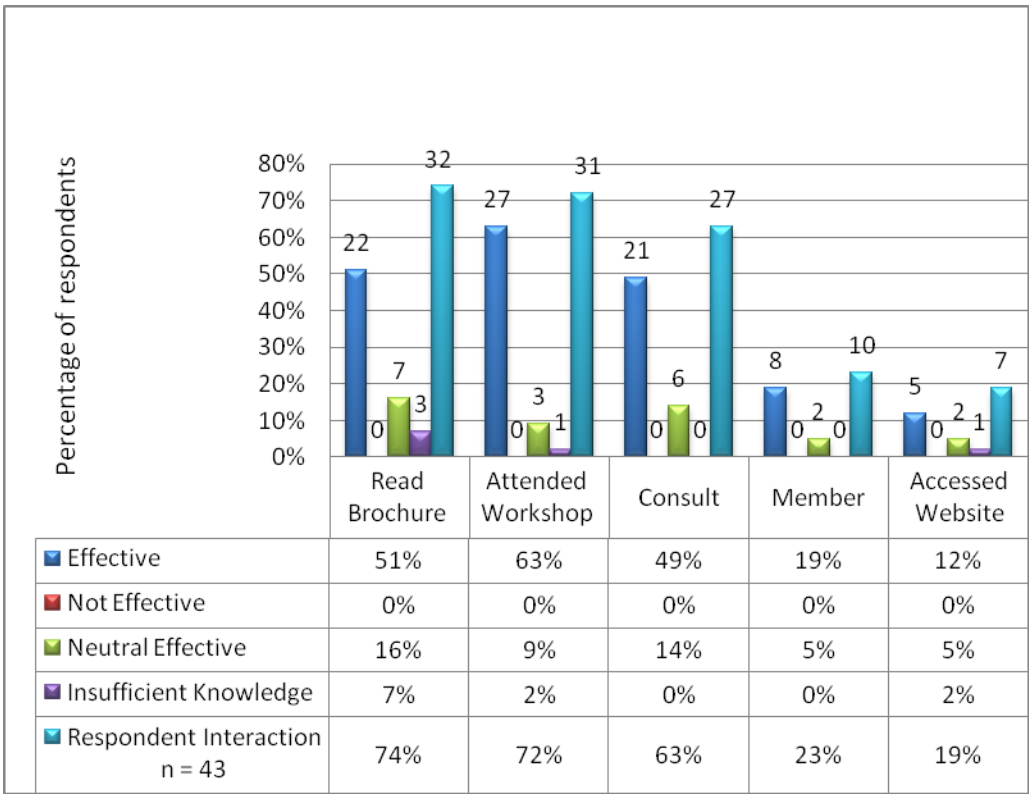
perception of effectiveness by program area. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart.



	Agriculture and Natural Resources	Family Consumer Science	4-H Youth Development	Community Development
Effective	52%	12%	56%	30%
Neutral Effectiveness	14%	0%	14%	10%
Not Effective	0%	0%	0%	0%
Insufficient Knowledge	2%	0%	0%	0%
Interaction with Extension n = 43	68%	12%	70%	40%

Figure 4.17: Comparison between respondents' past experience by WSU Extension program area and respondents' perception of effectiveness of WSU Extension.

Comparisons between the methods of interaction with Extension and the perception of the effectiveness of Extension were made to explore the relationship between knowledge base of the census respondents and their perception of Extension. Figure 4.18 exhibits the relationship between personal past experience of census respondents by Extension method and the perception of effectiveness of the program area. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart.



	Read Brochure	Attended Workshop	Consult	Member	Accessed Website
Effective	51%	63%	49%	19%	12%
Not Effective	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Neutral Effective	16%	9%	14%	5%	5%
Insufficient Knowledge	7%	2%	0%	0%	2%
Respondent Interaction n = 43	74%	72%	63%	23%	19%

Figure 2.18: Comparisons between respondents' past experience with WSU Extension by program method and perception of effectiveness of WSU Extension.

Comparisons were made of the personal experience of Extension by the county commissioners and their perception of cost effectiveness of Extension by program area. This comparison explored the relationship between knowledge base of the county commissioners and their perception of Extension. Figure 4.19 exhibits the relationship between personal past experience of census respondents by Extension method and the perception of effectiveness of the program area. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses.

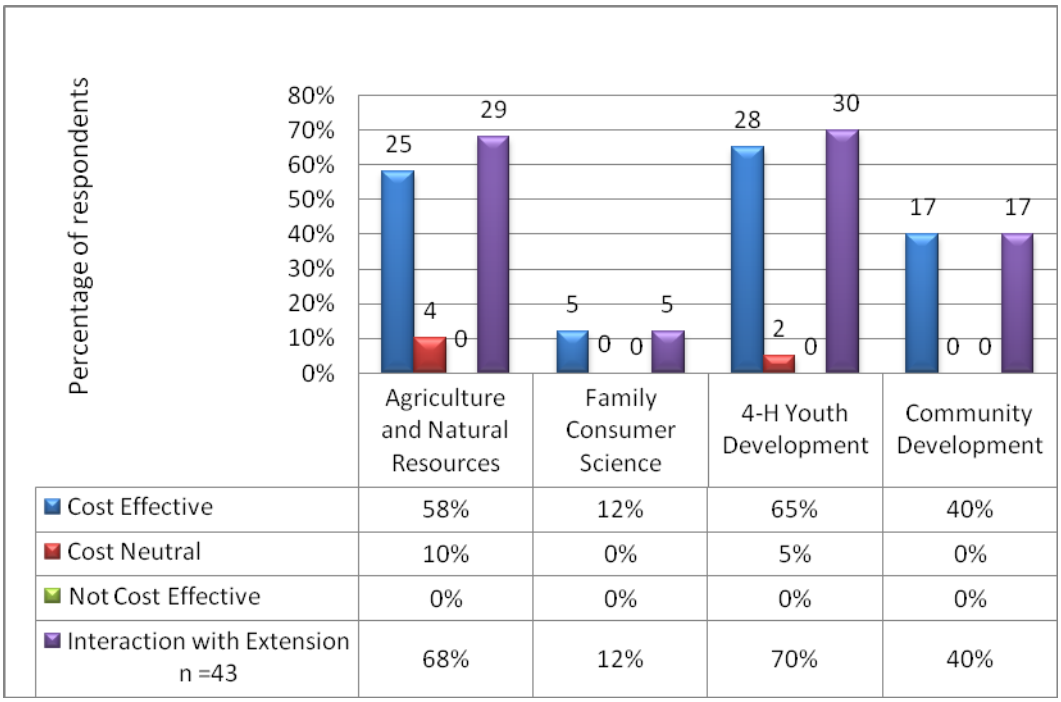
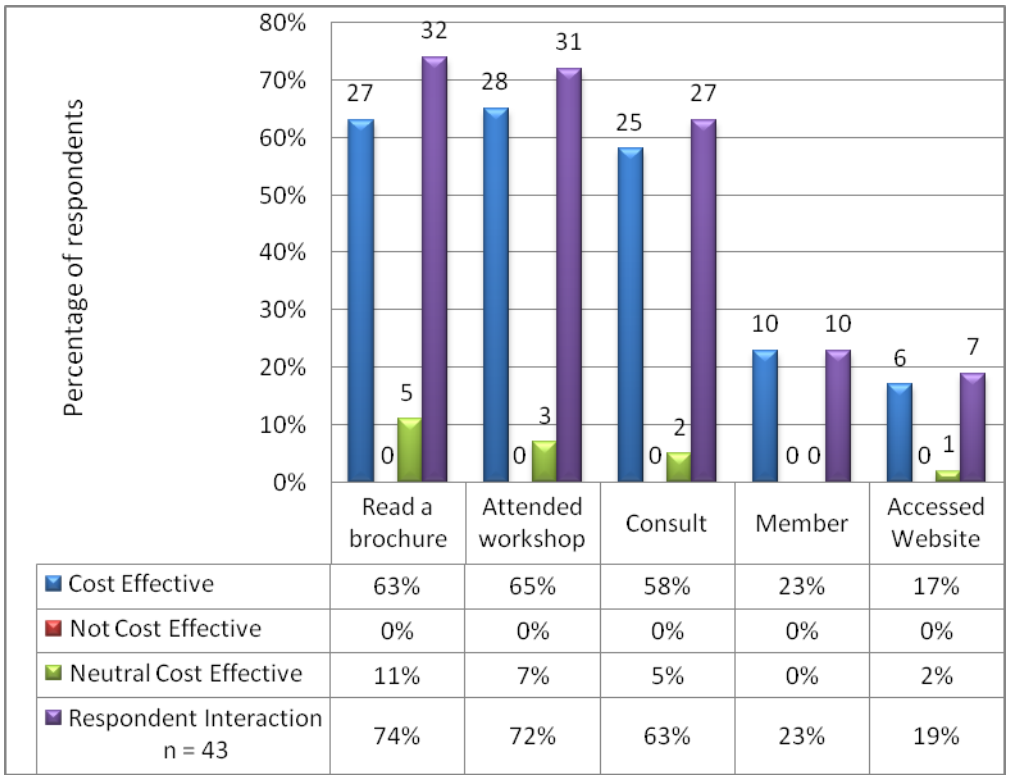


Figure 4.19: Comparisons between respondents' past experience and perception of cost effectiveness of WSU Extension by program area.

Comparisons between the methods of interaction with Extension and the perception of the cost effectiveness of Extension were made to explore the relationship between knowledge base of the census respondents and their perception of Extension. Figure 4.20 exhibits the relationship between personal past experience of census respondents by Extension method and the perception of effectiveness of the program area. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. The data from this chart shows the comparison between the county commissioners past experience by Extension program method and their perception of the effectiveness of Extension.

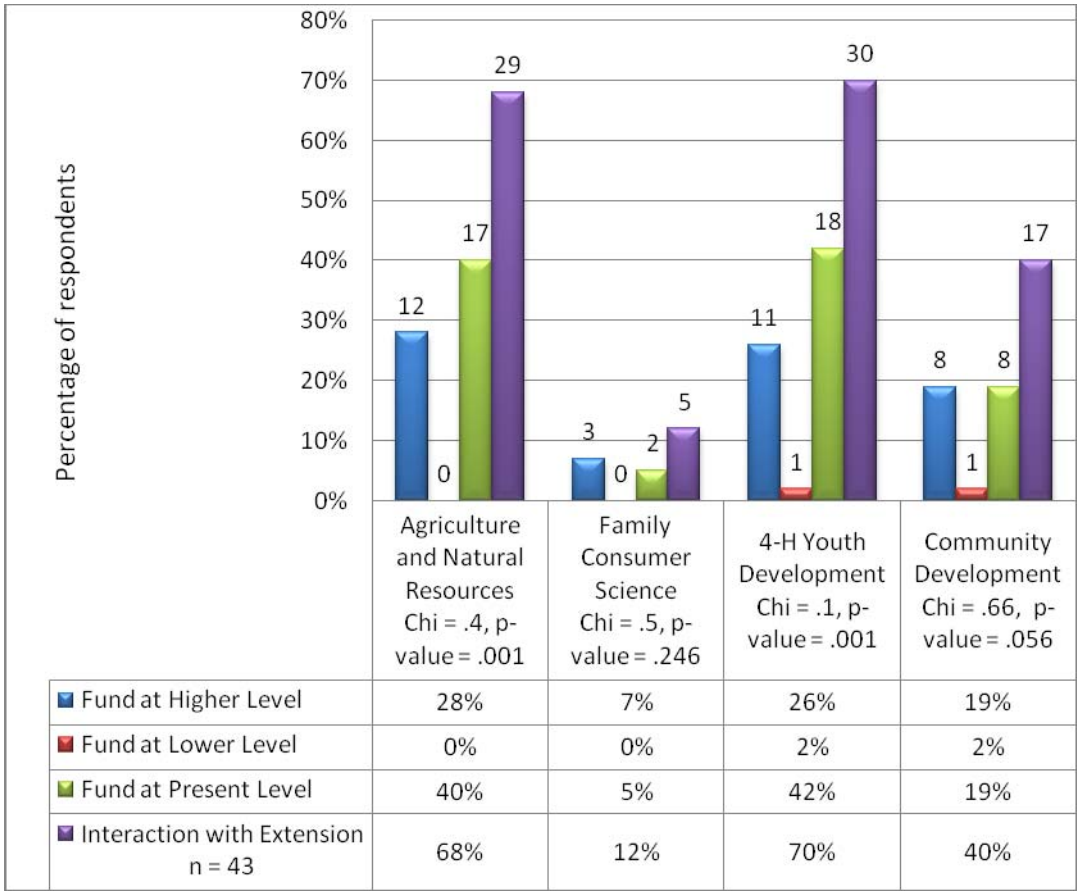


	Read a brochure	Attended workshop	Consult	Member	Accessed Website
Cost Effective	63%	65%	58%	23%	17%
Not Cost Effective	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Neutral Cost Effective	11%	7%	5%	0%	2%
Respondent Interaction n = 43	74%	72%	63%	23%	19%

Figure 4.20: Comparisons between respondents' past experience and perception of cost effectiveness of WSU Extension by program method.

Relationship between County Commissioners' Knowledge of WSU Extension and Their Willingness to Fund WSU Extension

Comparisons were made between the level of personal experience in Extension program area by the respondents and their willingness of the county commissioners to fund Extension with adequate county resources. Figure 4.21 exhibits the relationship between personal past experience of census respondents by Extension program area and the willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources to fund all county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses and chi square and predictive values of the data is included within the chart.



	Agriculture and Natural Resources Chi = .4, p-value = .001	Family Consumer Science Chi = .5, p-value = .246	4-H Youth Development Chi = .1, p-value = .001	Community Development Chi = .66, p-value = .056
Fund at Higher Level	28%	7%	26%	19%
Fund at Lower Level	0%	0%	2%	2%
Fund at Present Level	40%	5%	42%	19%
Interaction with Extension n = 43	68%	12%	70%	40%

Figure 4.21: Comparisons between respondents' past experience with WSU Extension program area and willingness to fund WSU Extension with adequate county resources.

Comparisons were made between the level of personal experience in individual Extension program area by census respondents and their willingness to fund Extension with insufficient county resources. Figure 4.22 exhibits the relationship between personal past experience of census respondents by Extension program area and their willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

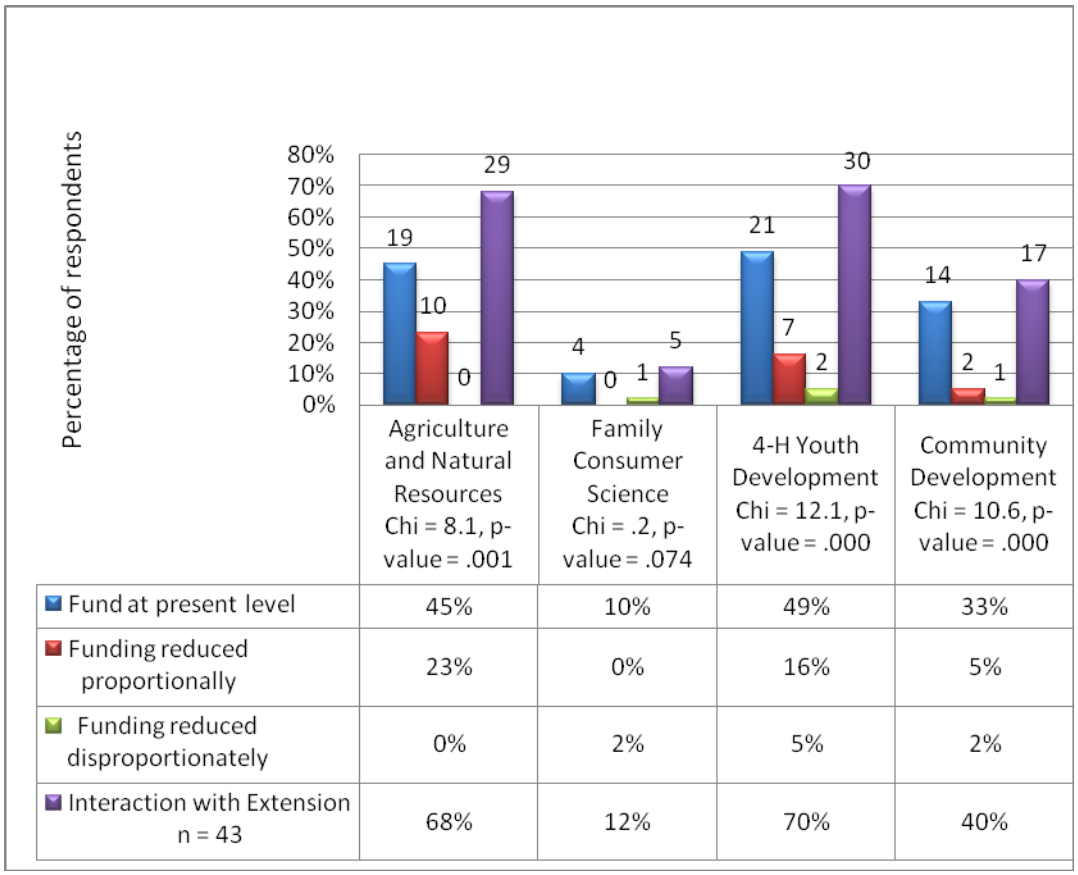
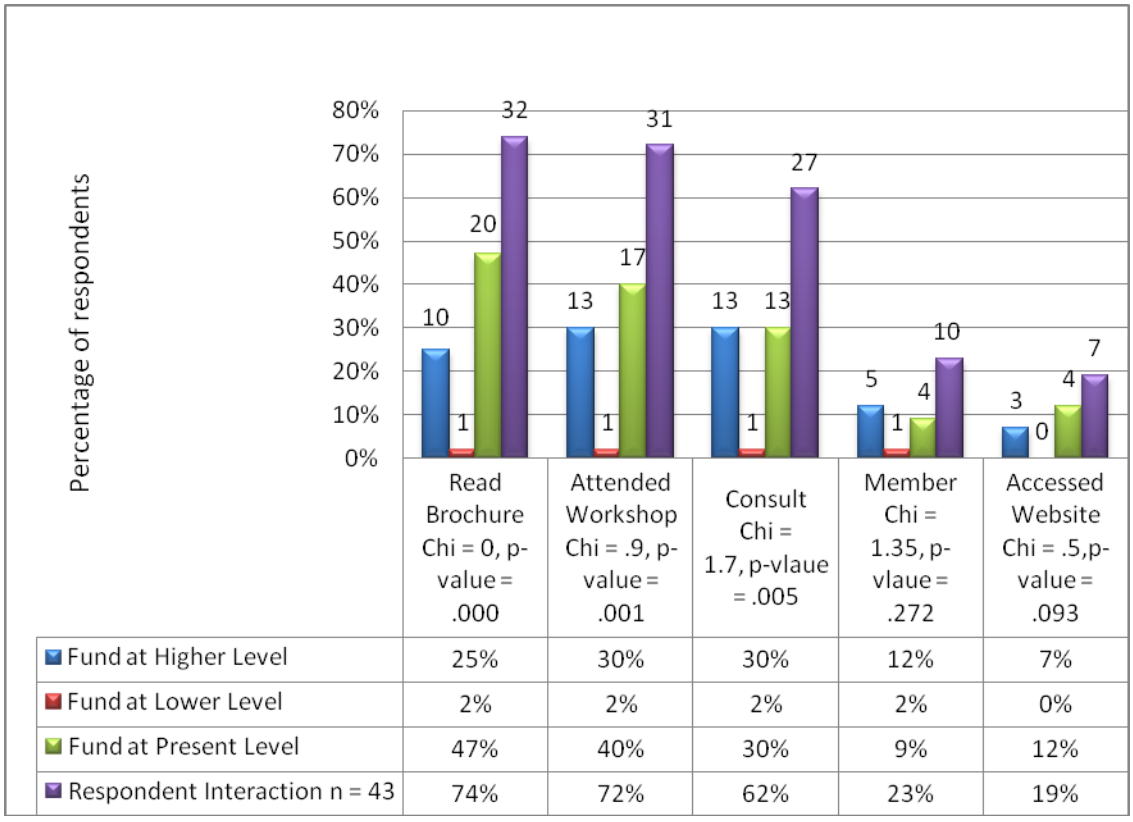


Figure 4.22: Comparisons between respondents' past experience with WSU Extension program area and willingness to fund WSU Extension with insufficient county resources.

Comparisons were made between the level of personal experience in individual program area by census respondents and the willingness to fund Extension with adequate county resources. Figure 4.23 exhibits the relationship between personal past experience of census respondents by Extension method and the willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources to fund all county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

The data from this chart shows the support of county commissioners in funding Extension and their participation in Extension program by specific methodology.

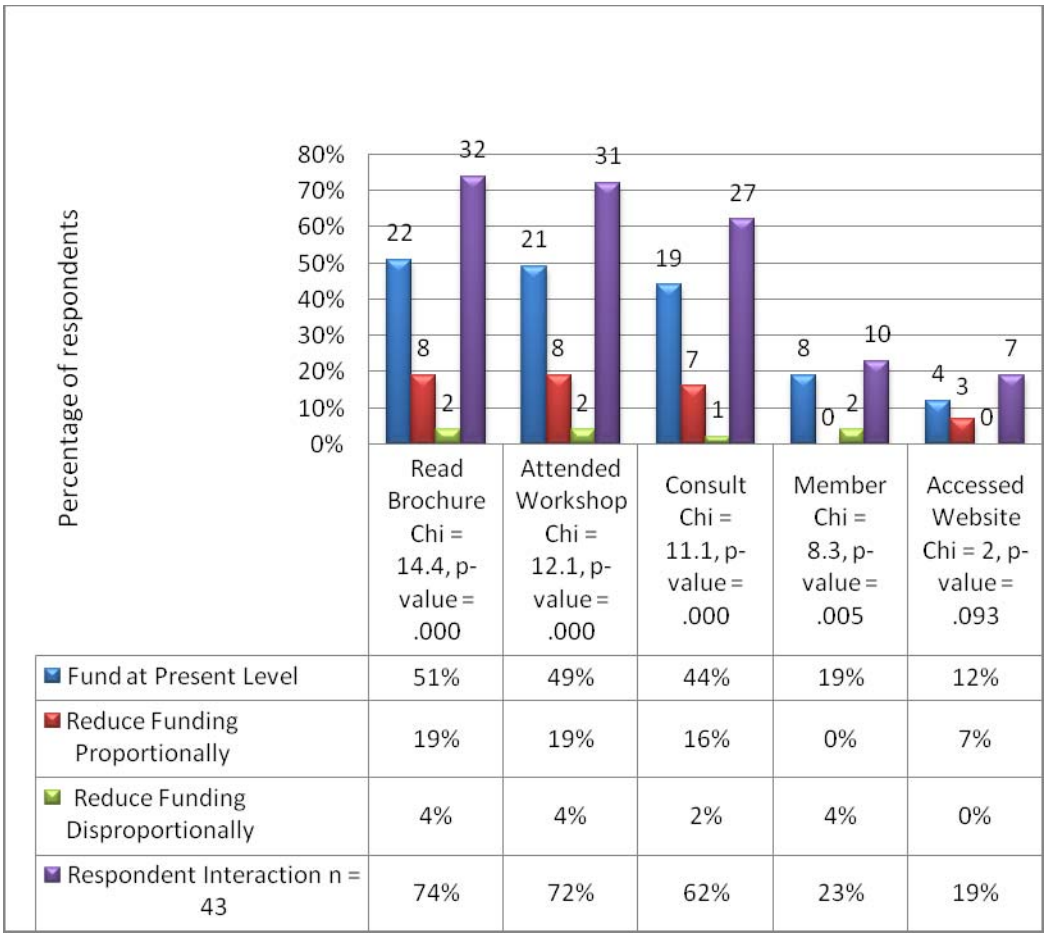


	Read Brochure Chi = 0, p-value = .000	Attended Workshop Chi = .9, p-value = .001	Consult Chi = 1.7, p-vlaue = .005	Member Chi = 1.35, p-vlaue = .272	Accessed Website Chi = .5,p-value = .093
Fund at Higher Level	25%	30%	30%	12%	7%
Fund at Lower Level	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%
Fund at Present Level	47%	40%	30%	9%	12%
Respondent Interaction n = 43	74%	72%	62%	23%	19%

Figure 4.23: Comparisons between respondents' past experience with WSU Extension program method and willingness to fund WSU Extension with adequate county resources.

Comparisons were made between the level of personal experience in individual program area by census respondents and the willingness to fund Extension with insufficient county resources. Figure 4.24 exhibits the relationship between personal past experience of census respondents by Extension method and the willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43). The frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the

chart. The data from this chart shows the support of county commissioners in funding Extension and their participation in Extension program by specific methodology.

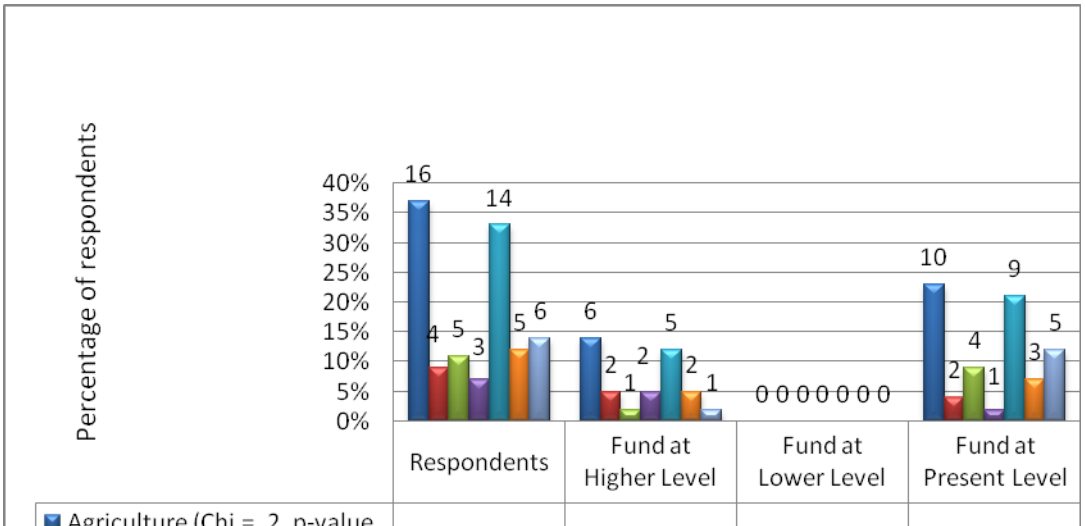


	Read Brochure Chi = 14.4, p-value = .000	Attended Workshop Chi = 12.1, p-value = .000	Consult Chi = 11.1, p-value = .000	Member Chi = 8.3, p-value = .005	Accessed Website Chi = 2, p-value = .093
Fund at Present Level	51%	49%	44%	19%	12%
Reduce Funding Proportionally	19%	19%	16%	0%	7%
Reduce Funding Disproportionally	4%	4%	2%	4%	0%
Respondent Interaction n = 43	74%	72%	62%	23%	19%

Figure 4.24: Comparisons between respondents' past experience with WSU Extension program method and willingness to fund WSU Extension with insufficient county resources.

Comparisons between were made between the prior occupation of the county commissioners and their willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources to fund all county obligations were made. Figure 4.25 exhibits the relationship between prior occupations of the census respondents and the willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources to fund all county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of

total respondents (n = 43) and the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

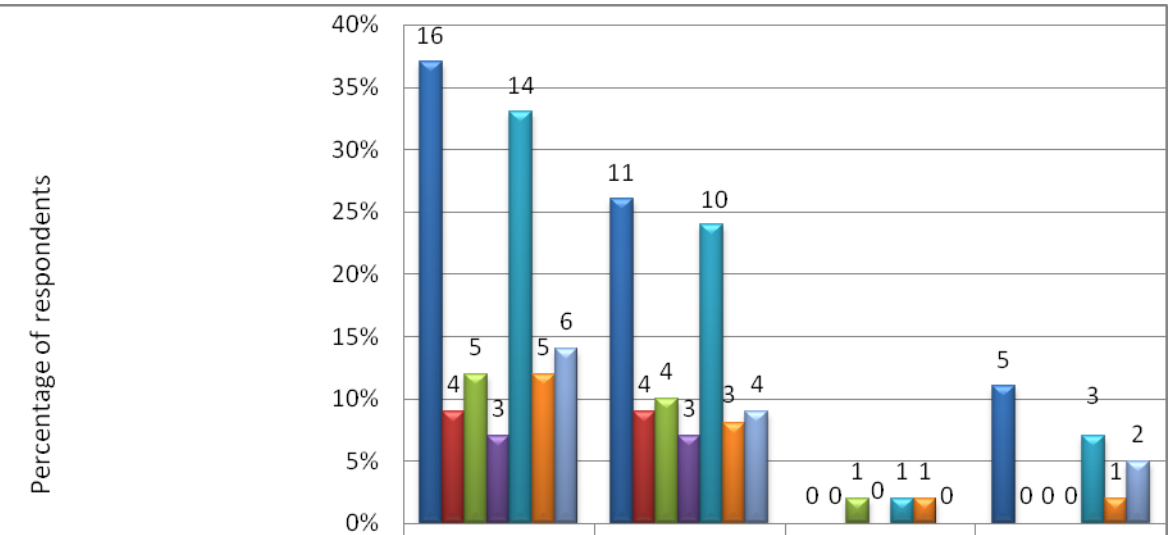


	Respondents	Fund at Higher Level	Fund at Lower Level	Fund at Present Level
Agriculture (Chi = .2, p-value = .009)	37%	14%	0%	23%
Construction (Chi = 1, p-value = .368)	9%	5%	0%	4%
Education (Chi = 5, p-value = .074)	11%	2%	0%	9%
Military (Chi = 1, p-value = .013)	7%	5%	0%	2%
Private Business (Chi = 0, p-value = .13)	33%	12%	0%	21%
Professional (Chi = 0, p-value = .247)	12%	5%	0%	7%
Public Service (Chi = 0, p-value = .367)	14%	2%	0%	12%

Figure 4.25: Comparisons between respondents' prior occupation and their willingness to fund WSU Extension with adequate county resources.

Comparisons between the prior occupations of the county commissioners and their willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources to fund all county obligations were made. Figure 4.26 exhibits the relationship between prior occupations of the census respondents and the willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources

to fund all county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

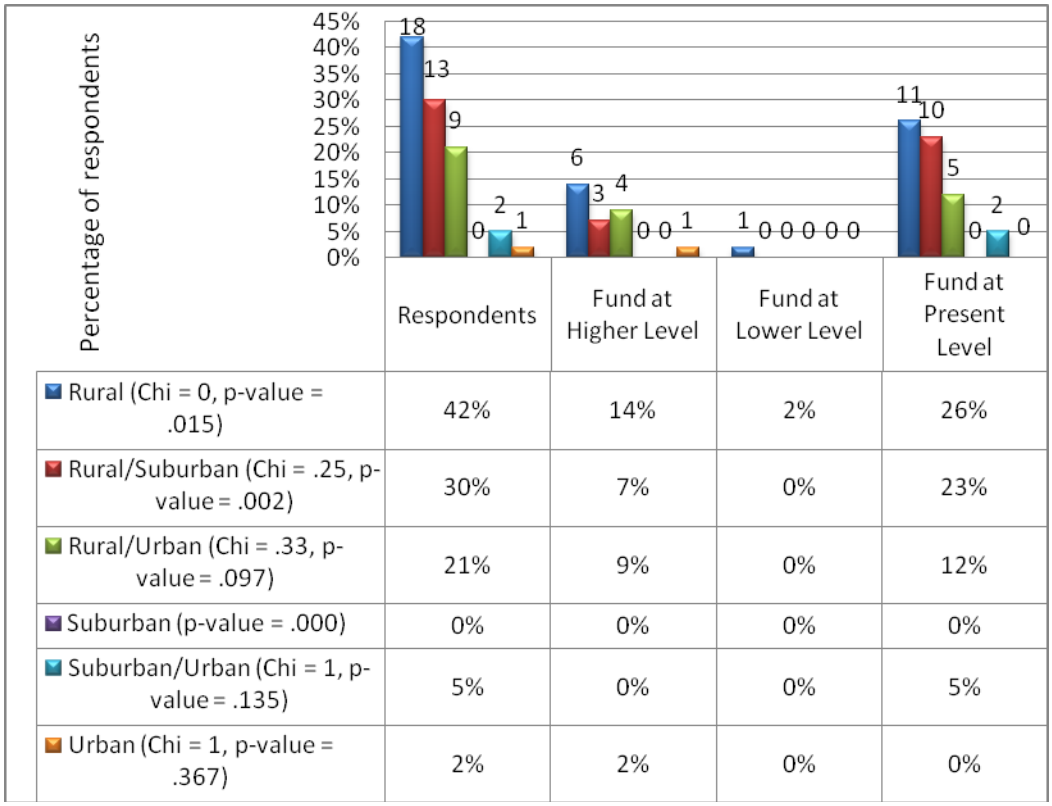


	Respondents	Present Level	Reduced Disproportionate	Reduced Proportionally
Agriculture (Chi = 7.2, p-value = .003)	37%	26%	0%	11%
Construction (Chi = 9, p-value = .018)	9%	9%	0%	0%
Education (Chi = 2, p-value = .074)	12%	10%	2%	0%
Military (Chi = 4, p-value = .05)	7%	7%	0%	0%
Private Business (Chi = 5, p-value = .008)	33%	24%	2%	7%
Professional (Chi = .5, p-value = .449)	12%	8%	2%	2%
Public Service (Chi = 2, p-value = .135)	14%	9%	0%	5%

Figure 4.26: Comparisons between respondents' prior occupation and their willingness to fund WSU Extension with insufficient county resources to fund county obligations.

Comparisons were made between the population demographics of the district represented and the willingness to fund Extension given adequate resources to fund all county obligations. Figure 4.27 exhibits the percentage of census respondents who indicated population demographics of district represented and corresponded to the

willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources to fund county all obligations (n = 43). The frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

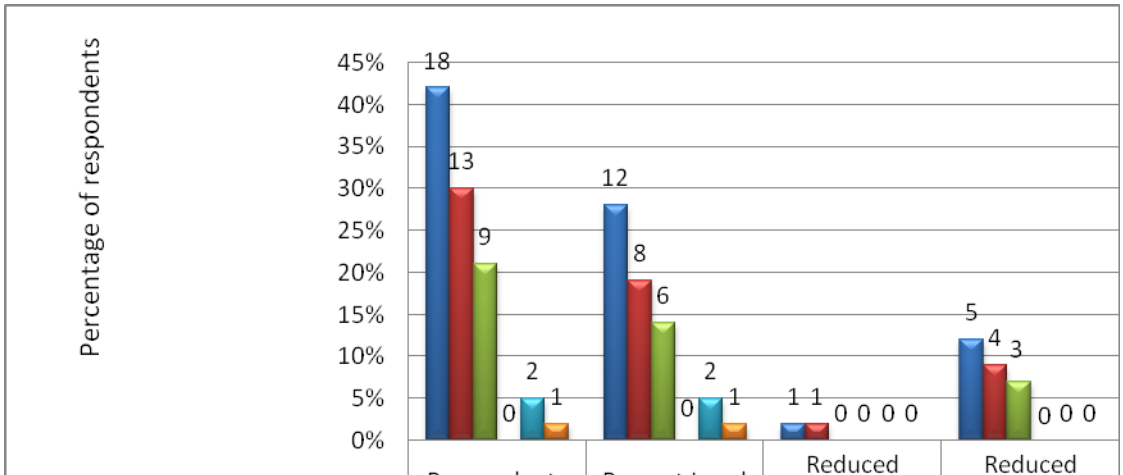


	Respondents	Fund at Higher Level	Fund at Lower Level	Fund at Present Level
Rural (Chi = 0, p-value = .015)	42%	14%	2%	26%
Rural/Suburban (Chi = .25, p-value = .002)	30%	7%	0%	23%
Rural/Urban (Chi = .33, p-value = .097)	21%	9%	0%	12%
Suburban (p-value = .000)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Suburban/Urban (Chi = 1, p-value = .135)	5%	0%	0%	5%
Urban (Chi = 1, p-value = .367)	2%	2%	0%	0%

Figure 4.27: Comparisons between the districts represented by respondents and their willingness to fund WSU Extension with adequate county resources.

Comparisons were made between the population demographics of the district represented and the willingness to fund Extension given insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Figure 4.28 exhibits the percentage of census respondents who indicated population demographics of district represented and corresponded to the willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources to fund county all obligations (n

= 43). The frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.

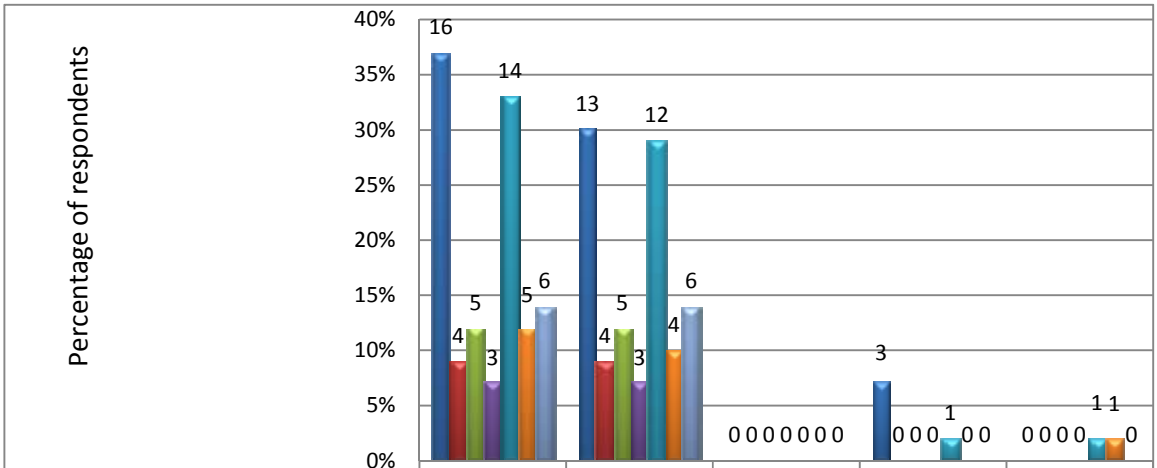


	Respondents	Present Level	Reduced Disproportion	Reduced Proportionally
Rural (Chi = 6, p-value = .006)	42%	28%	2%	12%
Rural/Suburban (Chi = 4, p-value = .006)	30%	19%	2%	9%
Rural/Urban (Chi = 3, p-value = .049)	21%	14%	0%	7%
Suburban (p-value = .0)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Suburban/Urban (Chi = 1, p-value = .135)	5%	5%	0%	0%
Urban (Chi = 0, p-value = .367)	2%	2%	0%	0%

Figure 4.28: Comparisons between the population demographics of the districts represented by respondents and their willingness to fund WSU Extension with insufficient resources to fund county obligations.

Comparisons were made between the prior occupation of the responding county commissioners and their perception of importance of Extension and the programs the agency delivers. Figure 4.29 exhibits the prior occupation of census respondents and their perception of importance of Extension and the programs the agency delivers (n = 43), the

frequency of responses is noted within the chart, as are chi square goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the chart.



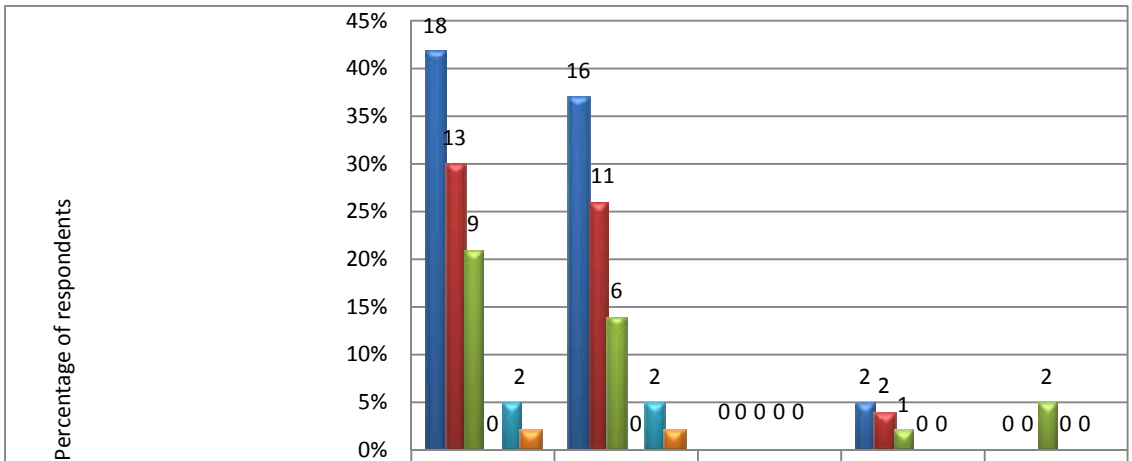
	Respondent	Important	Not Important	Neutral Importance	Insufficient Knowledge
Agriculture (Chi = 20.25, p-vlaue = .0)	37%	30%	0%	7%	0%
Construction (Chi = 9, p-vlaue = .018)	9%	9%	0%	0%	0%
Education (Chi = 16, p-vlaue = .0)	12%	12%	0%	0%	0%
Military (Chi = 4, p-vlaue = .001)	7%	7%	0%	0%	0%
Private Business (Chi = 27, p-vlaue = .368)	33%	29%	0%	2%	2%
Professional (Chi = 9, p-vlaue = .13)	12%	10%	0%	0%	2%
Public Service (Chi = 25, p-vlaue = .00)	14%	14%	0%	0%	0%

Figure 4.29: Comparisons between respondents' prior occupation and their perception of importance of WSU Extension.

Comparisons were made between the population demographics of the district represented and the perception of importance of Extension and the programs the agency delivers. Figure 4.30 exhibits the population demographics of census respondents and the

perception of importance of Extension and the programs the agency delivers as expressed by census respondents (n = 43). The frequency of responses, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is noted within the chart.

Comparisons of Population Demographics and Perception of Importance of Extension

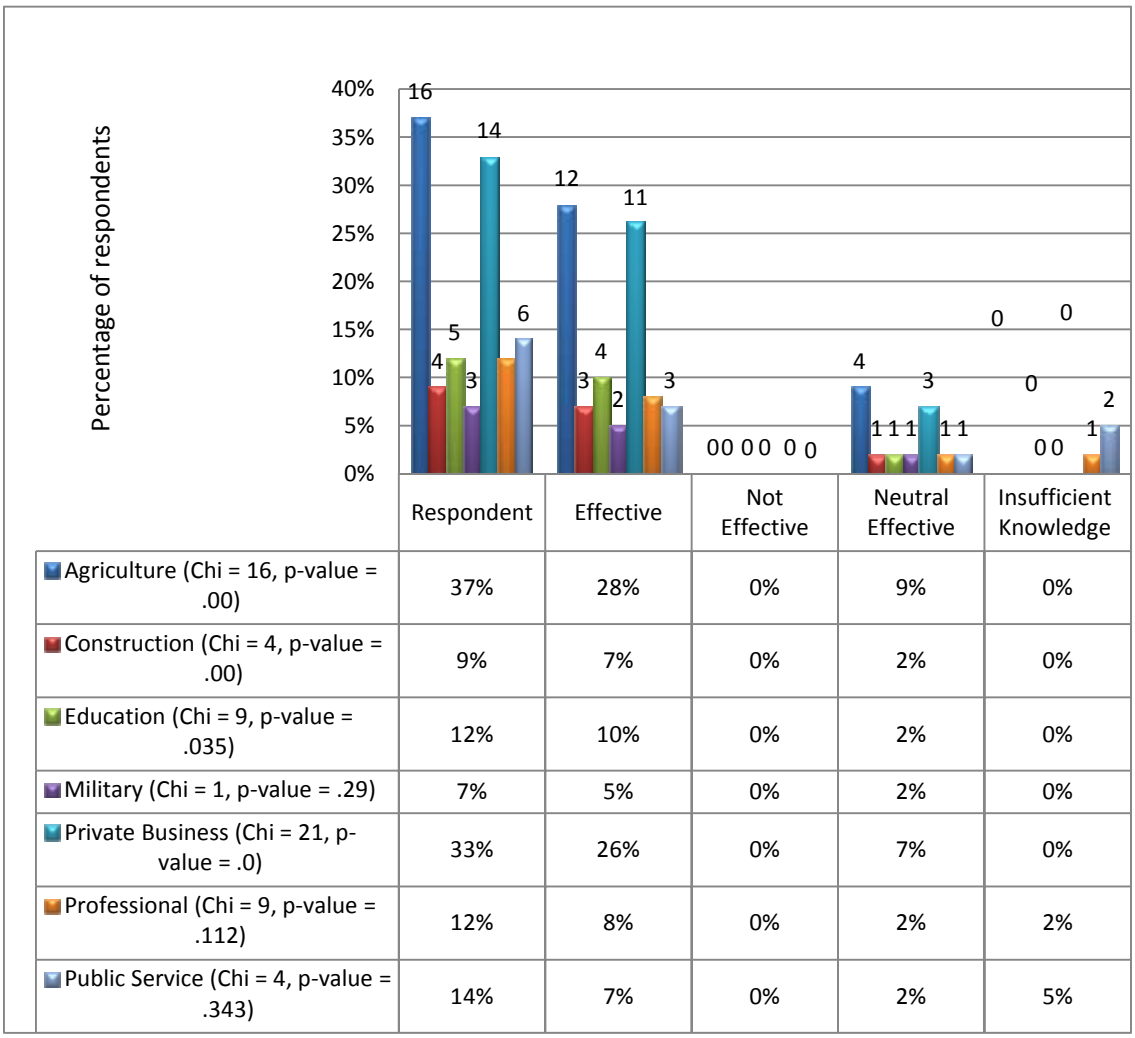


	Respondents	Important	Not Important	Neutral Importance	Insufficient Knowledge
Rural (Chi = 36, p-value = .00)	42%	37%	0%	5%	0%
Rural/Suburban (Chi = 21, p-value = .001)	30%	26%	0%	4%	0%
Rural/Urban (Chi = 8, p-value = .026)	21%	14%	0%	2%	5%
Suburban (p-value = .00)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Suburban/Urban (Chi = 1, p-value = .11)	5%	5%	0%	0%	0%
Urban (Chi = 1, p-value = .39)	2%	2%	0%	0%	0

Figure 4.30: Comparisons between the population demographics of the districts represented by respondents and their perception of importance of WSU Extension.

Comparisons were made between the prior occupation of the responding county commissioners and their perception of effectiveness of Extension and the programs the agency delivers. Figure 4.31 exhibits the prior occupation of census respondents and their

perception of effectiveness of Extension and the programs the agency delivers (n = 43). The frequency of responses is noted within the chart.



	Respondent	Effective	Not Effective	Neutral Effective	Insufficient Knowledge
Agriculture (Chi = 16, p-value = .00)	37%	28%	0%	9%	0%
Construction (Chi = 4, p-value = .00)	9%	7%	0%	2%	0%
Education (Chi = 9, p-value = .035)	12%	10%	0%	2%	0%
Military (Chi = 1, p-value = .29)	7%	5%	0%	2%	0%
Private Business (Chi = 21, p-value = .0)	33%	26%	0%	7%	0%
Professional (Chi = 9, p-value = .112)	12%	8%	0%	2%	2%
Public Service (Chi = 4, p-value = .343)	14%	7%	0%	2%	5%

Figure 4.31: Comparisons between respondents' prior occupation and their perception of effectiveness of WSU Extension.

Comparisons were made between the population demographics of the district represented and the perception of effectiveness of Extension and the programs the agency delivers. Figure 4.32 exhibits the population demographics of census respondents and the perception of effectiveness of Extension and the programs the agency delivers as

expressed by census respondents (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart.

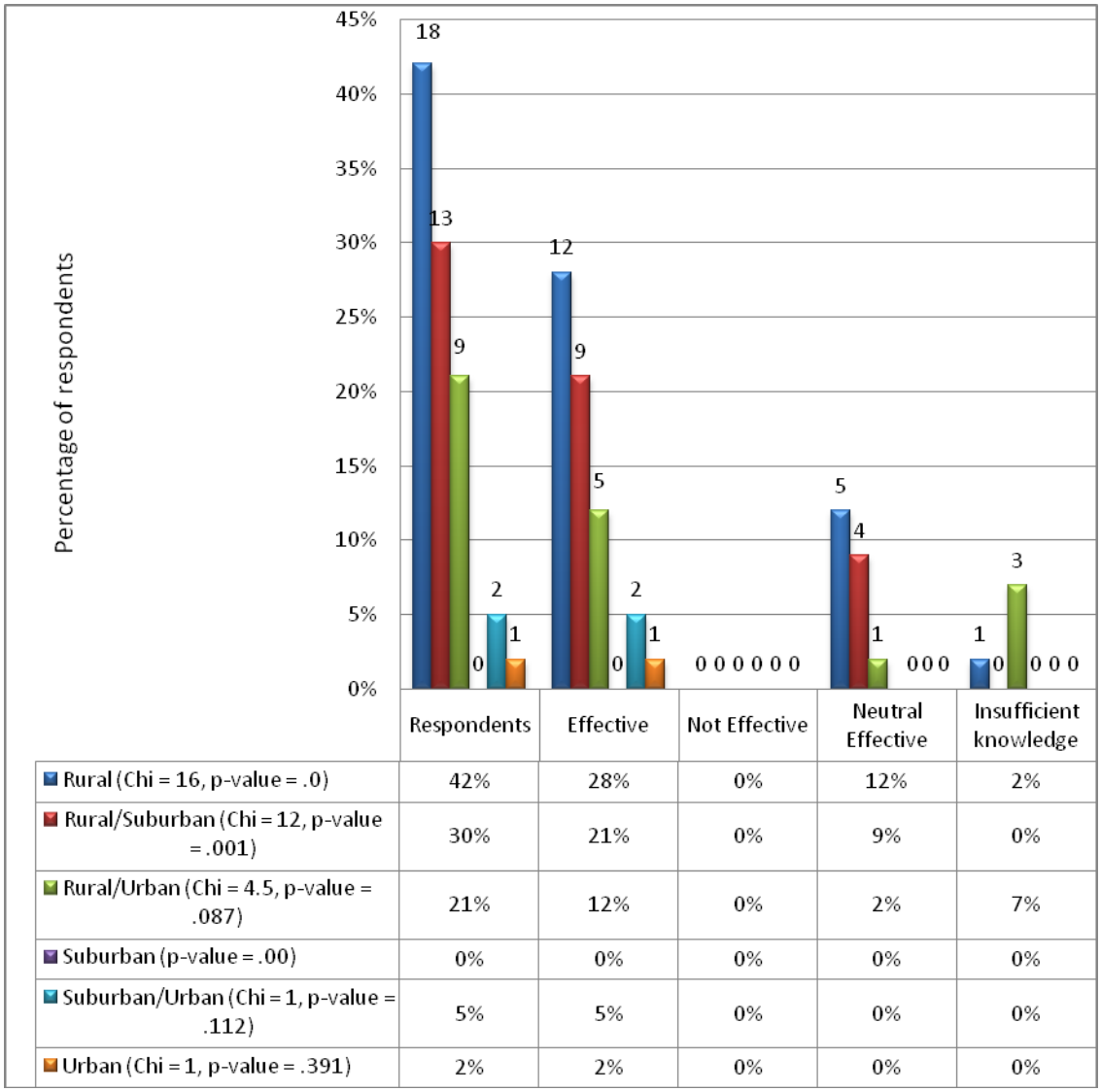
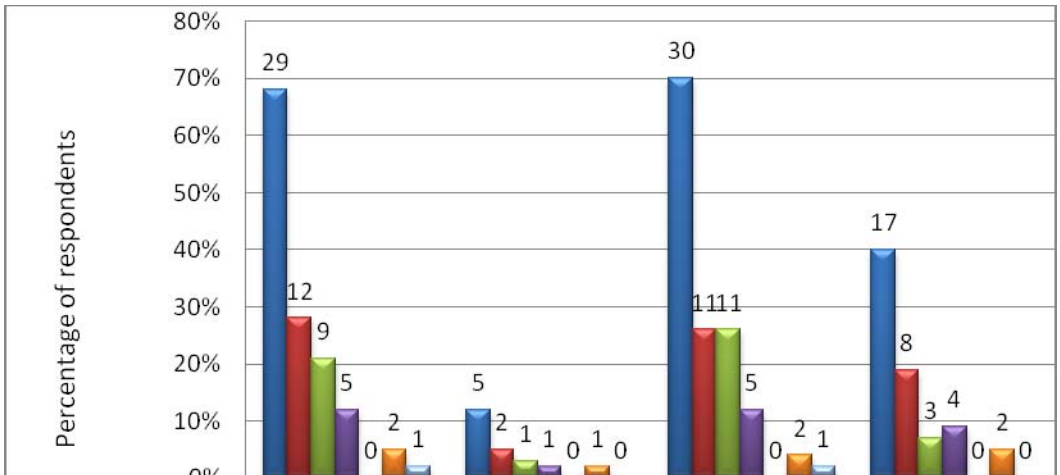


Figure 4.32: Comparisons between the population demographics of the districts represented by respondents and their perception of effectiveness of WSU Extension.

Comparisons were made between the population demographics of the district represented and the personal experience with Extension program areas. Figure 4.33 exhibits the population demographics of census respondents and the perception of

importance of Extension and the programs the agency delivers as expressed by census respondents (n = 43). The frequency of responses is noted within the chart.



	Agriculture and Natural Resources	Family Consumer Science	4-H Youth Development	Community Development
Respondent	68%	12%	70%	40%
Rural	28%	5%	26%	19%
Rural/Suburban	21%	3%	26%	7%
Rural/Urban	12%	2%	12%	9%
Suburban	0%	0%	0%	0%
Suburban/Urban	5%	2%	4%	5%
Urban	2%	0%	2%	0%

Figure 4.33: Comparisons between the population demographics of the districts represented by respondents and their personal experience with WSU Extension program areas.

Comparisons were made between the demographics of the district represented of the responding county commissioners, and the Commissioner's willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources. Figure 4.34 exhibits the population demographics of census respondents and the willingness of census respondents to fund Extension with adequate resources to fund all county obligations (n = 43). The frequency of responses is noted within the chart.

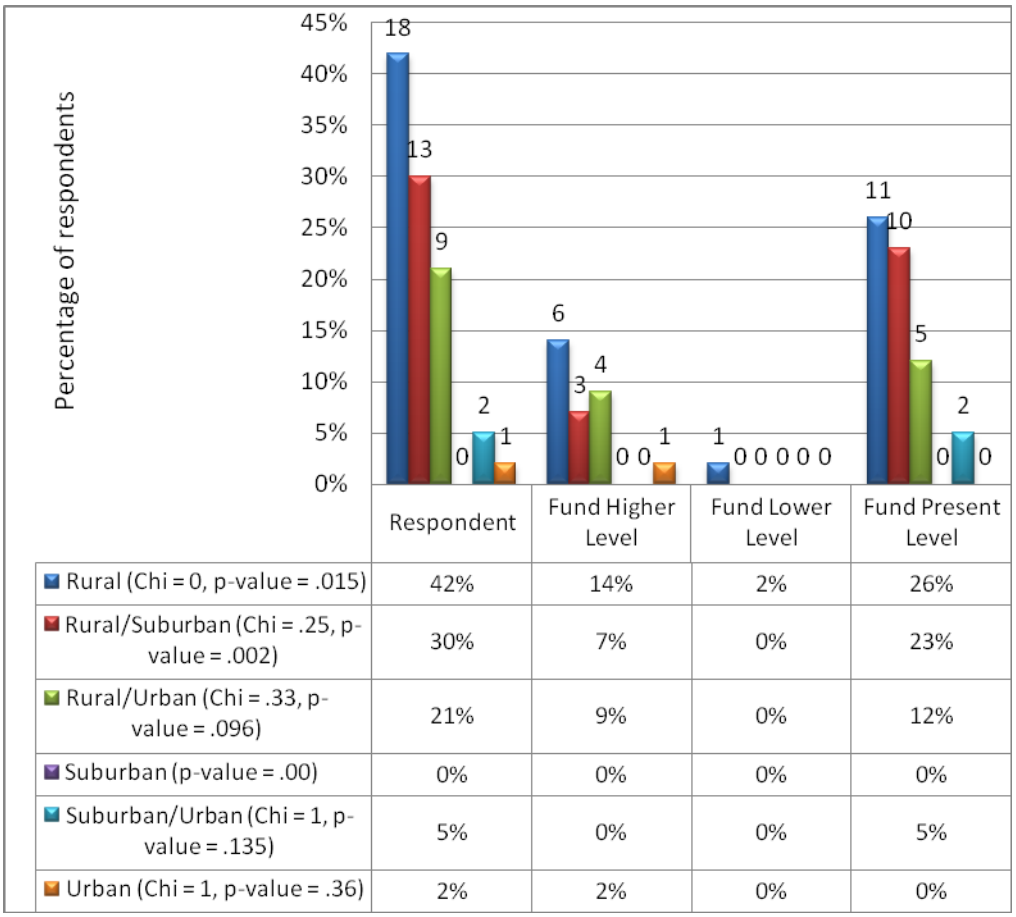
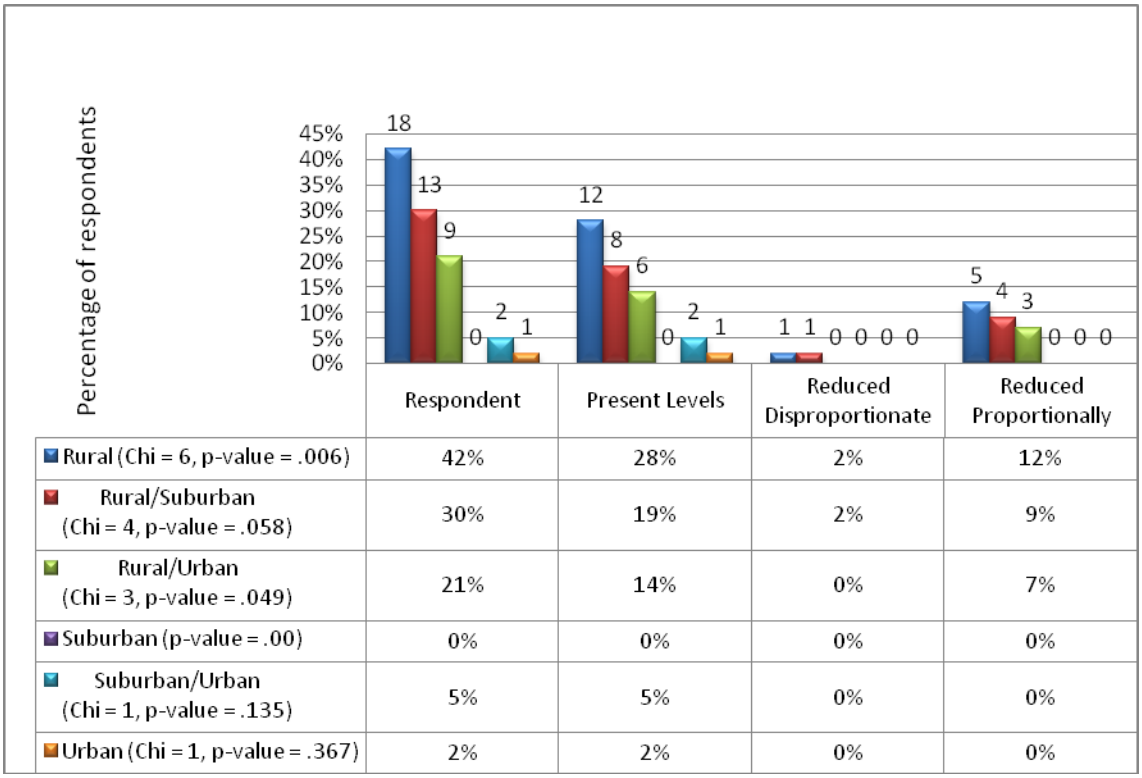


Figure 4.34: Comparisons between the population demographics of the districts represented by respondents and their willingness to fund WSU Extension with adequate county resources.

Comparisons were made between the demographics of the district represented of the responding county commissioners, and the Commissioner's willingness to fund Extension with insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Figure 4.35 exhibits the population demographics of census respondents and the willingness of census respondents to fund Extension with insufficient resources to fund all county obligations (n = 43). The frequency of responses is noted within the chart.



	Respondent	Present Levels	Reduced Disproportionate	Reduced Proportionally
Rural (Chi = 6, p-value = .006)	42%	28%	2%	12%
Rural/Suburban (Chi = 4, p-value = .058)	30%	19%	2%	9%
Rural/Urban (Chi = 3, p-value = .049)	21%	14%	0%	7%
Suburban (p-value = .00)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Suburban/Urban (Chi = 1, p-value = .135)	5%	5%	0%	0%
Urban (Chi = 1, p-value = .367)	2%	2%	0%	0%

Figure 4.35: Comparisons between the population demographics of the districts represented by respondents and their willingness to fund WSU Extension with insufficient resources to fund county obligations.

Comparisons were made between the demographics of the district represented of the responding county commissioners, the reported relative economy of the district the county commissioners represent and the county commissioner's willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources in the county. Table 4.11 exhibits the relationship among the county commissioners' willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources and the reported relative economy of the district. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43) and the frequency of responses is noted within the table. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the table.

Table 4.11: *Comparisons of District Economy and Willingness to Fund with Adequate Resources*

County resources			**Adequate**			
Description of district /economy	Willing to fund	Higher freq.	%	Present freq.	%	Lower freq.	%
Rural – level		3	7%	4	9%	0	0%
Rural – strong		0	0%	2	5%	0	0%
Rural – weak		3	7%	5	12%	1	2%
combined Chi/p-value = .043							
Rural/sub – level		2	5%	6	14%	0	0%
Rural/sub – strong		1	2%	3	7%	0	0%
Rural/sub – weak		0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
combined Chi/p-value = .002							
Rural/urban – level		3	7%	3	7%%	0	0%
Rural/urban – strong		0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
Rural/urban – weak		1	0%	1	2%	0	0%
combined Chi/p-value = .096							
Suburban- level		0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Suburban – strong		0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Suburban – weak		0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
combined Chi/p-value = .000							
Suburban/urban – level		0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
Suburban/urban – strong		0	0%	1	2%	0	0%
Suburban/urban – weak		0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
combined Chi/p-value = .135							
Urban – level		1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Urban – strong		0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Urban – weak		0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
combined Chi/p-value = .36							

Comparisons were made between the reported relative economy of the district the county commissioners represent and the county commissioners' perception of cost effectiveness of Extension. Figure 4.36 exhibits the relationship among the county commissioners' willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources and the reported relative economy of the district (n = 43), the frequency of responses is noted within the chart. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43) and the frequency of

responses is noted within the table. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the table.

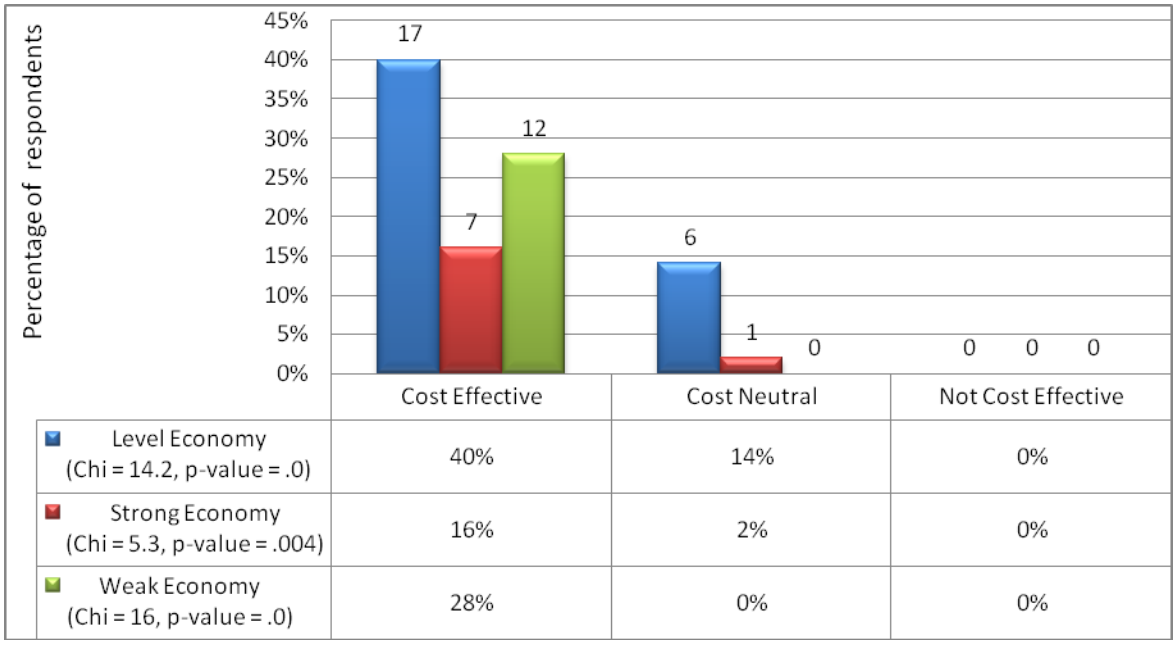


Figure 4.36: Comparisons of district economy and perception of cost effectiveness of WSU Extension by respondents.

Further comparisons were generated regarding the demographics of the district represented, the county commissioner's perception of cost effectiveness and the county commissioners' willingness to fund Extension with adequate resources and insufficient resources to fund all obligations in the county. This comparison consolidated the demographic categories to rural, suburban and urban designations. Table 4.12 exhibits the relationship among the demographics of the district, the perception of effectiveness and the willingness to fund with adequate and insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43) and the

frequency of responses is noted within the table. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the table.

Table 4.12: *Relationship among Demographics of District, Perception of Effectiveness and Willingness to Fund with Adequate and Insufficient Resources*

County resources	**Adequate**			**Insufficient**		
District Fund /effective	Higher	Present	Lower	Present level	Reduce proportionate	Reduce disproportionately
Rural (n=18)						
cost effective	6 (14%)	9 (21%)	1 (2%)	10 (23%)	5 (12%)	1 (2%)
not cost effective	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral	0	2 (5%)	0	0	2 (5%)	0
Chi/p-value = 0/.015				Chi/p-value= 2.6/.030		
Suburban (n=13)						
cost effective	1 (2%)	9 (21%)	0	6 (14%)	3 (5%)	1 (2%)
not cost effective	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral	2 (5%)	1 (2%)	0	2 (5%)	1 (2%)	0
Chi/p-value = .25/.002				Chi/p-value= 4/.058		
Urban (n=12)						
cost effective	5 (12%)	5 (12%)	0	8 (18%)	2 (5%)	0
not cost effective	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral	0	2 (5%)	0	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0
Chi/p-value = .25/.002				Chi/p-value= 6.25/.005		

Comparisons were generated regarding the past personal experience of the county commissioners and the Extension program areas, the county commissioner's perception of cost effectiveness and the county commissioners' willingness to fund Extension with adequate and insufficient county resources to fund all county obligations. Table 4.13 exhibits the relationship among the past personal experience of program area, the perception of effectiveness of those program areas and the willingness to fund with adequate and insufficient resources to fund all county obligations. Data is exhibited as a percentage of total respondents (n = 43) and the frequency of responses is noted within

the table. Additionally, goodness of fit and predictive values of the data is included in the table.

Table 4.13: *Relationship among Past Personal Experience of Program Area, Perception of Effectiveness and Willingness to Fund with Adequate and Insufficient Resources*

County resources		**Adequate**			**Insufficient**	
Program effectives	Funding Higher	Present	Lower	Present level	Reduce proportionate	Reduce disproportionate
Agriculture and natural resources n = 29						
Chi/p-value = .4/.00037				Chi/p-value =8.1/ .000		
cost effective	10 (23%)	15 (35%)	0	17 (40%)	8 (19%)	0
not cost effective	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	0	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	0
Family consumer science n = 5						
Chi/p-value = 15/.00037				Chi/p-value = 3/.0009		
cost effective	3 (7%)	2 (5%)	0	4 (9%)	0	1 (2%)
not cost effective	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral	0	0	0	2 (5%)	1 (2%)	0
4/H youth development n =30						
Chi/p-value = .11/00068				Chi/p-value = 12.1/.246		
cost effective	9 (21%)	18 (42%)	1 (2%)	19 (44%)	7 (16%)	2 (5%)
not cost effective	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral	2 (5%)	0	0	2 (5%)	0	0
Community development n=17						
Chi/p-value = .66/056				Chi/p-value = 10.6/.0004		
cost effective	8 (19%)	8 (19%)	1 (2%)	14 (33%	2 (5%)	1 (2%)
not cost effective	0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral	0	0	0	0	0	0

Comparisons were generated regarding the method of interaction of the county commissioners, the county commissioner's perception of Extension's effectiveness and the county commissioners' willingness to fund Extension with adequate and insufficient county resources to fund all county obligations. Table 4.14 exhibits the relationship among the past personal experience of program area, the perception of effectiveness of

those program areas and the willingness to fund with adequate and insufficient resources to fund all county obligations.

Table 4.14: *Relationship among County Commissioners' Method of Interaction with Extension, Perception of Effectiveness and Willingness to Fund Extension*

		Adequate			**Insufficient**		
Interaction /perception of effectives	**Fund**	Higher	Present	Lower	Present level	Reduce proportionate	Reduce disproportion
Read brochure (n=32)							
cost effective		9 (21%)	17 (40%)	1 (1%)	19 (44%)	6 (14%)	2 (5%)
not cost effective		0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral		2 (5%)	4 (7%)	0	4 (7%)	2 (5%)	0
		Chi/p-value = 0/.000			Chi/p-value = 13.9/.000		
Attended workshop (n=31)							
cost effective		11(26 %)	16 (37 %)	1 (2%)	19(44%)	7 (14%)	2 (5%)
not cost effective		0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral		3 (7%)	0	0	2 (5%)	1 (2%)	0
		Chi/p-value = 21.6/.005			Chi/p-value = 12.1/.000		
Consultation (n=27)							
cost effective		11(20%)	13 (30%)	1 (2%)	17 (40%)	7 (16%)	1 (2%)
not cost effective		0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral		2 (5%)	0	0	2 (5%)	0	0
		Chi/p-value = 1.7/.007			Chi/p-value = 1.1/.000		
Member (n=10)							
cost effective		11(12%)	4 (9%)	1 (2%)	8 (19%)	2 (5%)	0
not cost effective		0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral		0	0	0	0	0	0
		Chi/p-value =1.3/ .007			Chi/p-value = 8.3/.006		
Accessed Website (n=8)							
cost effective		4 (9%)	4 (9%)	0	11(12%)	1 (2%)	2 (5%)
not cost effective		0	0	0	0	0	0
cost neutral		0	1 (2%)	0	4 (9%)	2 (5%)	0
		Chi/p-value = .33/.097			Chi/p-value = 1.33/.000		

Predictive values were compiled as predictive analysis of the data. The following table is a compilation of demographic components and the corresponding p-value at a level of .05 and greater. The categories are further compiled by three components that include the economy, the demographics of the district represented, the economy and demographics of the district represented and the previous occupation of the county commissioner. Table 4.15 exhibits the predictive value of the specified demographics.

Table 4.15: *Predictive Value of Specified Demographics*

Demographics of district represented	**p-value**
Suburban/urban demographics	0.135
Rural/suburban Demographics	0.058
Demographics and economy of district represented	**p-value**
Rural/urban with level economy	0.223
Rural/suburban with strong economy	0.174
Suburban with strong economy	0.174
Rural level economy	0.156
Rural strong economy	0.135
Urban strong economy	0.135
Urban level economy	0.135
Economy of district represented	**p-value**
Weak economy	0.105
Previous occupation of county commissioners	**p-value**
Construction	0.368
Professional	.0247
Private Business	0.013
Public service	0.135
Education	0.074

Data was compiled and analyzed to examine the response to the willingness to provide funding and the combined knowledge and perception of the county commissioners of Extension. The component of very favorable funding, favorable funding and negative funding were assumed from the willingness to fund with adequate funding data. The data from this table indicates that generally, the overall responses to questions having impact upon Extension were favorable or very favorable to Extension regardless of circumstances that might mitigate support such as a poor economy. In instances when county commissioners are unfamiliar with specific program areas, quality of the program or lack sufficient knowledge to make a statement to the effectiveness of the program, 98% of the respondents are willing to continue to fund Extension at current or increased levels. Data is exhibited as a frequency distribution of components exhibiting which demonstrate willingness to fund WSU Extension.

Table 4.16: *Relationship among Compiled Components and the Willingness to Fund WSU Extension*

	Very Favorable funding	Favorable funding	Negative funding	n	% Very favorable funding	% Favorable funding	% Negative funding	Chi/p-value
Overall Response Rate	310	564	30	904	34%	62%	3%	0.000
Highest Rating	120	205	13	338	36%	61%	4%	0.000
Adequate	46	105	6	157	29%	67%	4%	0.000
Negative Rating	12	17	4	33	36%	52%	12%	0.020
Insufficient Knowledge	68	166	4	238	29%	70%	2%	0.000

As a measure of willingness to fund Extension, demographic components were ranked by the percentage of county commissioners that were found have a very favorable propensity to fund Extension. Table 4.17 exhibits the relationship among compiled quality components and the very favorable ranked response by census respondents. The data from this table shows the components which exhibit a very favorable response to fund WSU Extension.

Table 4.17: *Compiled Components of Ranked Very Favorable Response*

Question #	Component	Very favorable
10	Prior personal Experience with Extension	42%
3	Economy of Urban County	42%
10	Prior interaction with Extension	41%
2	Previous occupation of county commissioner	36%
11	Perception of Cost Effectiveness	33%
9	Perceived Quality the total Extension program	33%
8	Perception of Importance	33%
7	Perception of value of county expenditure	33%
3	Economy of the county represented	33%
3	Economy of Rural County	33%
9	Efficiency of FCS program	31%
9	Efficiency of Ag program	31%
9	Perceived Efficiency of program	31%
8	Perception of Effectiveness	31%
3	Demographics of county represented	30%
3	Efficiency of 4-H program	29%
3	Efficiency of CD program	28%

Furthermore, as a measure of willingness to fund Extension, demographic components were ranked by the percentage of county commissioners that were found to have a favorable propensity to fund Extension indicating areas of strength, but not at the same level as very favorable. Table 4.18 exhibits the relationship among compiled quality components and the favorable ranked response by census respondents. The data from this table shows components that indicate a favorable response to funding Extension by county commissioners.

Table 4.18: *Compiled Components and Highest Favorable Response Ranked by Component*

Question #	Component	Favorable
3	Economy of suburban counties	77%
3	Demographics of county represented	68%
9	Perceived efficiency of program	68%
3	Efficiency of 4-H program	68%
8	Perception of effectiveness	67%
9	Efficiency of FCS program	67%
9	Efficiency of Ag program	67%
9	Quality of 4-H program	65%
9	Quality of FCS program	65%
9	Quality of AG program	65%
3	Economy of the county represented	65%
8	Perception of importance	65%
11	Perception of cost effectiveness	65%
7	Perception of value of county expenditure	65%
2	Previous occupation of county commissioner	64%
3	Economy of rural counties	61%
3	Efficiency of CD program	61%
9	Perceived quality the total extension program	60%
3	Economy of urban counties	58%
10	Prior personal experience with Extension	56%
10	Prior interaction with Extension	56%
9	Quality of CD program	44%

As a measure of willingness to fund extension, demographic components were ranked by the percentage of county commissioners that were found to be very favorable

and favorable to fund Extension. Table 4.19 exhibits the relationship among compiled quality components and the total favorable ranked response by census respondents. The data from this table shows components that indicate a very favorable and favorable response to funding Extension by county commissioners.

Table 4.19 *Compiled Components and Total Areas of Support Ranked by Component*

Question #	Component	Very favorable/favorable
3	Economy of urban counties	100%
2	Previous occupation of county commissioner	100%
9	Perceived efficiency of program	99%
10	Prior personal experience with Extension	98%
9	Quality of 4-H program	98%
9	Quality of FCS program	98%
9	Quality of AG program	98%
3	Economy of the county represented	98%
8	Perception of Importance	98%
11	Perception of cost effectiveness	98%
7	Perception of value of county expenditure	98%
8	Perception of effectiveness	98%
9	Efficiency of FCS program	98%
9	Efficiency of Ag program	98%
3	Demographics of county represented	98%
10	Prior interaction with Extension	97%
3	Efficiency of 4-H program	97%
3	Economy of Rural County	94%
9	Perceived quality the total extension program	93%
3	Economy of suburban counties	80%
3	Efficiency of CD program	62%
9	Quality of CD program	61%

As a measure of unwillingness to fund Extension, demographic components were ranked by the percentage of county commissioners that were found to have negative willingness to fund Extension. This data is the inverse of the very favorable and favorable data that is exhibited in Table 4.18 and Table 4.19. Table 4.20 exhibits the relationship among compiled quality components and the total negative ranked response by census

respondents. The data from this table shows components that indicate an inverse favorable or negative response to funding Extension by county commissioners.

Table 4.20: *Compiled Components and the Total Negative Ranked Response*

Question #	Component	Negative
9	Quality of CD program	23%
3	Efficiency of CD program	11%
9	Perceived Quality the total Extension program	7%
9	Perceived Efficiency of program	4%
10	Prior interaction with Extension	3%
8	Perception of Effectiveness	3%
10	Prior personal Experience with Extension	2%
11	Perception of Cost Effectiveness	2%
9	Quality of 4-H program	2%
9	Quality of FCS program	2%
9	Quality of AG program	2%
8	Perception of Importance	2%
7	Perception of value of county expenditure	2%
3	Economy of the county represented	2%
9	Efficiency of FCS program	2%
9	Efficiency of Ag program	2%
3	Demographics of county represented	2%
3	Efficiency of 4-H program	2%
3	Economy of urban counties	0%
2	Previous occupation of county commissioner	0%
3	Economy of rural counties	0%
3	Economy of suburban counties	0%

Respondents Comments

Census respondents were provided the opportunity to make comments regarding funding of Extension. The following comments are examples of the broad support shown for Extension by county commissioners.

> Extension gives us a very good return on our investments -- especially in youth programs. Extension is very important to us being a rural agricultural county. Extension is vital to our economy. We get a great bang from our buck.

> Good Program -- Keep operating. Great service --could help county with environmental challenges. Our Community has benefited from WSU Extension programs. We definitely get the money's worth for the public.
>
> WSU Extension in my county provides such a wide range of citizen support activities. The increase of County funds into these actives would serve our citizens far more than any other program the county could invest in.

Additionally census respondents made comment regarding how they use WSU Extension. These comments may provide further insight on how that use may affect potential future funding.

> I rely on WSU Extension to provide leadership in the above mentioned areas which the county itself does not have the service level to address. I would like to expand WSU's involvement particularly in the Children, Youth and Families area.
>
> I understand the decreasing commercial agriculture on the west side limits WSU's ability to provide Ag Extension Service -- but it makes it difficult for our farmers. Getting further involved in community and economic development will be extremely important as Extension’s old focus on farms and farmers is less and less relevant as there are so many fewer farms and those remaining rely heavily on industry providers with specialists on staff.

A final set of comments may offer insight into the potential of future funding by county for Extension. All of the comments were made regarding funding Extension with adequate funding for all county expenditures and insufficient funding to fund county expenditures.

> If I had more $, I would increase funding -- at this time we are fortunate to maintain existing levels. The key question is...With adequate resources. I worry about the possible need to cut other, more basic County programs, in order to keep WSU Extension programs going. WSU also needs to fund programs at a higher level. Although Extension has a strong, valuable constituency it is not a core function of county government, so in tough budget times it is a program that has to be evaluated thoroughly. Due to the extent of the programs' success throughout the county it would be one of the last areas I would recommend cutting. I believe that if it came to that (insufficient funding), we would need to provide private funding to continue these programs. If WSU Extension youth program benefits could be quantified in the criminal justice system then the cost and effects and benefits on fostering productive adults would justify all of the expense.

Summary

This study compiled and analyzed results from the quantitative data that provides observations into relationships among the knowledge and perception that Washington State county commissioners hold of WSU Extension and demographics of the county commissioners. The data illustrates there was a lack of predictability between the variables as gathered through the census. Therefore, there was limited statistical analysis. Consequently, there is minimal reliance on statistics with a margin of error. The relationships as presented were used to test the null hypotheses and provide meaning to the summary, conclusions, and recommendations as reported in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate and interpret the implications of the results and findings. This study adds to the empirical research base for adult education leadership, namely the administration of Extension systems, and will help shape theory, practice, and future investigation of the relationship between funding partners and the host organization. Higher education leaders can utilize this information to more effectively strategize to maintain and potentially increase funding from the various partners in the Extension system. The following sections discuss the summary of the findings from the analysis, presents conclusions and interferences based on those findings, make recommendations for theory and practice, and make recommendations for future research.

The purpose for this study was to determine the relationship between perceptions that the Washington State county commissioners hold of WSU Extension and their knowledge of WSU Extension. In addition, the study determined whether the county commissioners' perceptions and knowledge and/or understanding of Extension are related to and thereby may have predictability to their willingness to provide the essential local funding to continue the educational programs Extension delivers. In conclusion, the purpose addresses the level of interest of Washington State county commissioners have in funding WSU Extension, which directly affects the critical element of maximizing Extension's impact on society.

As a publicly funded educational organization, WSU Extension faces an uncertain fiscal future as funding partners face financial stress. Without funding from the key partners, such as county government, WSU Extension would not be able to continue to provide educational programming and nor would society benefit from the verifiable impacts that Extension has imparted for the past 100 years.

Findings

Research Question

The research question as stated is: What is the relationship among the perceptions held by Washington State county commissioners of WSU Extension with their knowledge or understanding of Extension, and their willingness or inclination to fund Extension?

Generally, the overall responses to questions having impact upon Extension were favorable or very favorable to Extension regardless of circumstances that might mitigate support such as a poor economy. This was indicated by 98% of the responding county commissioners. Based upon the overall findings, the Extension enjoys a relationship with county commissioners that appears robust to circumstances that might otherwise compromise that support. In instances when county commissioners are unfamiliar with specific program areas, quality of the program or lack sufficient knowledge to make a statement to the effectiveness of the program, 98% of the respondents are willing to continue to fund Extension at current or increased levels.

The responses to the census indicate a trend with three of the components examined in the study. Trends of the responses identify a predictive nature for the

components that include; (a) demographics and (b) economy of the district represented and (c) the previous occupation of the county commissioners.

Analysis of key issues provided areas of support that indicate the propensity to favorably continue to financially support Extension by the responding county commissioners. The components with the greatest level of the propensity to continue fund Extension by census respondents include economy of the counties, previous occupation of the county commissioners, perception of efficiency of Extension programs, perception of value of Extension and the perception of value of educational programs the agency delivers.

In response to the research question and based on the data, county commissioners in Washington State believe that WSU Extension is effective, the programs that Extension delivers are of good quality and beneficial to their constituents. Extension is considered a good value for the county expenditure. Census respondents are willing to fund Extension at present or higher levels. Regardless of the reported economy of the district represented, 98% of the county commissioners are willing to fund Extension at current or increased levels.

County commissioners have knowledge and understanding of Extension and the educational programs delivered to the constituents. Census respondents attend Extension programs, read Extension produced newsletters, join Extension educational organizations such as 4-H and access the web resources that Extension produces.

The null hypothesis was stated as: There will be no experimentally important or consistent correlation of Washington State county commissioners' perception of WSU Extension, knowledge thereof and willingness to fund Extension.

The null hypothesis is rejected based on the evidence exhibited in the analysis of the census data. There appears to be a trend between the Washington State county commissioners' perception of WSU, knowledge thereof and the willingness to fund Extension.

The study centered a series of questions that inquired demographic characteristics of Washington State county commissioners, their perception and knowledge of WSU Extension and the willingness to fund WSU Extension.

Demographics

The majority of census respondents represented rural districts within their respective counties and described the economy of that district as being "level." The respondents were generally in their first term or second term of office. Most of the respondents were either from an agricultural or private business background.

Eighteen respondents reported representing their district as a county commissioner for 1 – 5 years. Five respondents reported representing their district as a county commissioner/ county council member for 6 - 11 years. Six respondents reported representing their district as a county commissioner for 12 – 18 years. One respondent reported representing their district as a county commissioner for 35 years. Two respondents choose not to respond to the question.

While describing their career or chosen occupation before becoming County Commissioners 26% of the respondents listed their occupation as being agriculturally based. Private Business was listed as the occupation for 23% of the responding County Commissioners. Fourteen percent of the respondents selected "other" as their occupation.

In describing the district that they represent eighteen (41.86%) of the respondents described their district as rural. Thirteen (30.23%) described their district as rural/suburban. Nine (20.93%) described their district as rural/urban. Two (4.65%) described their district as suburban/urban. One (2.33%) respondent described their district as urban.

Furthermore, in describing the relative economy of the district that they represent, eight (18.6%) respondents indicated their district had a strong economy. Twenty-three (53.4 %) respondents indicated that their district had a level economy while 12 (27.9%) indicated that their district had a weak economy. Thirty four respondents indicated a range of taxable valuation from $286 Million to $31 Billion.

Knowledge of WSU Extension

Census respondents were knowledgeable of Extension and the programs the agency offers. As a measure of their familiarity of Extension, county commissioners reported that they access Extension programs. The program areas that encompass the largest participation of county commissioners were Agriculture and Natural Resources (67%) and 4-H Youth Development (70%). The Extension program methods that had the highest participation rate were reading an Extension newsletter or brochure (74%) and attending an Extension workshop or meeting (70%). Over one half of the respondents

have met with an Extension educator for personal consultation. Almost one quarter of the county commissioners have been a member or a family member has been a member of an Extension educational organization, such as 4-H.

Perceptions of WSU Extension

Washington State county commissioners perceive WSU Extension to be a good value for the county expenditure. Of the census respondents, 93% indicated that WSU Extension provided a good value for the county expenditure. No county commissioners indicated that WSU was not a good value for the county expenditure.

Most Washington State county commissioners identified the quality of the WSU Extension program areas as good or adequate. The Agriculture program area was perceived as having good or adequate quality by 97% of the census respondents, 4-H program area was perceived as having good or adequate quality by 95% of the respondents.

All of the respondents (100%) indicated that WSU Extension was cost effective or at least cost neutral. Washington State county commissioners view Extension programs to be efficient. Of the respondents, 91% indicated that Extension was effective or neutrally effective and 96% indicated that Extension was important or neutrally important. No county commissioner indicated that Extension was not effective or important.

Regarding the individual program areas of WSU Extension 97% of the respondents indicated that the agriculture program was good or adequate in program quality and efficiency and 95% indicated that the 4-H program was good or adequate in program quality and 69% in program efficiency. Community development and family

consumer science programs were called good or adequate in program quality by 67% and 77% of the county commissioners. These program areas were viewed as efficient by 55% and 84% of the respondents.

Census respondents indicated that the program delivery methods such as workshops, print media and membership in Extension educational organizations were viewed to have positive benefit. Workshops were considered to have positive benefit by 98% of the census respondents. Print media such as brochures or newsletters were considered of positive benefit by 94% of the respondents, and organizations such as 4-H clubs were considered of positive benefit by 98% of the county commissioners that responded to the census.

Willingness to Fund WSU Extension

Washington State county commissioners are willing to continue to fund WSU Extension. Almost all respondents (98%) indicated their willingness to fund Extension with adequate county resources. With insufficient county resources to fund all county obligations, 96% indicated favorable funding for Extension.

Relationship between Willingness to Fund WSU Extension and County Commissioners' Perceptions

Census respondents view Extension as being a cost effective, efficient and a good value for the county expenditure, and are willing to continue to fund Extension at either present levels or higher. A majority of county commissioners (82%) view Extension as cost effective and were willing to continue to fund Extension. When comparing value of

the county expenditure and willingness to fund Extension, 91% of the county commissioners were willing to continue to fund Extension.

County commissioners view Extension's educational programs to be of quality and have a favorable view of funding. Specifically with the agriculture program, 96% of respondents indicated that the program quality was adequate or better and were willing to continue to fund Extension at current or increased levels. Within the 4-H program area, 96% indicated adequate or better quality and were willing to continue funding Extension.

County commissioner view Extension program to be efficient and have a favorable view of funding. Within the agriculture program, 90% of the respondents indicated that the program was efficient and were willing to continue to fund Extension at current or increased levels. Additionally, 86% of the census respondents viewed the 4-H program as being efficient and were willing to continue to fund Extension at current or increased levels.

Relationship between County Commissioners' Knowledge and Perception of WSU Extension

Census respondents report that they are knowledgeable of Extension and the agency's program areas and access those programs. The respondents indicate that Extension and the programs the agency deliver are a good value, are cost effective, efficient, and important to their constituents.

Of the county commissioners that had accessed Extension through reading brochures or newsletters, 95% indicated that Extension was a good value. Of the respondents that had attended an Extension workshop, 100% viewed Extension as a good

value. A majority of census respondents (85%) that had interacted with the agriculture and 4-H programs indicated that Extension was important.

County commissioners (85%) that accessed Extension through reading brochures, attending workshops, consulting with Extension personnel or accessing Extension websites viewed Extension as important. All of the county commissioners (100%) that were a member or their family were members of educational organizations such 4-H clubs, indicated that Extension was important. Comparably, of those county commissioners that had accessed Extension through the various program areas, 100% indicated that Extension programs exhibited effectiveness. Of the respondents that access Extension through the various program deliver models, all indicated that Extension was effective.

Similarly, all of the commissioners that had accessed an Extension program area indicated that Extension was at least cost neutral. Of the respondents that access Extension through the various program deliver models, all indicated that Extension was cost effective.

Relationship between County Commissioners' Knowledge of WSU Extension and Their Willingness to Fund WSU Extension

Census respondents are knowledgeable of Extension and access the programs the agency delivers. County commissioners are willing to fund extension at either present levels or higher with adequate funding for all county obligations. When there is insufficient funding for all county obligations, county commissioners indicate that they

are willing to fund Extension at present levels or reduce funding proportionally to other county departments.

Of those county commissioners that indicate that they have had a past personal experience with Extension program areas, 98% indicate that they have a favorable view of funding Extension. Of the commissioners that accessed Extension by the various program methods, 96% indicate that they have a favorable view of funding Extension.

Relationship among Selected Demographic Characteristics, Perception and Knowledge and the Willingness to Fund WSU Extension

Census respondents are willing to fund Extension at present or higher levels without regard to prior occupation or population demographics of the district represented with adequate resources in the county. Regardless of the reported economy of the district represented, 98% of the county commissioners are willing to fund Extension at current or increased levels.

In general, 98% of the overall responses to questions having impact upon Extension were very favorable or favorable to Extension regardless of circumstances that might mitigate support such as a poor economy. Based upon the overall findings, Extension enjoys a relationship with county commissioners that appear to be robust to circumstances that might otherwise compromise that support. In instances when county commissioners are unfamiliar with specific program areas, quality of the program or lack sufficient knowledge to make a statement to the effectiveness of the program, 98% of the respondents are willing to continue to fund Extension at current or increase levels.

Other Key Findings

A majority of the census respondents indicated that they had knowledge of Extension, the program areas and the program methods that Extension uses. Yet some census participants had insufficient knowledge of the programs areas to have an opinion of the quality of the Extension program area. This was most prevalent in the Community Development and Family Consumer Sciences program areas. These same county commissioners are willing to fund Extension at present or higher levels with insufficient knowledge of the program area.

County commissioners were given the opportunity to provide response through written comments. The written comments of the county commissioners offer valuable insight to WSU Extension and the educational programs the agency provides. The county commissioners identified additional levels of support for Extension through these comments. County commissioners identified youth, family and community development as areas of programmatic need identification and potential for increased funding. While commissioners identified agricultural educational programs as a need within their counties, some lamented the reduction in farmers and the resulting redirection of programmatic efforts.

Conclusions

County commissioners in Washington State are knowledgeable of WSU Extension and the educational programs the agency delivers. These county commissioners access the WSU Extension programs and believe these programs are of good quality, and are efficient and effective. Census respondents view Extension as cost

effective and important to their counties. The county commissioners are willing to fund Extension at present or higher levels without regard to relative economy of the district represented or interaction with the specific program area or programming method with adequate resources in the county.

There appears to be a trend of county commissioners to be willing to fund Extension based on the demographics of the district represented and economy of those districts and the previous occupation of the county commissioners. Components regarding perception of Extension may lend to the continued financial support of Extension. Conversely, lack of knowledge and the related components of perception may negatively affect continued financial support.

Recommendations

This section explores implications of this research on WSU Extension and makes recommendations regarding WSU Extension and the theory and practice of maintain funding from the locally based funding partner, the county commissioner. WSU Extension leaders can utilize this information to more effectively strategize to maintain and potentially increase funding from the various partners in the Extension system.

Recommendations for Theory and Practice

WSU Extension must continue to develop, implement and evaluate educational programs with the impact on society as the focus. These programs must meet the needs of the community and the constituents served. Extension must continue to diversify its clientele base to build broad based constituent support throughout all counties and within all counties.

To alleviate stakeholder concern regarding the loss of Extension programming, WSU Extension must increase the knowledge level of county commissioners of the program areas, delivery methods and impacts of the program. This in turn may lead to higher perceptions of quality and the propensity to continue to fund Extension. Clearly, county commissioners that attend Extension educational programs through a variety of methods have a higher propensity to fund Extension.

WSU Extension faculty must engage the county commissioners in the educational programs. The education of the county commissioners may be enhanced by involving the commissioners in the program delivery. County commissioners must begin to own the Extension program in their county and develop pride in the accomplishments. Commissioners can present certificates of accomplishments to program participants, dedicate public demonstrations and displays and where appropriate teach topics to the public through Extension efforts.

It is apparent through data analysis, that some county commissioners have insufficient knowledge of some program areas to be able to make judgments as to the quality and importance of those programs. This fact may affect the county commissioners' long term financial support of Extension. An increase in knowledge base would suggest greater support for Extension. This knowledge increase would be facilitated by interaction by county commissioners with Extension and the programs the agency delivers. Extension faculty must articulate program efforts and impacts and actively engage county commissioners in the development, implementation and evaluation of educational programs.

While Extension must strive to increase the knowledge base of county commissioners for all of the program areas, it is imperative that knowledge Community Development and Family Consumer Science program areas and the impacts of these programs become common place with county commissioners. While commissioners support those program areas, the data indicated that the commissioners have insufficient knowledge of those program areas and hence may affect long term funding. Extension must be proactive in delivering quality programs in these areas and report impacts on society to all decision makers. These must not be "silent" programs or programs that are unknown to county commissioners. The faculty that delivers these programs must bring the programs to the public eye. The public, and therefore the commissioners, must learn of the programs, the clientele that the program reaches and the impact that these programs deliver.

Extension faculty must develop clientele advocates for the agency and the educational programs that Extension delivers. The commissioners indicate that at the current time they rely primarily on their own knowledge in the decision process regarding funding Extension programs. There was a void of influence by constituents in the funding process. Constituents should be taught how to share impacts with decision-makers and advocate for sustained funding.

WSU Extension must become true partners in the county government system and assist county government officials in meeting their goals regarding issues that affect the constituents in that county. Extension faculty must engage in programming that assist the county in meeting its priorities. These priorities are often set by commissioners in

strategic planning sessions that may or may not include Extension representation. Extension must be included in those priority setting processes and must plan appropriate educational programs to assist the commissioners in meeting those priorities. This action will increase the value of Extension to the local decision maker.

The relationship within the county government structure must be enhanced through regular interaction with the elected officials and their appointed staffs. Almost a quarter of the respondents to this census were County Commissioner's staff that had the task delegated to them. These staff, which included administrative assistants, budget officers and county executives, can become advocates for Extension and the programs the agency delivers when they have knowledge of the breadth and depth of the programs and the impacts on society that the programs deliver.

Active public relations strategies must be employed to inform stakeholders of impact of programs on society. Relationships with media that can share this information with stakeholders must be enhanced. Targeted reporting through the media of program impacts may increase knowledge of stakeholders and county commissioners. Extension faculty must be trained in effective methodologies in working with media to share program development and impacts of those programs.

Staffing of counties may need to be abridged to incorporate a broader base of program area representation throughout counties. Possibilities for staffing alignment to program areas may include area or regional assignments for faculty and broader based subject matter local Extension faculty. These broad-based or generalist faculty can become brokers of educational programs to meet community needs. This change in

staffing may alleviate the lack of program delivery in all program areas in all counties. Where staffing does not permit broad based programming in all program areas, commissioners should be taught the programming efforts and impacts from a cumulative, regional basis.

Extension must address components that are associated with lack of support for Extension. Several components were associated with lack of support for Extension. These components are associated with the perception that county commissioners hold of Extension and the non-formal educational programs the agency offers. That lack of support for Extension was tied to the perception of lack of quality, efficiency and effectiveness of Extension programs. As shown through the findings, to effectively affect the perception of the county commissioners regarding these components, Extension faculty must increase the participation of county commissioners in the programs to increase their knowledge base. County commissioners that participate in Extension programs support funding Extension.

Other components that may affect the potential funding include the demographics and economy of the county represented and previous occupation of the county commissioners. County directors must be aware of these components when developing strategies when working with county commissioners. There is seemingly a trend for a poor economy to cause hesitation in funding Extension. Extension county directors, when submitting the county budget, must take that component into consideration. The county directors need to develop political savvy in developing county budget requests. Funding from counties can be increased in periods of economic strength and maintained during

periods of economic downturns. WSU Extension administration should plan accordingly and increase the skill base of the county director to negotiate the increase with the county funding partners. The county director must make a conscious effort to learn about the county commissioners, their issues of concern and which clientele groups have credibility with them.

Extension should use the information that identifies the conditions that capitalize on very favorable and favorable responses for Extension funding by county commissioners. This information should be used to develop a matrix which can be used to anticipate when funding is secure and prepare budget proposals accordingly. Likewise, the predictive nature of some data should be used to enhance Extensions base knowledge regarding when to request additional local funding.

Extension must strive to maintain areas presently enjoying strong support. Generally speaking, these areas of support include prior personal experience with Extension. As county commissioners interact with Extension, their perception of program quality, importance, effectiveness, efficiency of Extension, and value of Extension increase. These interactions of county commissioner with Extension must be continued and enhanced for Extension to continue to enjoy the strong support it currently receives from the census respondents.

To insure that interactions continue, Extension must take similar steps as outlined to address increasing the knowledge base of county commissioners. Extension must continue to involve the county commissioners in Extension programs, continue to deliver high impact programming in all program areas, build relationships with county

commissioners and their staffs, report programmatic impacts in a systematic matter, and build clientele advocacy systems.

WSU Extension must continue to diversify funding sources. WSU Extension has made strides in developing funding from public and private sources. This must continue and become an expectation for performance with all faculty and program staff. WSU Extension must continue to pursue funding sources from other partners. These partners could include municipalities, other state agencies and county departments that share similar missions, but lack the expertise or capacity to deliver the educational programs.

While Extension enjoys a positive relationship with the county commissioners that responded to the census, the agency must be cautious in regards to its future and the future of funding on the local level. County government will continue to suffer from an increase in funding demands from sectors such as health care and the justice system. Coupled with the inability to increase revenue through various tax strategies, the county commissioners will have to make ever increasingly difficult choices regarding programs to be funded. Extension, as a non-mandated program within county government, must build a strong bond with these locally based funding partners. The strategies outlined in the recommendations may assist Extension in the continuation of the funding base. If Extension maintains the status quo of taking for granted the support of the local based decision makers funding will in all probability decrease and will be in jeopardy of loss of this funding source. The current paradigm of locally based, non-formal educational programs designed to meet local needs by WSU Extension would change dramatically. New paradigms of engagement for the land grant university's tripartite mission of

education, research and service would need to be revealed and implemented. A new paradigm for Extension would need to be unveiled, as the current paradigm would not exist.

Recommendations for Further Study

The conclusions from this research study along with findings in other studies in the area of funding of relationships that affect the funding of non-formal educational programs such as WSU Extension lead to the advance of the knowledge base of the agency and others that utilize non-mandated funding to support their educational objectives. Further studies of local decision-makers are important to the agency and to the recipients of the educational programs the agency delivers as well as the impact that these programs have on society.

This study can serve as base-line information on Washington State county commissioners, their perception, knowledge and willingness to fund WSU Extension. This type of study should be repeated periodically to access changes in knowledge, perception and the willingness to fund WSU Extension by this local funding partner.

In designing those reoccurring studies, experiences gained from this study should be taken into consideration. Future studies should use traditional survey method along with electronic surveys to efficiently and effectively collect the data. While each county commissioner has an email address, not all check their email and were unfamiliar with electronic surveys. A limitation to this study was the evidence of cluster sampling, where census respondents would complete the survey jointly, or as collective memory of

administrative support and report as one representative. This methodology may be a benefit for the Extension organization and should be considered for future study.

Budget pressures are increasing on all Extension funding partners. Studies should be conducted of Washington State and national officials' familiarity, perceptions of effectiveness, knowledge of and willingness to fund Extension.

Extension should study the current program areas of Agriculture, 4-H Youth Development, Community Development and Family Consumer Sciences to determine whether they are relevant in today and tomorrow's society. Program areas could be redesigned to lend to contemporary society as research determines.

McDowell (2004) asked if Extension is an idea whose time has come--and gone. Continuing research into the relationships among decision-makers' knowledge, perception and willingness to fund the agency may further counter his question with empirical data instead of supposition. The data may very well show that Extension is an idea that has a future that is sustained through partnerships with the decision makers that hold the key of continued funding.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Census Instrument

WSU Extension County Partner Census

This census is designed to explore the relationship between the Washington county commissioners and county council members and Washington State University Extension. County government and Washington State University Extension have had a close working relationship since the 1920's. It is our continuing objective to enhance the programs provided to the citizens of the State and augment our partnership with county government and county commissioners/council members.

Please tell us about yourself.

1. How many years have, including the present year, have you represented your district as a county commissioner/ county council member? _____ Years

2. Prior to becoming a county commissioner/county council member, what was or is your occupation? Please indicate below.

□ Agriculture	□ Education	□ Private Business
□ Construction	□ Public Service	□ Professional
□ Law Enforcement	□ Military	□ Other - please identify: _____

Please share information regarding your district.

3. What demographics do you consider your district to have and what is the relative economy of the district?

District	Economy of District		
□ Rural	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
□ Rural/Suburban	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
□ Suburban	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
□ Rural/Urban	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
□ Suburban/Urban	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak

□ Urban □ Strong □ Level □ Weak

4. Please list the taxable valuation of your county. _____$

Please share your views of WSU Extension.

5. Does WSU Extension serve as a positive model of county expenditures?

□ Yes □ No □ No opinion regarding value of WSU Extension

6. Does WSU Extension provide a good value for county expenditures?

□ Yes □ No □ No opinion regarding value of WSU Extension

7. Based upon your knowledge of WSU Extension and the educational programs that its educators deliver, please rate the level in which you believe that WSU Extension is important and effective.

Importance of WSU Extension:

□ Important	□ Neutral importance	□ Not important	□ Not enough knowledge to have an opinion on importance

Effectiveness of WSU Extension:

□ Effective	□ Neutral effectiveness	□ Not effective	□ Not enough knowledge to have an opinion of effectiveness

8. WSU Extension provides educational program in several broad areas. Please list the program areas in which you are familiar and have basis to judge the quality and efficiency. Use as many blanks as necessary to list the program areas in which you are familiar.

Name of Program Area	Level of Quality	Level of Efficiency

_____ □ Good □ Adequate □ Poor □ Efficient □ Neutral □ Not Efficient

_____ □ Good □ Adequate □ Poor □ Efficient □ Neutral □ Not Efficient

_____ □ Good □ Adequate □ Poor □ Efficient □ Neutral □ Not Efficient

_____ □ Good □ Adequate □ Poor □ Efficient □ Neutral □ Not Efficient

_____ □ Good □ Adequate □ Poor □ Efficient □ Neutral □ Not Efficient

9. Based upon your knowledge do you believe that WSU Extension is?

□ Cost Effective □ Cost Neutral □ Not Cost Effective

10. With Adequate resources how willing are you to continue to fund WSU Extension at:

□ Present Levels □ Higher Level □ Lower Level

11. Given insufficient resources to fund all county obligations, funding for WSU Extension should be:

□ Maintained at present levels □ Reduced proportionally □ Reduced disproportionally

12. WSU Extension delivers its educational programs using many different methods. Please list all of the methods with which you are familiar and rate on how well the method serves your clientele using the following scale. Please use as many blanks as you need to address all of the program delivery methods using the following scale.

Name of Program Delivery Method	Level of Service to Clientele
_____	□ Beneficial □ Neutral □ Not Beneficial
_____	□ Beneficial □ Neutral □ Not Beneficial
_____	□ Beneficial □ Neutral □ Not Beneficial
_____	□ Beneficial □ Neutral □ Not Beneficial

_____	□ Beneficial □ Neutral □ Not Beneficial
_____	□ Beneficial □ Neutral □ Not Beneficial
_____	□ Beneficial □ Neutral □ Not Beneficial

13. Given sufficient resources WSU Extension programs merit continued funding:

Programs that merit funding	Programs that do not merit funding
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____

14. Under conditions of insufficient funding, in order to maintain quality WSU Extension program I am willing to:

Please check all that apply:

□ Not willing to increase revenue

□ Increase taxes

□ Help obtain outside revenue such as grants

□ Lobby State legislature for increased funding

□ Other_____

Thank you for completing this census!!!

Appendix B

Census Instrument with Raw Data

WSU Extension County Partner Questionnaire

This survey is designed to explore the relationship between the Washington county commissioners or county council members and Washington State University Extension. County government and Washington State University Extension have had a close working relationship since the 1920's. It is our continuing objective to enhance the programs provided to the citizens of the state and augment our partnership with county government and county commissioners/council members.
Please tell us about yourself.

1. How many years, including the present year, have you represented your district as a county commissioner/ county council member? _____ Years

18 respondents reported representing their district as a county commissioner/ county council member for 1 – 5 years

5 respondents reported representing their district as a county commissioner/ county council member for 6 - 11 years

6 respondents reported representing their district as a county commissioner/ county council member for 12 – 18 years

1 respondent reported representing their district as a county commissioner/ county council member for 35 years

2 respondents choose to respond N/A

Range was from 1 – 35 years with a mean of 6.7 years

2. Prior to becoming a county commissioner/county council member, what was or is your occupation? Please indicate below.

25.8%	*16 respondents*	*Agriculture*
22.6%	*14 respondents*	*Private Business*
14.5%	*9 respondents*	*Other:*
9.7%	*6 respondents*	*Public Service*
8.1%	*5 respondents*	*Education*
8.1%	*5 respondents*	*Professional*
6.5%	*4 respondents*	*Construction*
4.8%	*3 respondents*	*Military*

Identified as Other include: Dept. Manager, Nursing, Project Management/Consulting, State Representative, and Student,

Please share information regarding your district.

3. What demographics do you consider your district to have and what is the relative economy of the district?

District	Economy of District		
□ Rural	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
18 respondents 42%	(2, 12, %)	(7, 38%)	(9, 50%)
□ Rural/Suburban	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
13 respondents 30%	(4, 31%)	(8, 62%)	(1, 7%)
□ Suburban	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
0 respondents	(0)	(0)	(0)
□ Rural/Urban	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
9 respondents 21%	(1, 11%)	(6, 67%)	(2, 22%)
□ Suburban/Urban	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
2 respondents 5%	(1, 50%)	(1, 50%)	(0)
□ Urban	□ Strong	□ Level	□ Weak
1 respondents 2%	(0)	(1, 100%)	(0)

4. Please list the taxable valuation of your county. _____$

Thirty four respondents indicated a range of taxable valuation from $1,688,154,000 to $31,000,000,000. The mean of responding counties was $11,411,088,652.

To help us understand your knowledge of WSU Extension programs, please share your views of WSU Extension.

5. WSU Extension provides educational program in several broad areas. Please list, in your own words, the program areas with which you are familiar. Use as many blanks as necessary to list the program areas with which you are familiar. Later the questionnaire will describe program and delivery in WSU Extension terms and ask some different questions.

Name of Program Area

86 respondents identified Agriculture and Natural Resources (Commercial agriculture, Master Gardiners, Small Farms Program, etc.)

24 respondents identified Community Development (Economic Development, Leadership skill training, etc.)

26 respondents identified Family Consumer Sciences
(Food $ense, Parenting, etc.)
11 identified 4-H Youth Development
(4-H Clubs, Camps, etc.)

6. WSU Extension delivers its educational programs using many different methods. Please list, in your own words, the methods with which you are familiar. Use as many blanks as necessary to list the program delivery methods with which you are familiar.

Name of Program Delivery Method

One on One Consultation *identified by 22 respondents*

Workshops classes *identified by 39 respondents*

Print media *identified by 20 respondents*

Electronic media *identified by 16 respondents*

Clubs/Organizations *identified by 17 respondents*

7. Does WSU Extension provide a good value for county expenditures?

□ Yes	□ No	□ No opinion regarding value of WSU Extension
93%	0%	*7.0%*
40 respondents		*3 respondents*

8. Based upon your knowledge of WSU Extension and the educational programs that its educators deliver, please rate the level to which you believe that WSU Extension is important and effective.

Importance of WSU Extension:

□ Important	□ Neutral importance	□ Not important	□ Not enough knowledge to have an opinion on importance
83%	*12%*	*0%*	*5%*
36 respondents	*5 respondents*	*0 respondents*	*2 respondents*

Effectiveness of WSU Extension:

□ Effective	□ Neutral effectiveness	□ Not effective	□ Not enough knowledge to have an opinion of effectiveness
67% 29 respondents	*23% 10 respondents*	*0% 0 respondents*	*10% 4 respondents*

9. WSU Extension provides educational programs in several broad areas. Listed below are the program areas commonly attributed to Extension. Please check the appropriate box to indicate level of quality and efficiency for the listed program areas. If you are unfamiliar with the program area please mark the appropriate box.

Name of Program Area			Level of Quality
4-H Youth Development (4-H Clubs, Camps, etc.)	*80%*	*34 respondents*	*Good*
	16%	*7 respondents*	*Adequate*
	5%	*2 respondents*	*Insufficient knowledge of program*
Family Consumer Sciences (Food $ense, Parenting, etc.)	*40%*	*17respondents*	*Adequate*
	37%	*16 respondents*	*Good*
	23%	*10 respondents*	*Insufficient knowledge of program*
Community Development (Economic Development, Leadership skill training, etc.)	*37%*	*16 Respondents*	*Good*
	30%	*13 Respondents*	*Adequate*
	26%	*11 Respondents*	*Insufficient knowledge of program*
	7.0%	*3 Respondents*	*Poor*
Agriculture and Natural Resources (Commercial agriculture, Master Gardiners, Small Farms Program, etc.)	*82%*	*35 Respondents*	*Good*
	16%	*7 Respondents*	*Adequate*
	2%	*1 Respondents*	*Poor*

Name of Program Area	Level of Efficiency (potential answers included □ Good □ Adequate □ Poor □ Insufficient knowledge)		
4-H Youth Development (4-H Clubs, Camps, etc.)	*74%*	*31 Respondents*	*Good*
	12%	*5 Respondents*	*Adequate*
	12%	*5 Respondents*	*Insufficient knowledge of program*

	2%	*1 Respondents*	*Poor*
Family Consumer Sciences	*43%*	*18 Respondents*	*Adequate*
(Food $ense, Parenting, etc.)	*31%*	*13 Respondents*	*Insufficient knowledge of program*
	26%	*11 Respondents*	*Good*
Community Development	*38%*	*16 Respondents*	*Insufficient knowledge of program*
(Economic Development,	*29%*	*12 Respondents*	*Adequate*
Leadership skill training,)	*26%*	*11 Respondents*	*Good*
	7%	*3 Respondents*	*Poor*
Agriculture and Natural	*64%*	*27 Respondents*	*Good*
Resources	*26%*	*11 Respondents*	*Adequate*
(Commercial agriculture,	*7%*	*3 Respondents*	*Insufficient knowledge of program*
Master Gardiners, Small Farms	*2%*	*1 Respondents*	*Poor*
Program, etc.)			

10. Of the program areas listed above, with which do you have personal past experiences?

Name of Program Area		
4-H Youth Development	*37%*	*30 respondents*
Family Consumer Sciences	*6%*	*5 respondents*
Community Development	*21%*	*17 respondents*
Agriculture and Natural Resources	*36%*	*29 respondents*

How have you interacted with Extension?		
Read brochure or newsletters	*30%*	*32 respondents*
Attended workshop or meeting	*29%*	*31 respondents*
Personal Consultation	*25%*	*27 respondents*
Member or a family member is a member of one of Extension's educational organizations (4-H, Master Gardener, Commodity group, etc.)	*9%*	*10 respondents*
Accessed Web site or list serve	*7%*	*8 respondents*

11. Based upon your knowledge which of the following do you believe describes WSU Extension?

Cost Effective	84%	36 *respondents*
Cost Neutral	16%	7 respondents
Not Cost Effective	0	*respondents*

12. With adequate resources how willing are you to continue to fund WSU Extension at:

Present Levels	*65%*	*28 respondents*

Higher Level	*32%*	*14 respondents*
Lower Level	*2%*	*1 respondent*

Comments:

Extension gives us a very good return on our investments -- especially in youth programs.

Extension is very important to us being a rural agricultural county. Extension is vital to our economy.

We get a great bang from our buck. Good program -- keep operating.

Great service --could help county with environmental challenges.

Our community has benefited from WSU Extension programs.

We definitely get the money's worth for the public.

WSU Extension in my county provides such a wide range of citizen support activities. The increase of county funds into these actives would serve our citizens far more than any other program the county could invest in.

I rely on WSU Extension to provide leadership in the above mentioned areas which the county itself does not have the service level to address.

I would like to expand WSU's involvement particularly in the Children, Youth and Families area.

I understand the decreasing commercial agriculture on the west side limits WSU's ability to provide Ag Extension Service -- but it makes it difficult for our farmers.

Getting further involved in community and economic development will be extremely important as extensions old focus on farms and farmers is less and less relevant

as there are so many fewer farms and those remaining rely heavily on industry providers with specialists on staff.

13. Given insufficient resources to fund all county obligations, funding for WSU Extension should be:

Maintained at present levels	*67%*	*29 respondents*
Reduced proportionally	*28%*	*12 respondents*
Reduced disproportionately	*5%*	*2 respondents*

Comments:

If I had more $, I would increase funding -- at this time we are fortunate to maintain existing levels.

The key question is...With adequate resources. I worry about the possible need to cut other, more basic County programs, in order to keep WSU Extension programs going.

WSU also needs to fund programs at a higher level. Although Extension has a strong, valuable constituency it is not a core function of county government, so in tough budget times it is a program that has to be evaluated thoroughly.

Due to the extent of the programs' success throughout the county it would be one of the last areas I would recommend cutting.

I believe that if it came to that (insufficient funding), we would need to provide private funding to continue these programs.

If WSU Extension youth program benefits could be quantified in the criminal justice system then the cost and effects and benefits on fostering productive adults would justify all of the expense.

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14. WSU Extension delivers its educational programs using many different methods. Please list all of the methods with which you are familiar and rate on how well the method serves your clientele using the following scale. Please use as many blanks as you need to address all of the program delivery methods using the following scale.

Name of Program Delivery Method			
One on One	*72%*	*31 respondents*	Beneficial
Consultation	*16%*	*7 respondents*	Insufficient knowledge
	12%	*5 respondents*	Neutral
Workshops	*93%*	*40 respondents*	Beneficial
and Classes	*57%*	*2 respondents*	Neutral
	2%	*1 respondent*	Insufficient knowledge
Print media	*63%*	*27 respondents*	Beneficial
(newsletters,	*30%*	*13 respondents*	Neutral
publications)	*5%*	*2 respondents*	Insufficient knowledge
	2%	*1 respondent*	Not Beneficial
Electronic	47%	20 *respondents*	Beneficial
media	30%	13 *respondents*	Neutral
(list serves,	19%	8 *respondents*	Insufficient knowledge
web sites)	4%	2 *respondents*	Not Beneficial
Clubs and	86%	37 *respondents*	Beneficial
Organizations	11%	5 *respondents*	Neutral
(4-H Clubs,	2%	1 *respondent*	Insufficient knowledge
Commodity groups)			

15. Given sufficient resources, what WSU Extension programs merit continued funding?

Programs that merit funding	Programs that do not merit funding
1. __*4-H (37 identified)*_____	1. _____*Family Consumer Sciences (2)*
2. __*Ag and Natural Resources (41)*	2. _____
3. __*Community Development (15)*	3. _____
4. ___*Family Consumer Sciences (18)*	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____

16. I am inclined, under conditions of insufficient funding, in order to maintain quality WSU Extension programs, as a County Commissioner/ Council Member to:

(Please check all that apply).

Help obtain outside revenue such as grants	46%	36 *respondents*
Lobby state legislature for increased funding	40%	31 *respondents*
Not willing to increase revenue	9%	7 *respondents*
Other:	4%	3 *respondents*
Increase taxes	1%	1 *respondent*

Comments/Notes:

Encourage & support volunteers - leaders
Fees for services

17. Which of the following do you rely upon for guidance in approval of WSU Extension funding? Please check the box of all that you rely upon for giving guidance in approval of WSU Extension funding. Of boxes checked, please number the following by priority in providing guidance with 1 being primary in providing guidance.

□	Participants of Extension programs	*1 (18), 2 (11), 3 (6), 4 (1), 5 (1)*
□	Personal Knowledge	*1 (23), 2 (8), 3 (6), 4 (1), 5 (1)*
□	Taxpayers	*1 (7), 2 (6), 3 (7), 4 (7), 5 (3)*
□	County Executive	*1 (3), 2 (4), 3 (2), 4 (5), 5 (0), 6 (1)*
□	Budget Officer	*1 (8), 2 (9), 3 (5), 4 (3), 5 (3), 6 (1)*
□	Administrative Assistant	*1 (1), 2 (2), 3 (2), 4 (3), 5 (1), 6 (1)*
□	Other_____	.

7 identified fellow Commissioners
2 identified Lobbying by Extension Administrator

18. While this survey is being sent to County Commissioners/Council Members, often this type of work is delegated to another person. Please indicate the position of the person that completed this survey.

County Commissioner/Council Member	*83%*	*36*
Administrative Assistant	*5%*	*2*
Budget Officer	*5%*	*2*
County Executive	*2%*	*1*
Other:	*2%*	*1*

Comments/Notes for "Other:":
Administrative Services Director

Appendix C

Email Request to County Commissioners

Dear County Commissioner/County Council Member

County government and Washington State University Extension have had a close working relationship since the 1920's. It is our continuing objective to enhance the programs provided to the citizens of the State and augment our partnership with county government and county commissioners/council members. One of the methods that we can use to enhance our relationship is to question you, the local elected officials regarding your views of WSU Extension and the educational programs our faculty delivers.

This census is designed to explore the relationship between the Washington county commissioners or county council members and Washington State University Extension. This survey asks specifically about your perceptions and knowledge of WSU Extension and your inclination to provide funding. It takes about 20 minutes to complete, but the time may be shorter.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You are free to choose whether or not to participate. There will be no penalty if you choose not to participate. All the information you give is anonymous and your name will not be associated with the results. The findings will be reported only in summary form so no individual can ever be identified.

To take the survey, please click on this link: http://ext.wsu.edu./CountyPartner.html

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study you can contact Jim Lindstrom, WSU Extension Educator at jlindstr@wsu.edu or 509.477.2170. Information gained from the survey will also be used by Jim to complete his dissertation as part of his Doctorate of Education through the University of Montana.

This survey has been reviewed and approved for human subject participation by WSU Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a participant, contact WSU Institutional Review Board at 409.335.9661 or irb@wsu.edu.

Thank you.

Linda Kirk-Fox, Ph.D.
WSU Extension Dean and Director