

Exhibition Experiences and Adult Interactions in Youth Livestock Projects



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What is a Livestock Project?

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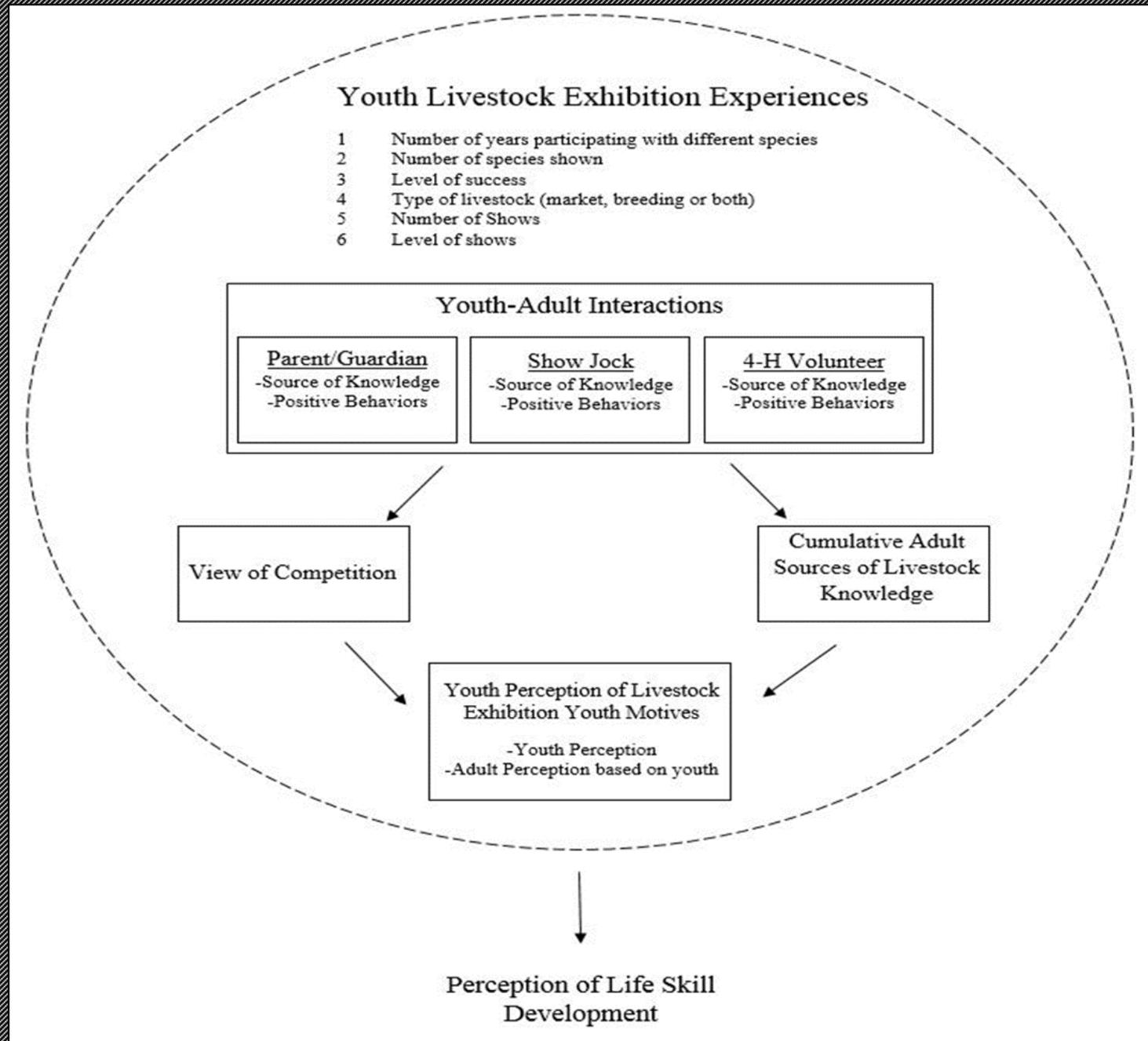
- Beef, goats, sheep and swine.
- Largest animal science project that enables youth to develop their interest in a particular species.
- Youth livestock exhibitors learn:
 - Animal selection
 - Animal care
 - Animal nutrition
 - Animal health
 - Record keeping
- Youth exhibitors competitively exhibit their livestock project at a county or state fair (Purdue University Extension, 2015).

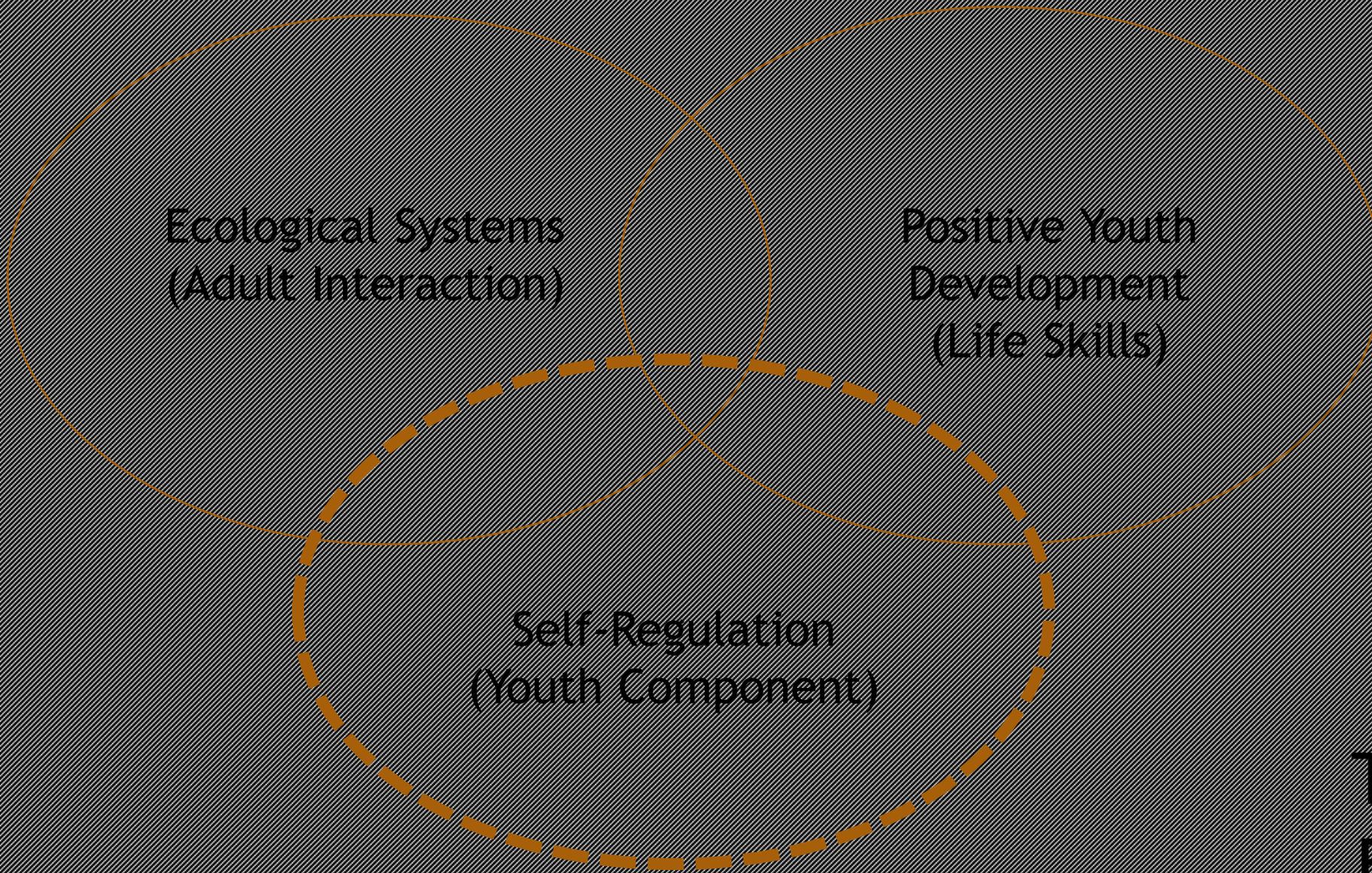
Youth-Adult Interactions in Livestock Projects

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- Youth-Adult interactions are a critical feature to the development, psychology and engagement of youth (Zeldin, Christens, & Powers, 2013).
- Social interactions allow adults to pass on information, values and goals on to youth, directing youth's thinking in a specific area of interest (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).
- Project workshops, activities and livestock shows allow youth to engage with their Extension Educator and 4-H volunteer.
- Youth exhibitors also interact with their parents, feed specialists, show jocks and other agricultural professionals (Jarrett, Sullivan, & Watkins, 2005).

Conceptual Framework





Theoretical
Framework

Purpose

- The purpose of this study was to describe exhibition experiences and adult sources of livestock knowledge of livestock project exhibitors and to explain how those factors shape youth exhibitor's view of competition and exhibition motives.



Research Questions

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1. What were youth exhibitors' livestock exhibition experiences (i.e., number of years participating with different species, number of species shown, level of success, type of livestock shown, number of shows, level of shows)?
2. Which adults (i.e., parent/guardian, show jock, 4-H volunteer), according to the youths' perceptions, served as sources of livestock knowledge and modeled positive behaviors regarding livestock exhibition?
3. What were youth exhibitors' views of competition and perceptions of livestock exhibition motives (i.e., youth perception, youth's perception of parent/guardian)?

Participants

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- Youth Livestock Exhibition Experiences Survey
- 159 participants/livestock exhibitors.
- Criteria:
 - Were a full time student enrolled in at least one agriculture course.
 - Were a member of 4-H.
 - Participated in either a beef, sheep, swine or goat project.

- Average age: 15 years
- Average years in 4-H: 6.72
- Male: 60.4% Female: 39.6%
- Species shown most among participants: swine (47.2%)
- Species shown least among participants: goat (11.9%)



FINDINGS

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Participants reported their parent as their main source of livestock knowledge and skills.

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Knowledge Source	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Parent	8.21	4.46
Show Jock	2.50	3.58
4-H Volunteer	0.94	2.11

According to youth's perceptions, adults modeled highly positive behaviors when working with youth in a livestock project.

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	Median		
	Parent/ Guardian (N=159)	Show Jock (N=97)	4-H Volunteer (N=74)
My (parent/guardian, show jock, 4-H volunteer)...			
...gets upset with me when I don't perform well with my livestock.*	4	5	5
...is proud of me when I don't do well in the show ring.	4	3	4
...relationship has improved.	4	4	4
...and I had good conversations when showing livestock.	4	4	4
...is controlling and manipulative.*	5	5	5
...encouraged me to do something morally wrong.*	5	5	5
Grand Mean (SD)	4.08 (0.61)	4.01 (0.59)	4.09 (0.60)

*Negatively worded items were reverse coded.

Note. 1 = Not at All; 2 = A Little; 3 = Sometimes; 4 = Quite a Bit; 5 = Yes Definitely

Participants revealed that competition was a driving force behind their motivation to strive for excellence in their livestock project.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Statement:	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)	<i>f</i> (%)
Competition is beneficial to my positive development.	0(0%)	5(3.1%)	78(49.1%)	76(47.8%)
Livestock exhibition places too much emphasis on competition.*	18(11.4%)	75(47.2%)	59(37.3%)	6(3.8%)
Competition provides me with better learning experiences.	1(0.6%)	9(5.7%)	56(35.4%)	92(58.2%)
Competition encourages cheating.*	54(34.6%)	47(30.1%)	40(25.6%)	15(9.6%)
Competition is an incentive to participate in livestock exhibition.	8(5.1%)	31(19.9%)	82(52.6%)	35(22.4%)
Competition motivates me to strive for excellence.	2(1.3%)	7(4.4%)	46(28.9%)	104(65.4%)
Competition encourages improper parental attitudes.*	43(27.2%)	70(44.3%)	39(24.7%)	6(3.8%)
I am happy for those that win.	6(3.8%)	15(9.4%)	87(54.7%)	51(32.1%)

Agreement of Exhibition Motives

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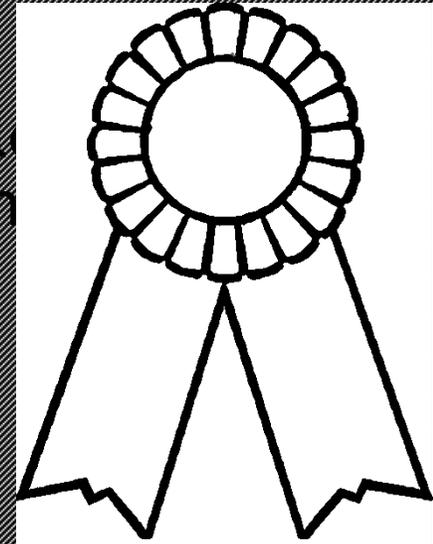
Agreement vs. Disagreement	<i>f</i> (%)
Agreement: Competition	4 (26.7%)
Disagreement: Youth- Competition/Parent- Learning	11 (73.3%)

Agreement vs. Disagreement	<i>f</i> (%)
Agreement: Learning	138 (97.2%)
Disagreement: Youth Learning/Parent- Competition	4 (2.8%)

Conclusions

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- Extension educators and 4-H volunteers can use the information gained from this study to improve and develop livestock species programs and volunteer training that includes instructions and strategies on teaching youth livestock exhibitors about their project.
- Parents, volunteers, show jocks and extension professionals should be aware of the relationships youth livestock exhibitors have with them.



Questions?

