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COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN PENNSYLVANIAN HIGH SCHOOLS WITH AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

In order to build sustainable communities it is critical to understand the connection between youth leadership development and community development. Youth leadership is vital to develop, maintain, and sustain communities. Thus, it is critical to provide youth with leadership experiences that allow them to act collectively for the betterment of their communities. Alternatively, while a wide array of programs claim contributions towards community development, they focus on providing youth with individual leadership skills, and do not provide them with opportunities for practice.

This study is designed to understand the factors contributing to the development of youth leaders. A descriptive correlational study was conducted to reach this goal, and a mixed method approach was used. Four public high schools with agriculture program were selected from southeastern Pennsylvania to participate in this study. A total of 421 questionnaires were completed leading to a response rate of 86%. This was coupled with ninetneen interviews with teachers and students.

The findings of this research indicate that social support was the most important predictor of leadership skills. This was followed by civic engagement and social interaction variables. Participation in leadership programs was also related to leadership skills. Additionaly, gender differences existed in leadeship skills, with females showing higher levels.

Much of the leadership skills are formed through support, engagement and interaction. This occurred at schools and in communities. Implications of these findings were presented and served to integrate the processes of youth leadership development and community development.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Half of the world's population is under the age of thirty (Bokova, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). It is increasingly seen as necessary to consider involving young people in community development initiatives (Barnett & Brennan, 2006; Haugen & Becky, 2010). This will allow youth to develop their capacities to serve their communities and to be effective community leaders in the future (Brennan, 2008). Equally important, it allows for positive youth development, by which youth through their interaction developed a host of life skills (Anderson, Bruce, Jones, & Flowers, 2015). Because youth development shapes communities and themselves, youth need to develop the skills and experiences that allow them to contribute meaningfully to their communities for the short term as youth, and long term, as adults (Brennan, Barnett, & McGrath, 2009; Haugen & Becky, 2010; Anderson et al., 2015). They need to be able to identify and address real community problems such as poverty, environmental pollution, diseases, and many other issues, and conceptualize options for locally addressing these problems. This will foster youth development in terms of skills and capacities at the personal level and will serve in building community capacity (Brennan, 2008). However, many barriers inhibit youth leadership development throughout the world, and they can vary from one place to another. These barriers include the lack of awareness about opportunities, lack of knowledge, lack of communication between youth and adults, lack of awareness about benefits of community involvement, transportation issues, poverty, and cultural conditions (Rennekamp & Gerhard, 1992; Brennan, Barnett, & Baugh, 2007; Boyd, 2001).

Alternately, social exclusion can contribute to a host of negative social and personal development outcomes, including drug use, violence, and extremism and teen pregnancy (Berthelon & Kruger, 2011; Carpenter, 2005; Gaetz, 2006). Often the poorest youth are more

prone to participate in criminal activities and to exhibit risky behaviors (Berthelon & Kruger, 2011). These risky behaviors occur because in poor neighborhoods there is often a higher level of social exclusion (Krivo & Peterson, 1996). Residents in such areas are isolated from the wider society and are linked to a locality of disadvantaged individuals. They have limited social networks and are less likely to supervise youth activities. They have less access to jobs and resources, and the presence of middle class families is limited. All these facts, limit the capacity "of communities to sustain basic institutional structures and various sources of social control" (Krivo & Peterson, 1996; p.620). Thus, "poverty and social disadvantage are associated with negative community outcomes" (Krivo & Peterson, 1996; p.621), such as absence of jobs, family disruption and crime. These risks could be the lack of cognitive skills, parental supervision, school achievement, low income and drug misuse (Gray, 2007).

Such factors are particularly relevant in Pennsylvania where the youth under 18 constitute 21.3% of the total population (U. S. Census Bureau, 2013). The 2013 state report of PAYS survey (Pennsylvania Youth Survey) shows that communities with low levels of youth attachment and involvement have higher rates of drug, delinquency and violence problems. The less homogeneous a community, the less people are connected and the more challenging it is to create community identity, goals and attachment (Bach Harrison & The Pennsylvania State University, 2013).

In settings such as this, civic engagement and leadership development programs have shown to affect youth positively, as well as community development (Balsano, 2005; Boyd, Herring, & Briers, 1992). Alternately, a lack of youth engagement and leadership skills has led to a detachment and alienation from the community (Balsano, 2005; Boyd et al., 1992). Youth who are socially excluded have a limited social network and skills as well, leading to a lack of social supports and resources that facilitate positive youth development (Raffo & Reeves, 2010). Youth leadership programs help youth to develop leadership skills that are essential for them to

contribute to their communities. Such programs help youth to become empowered problem solvers and determined future leaders. Such civic engagement builds and fosters community capacity and resiliency (Brennan, 2008). Finally, youth engagement is particularly important in rural and traditional agricultural locales that are often characterized by youth outmigration, challenges economic conditions, and educational systems, which are often underfunded (White, 2012; Campbell, Edwards, 2012). Nevertheless, youth leadership programs are not the only factor contributing towards leadership skills development. Factors such as youth engagement, social support, leadership experiences, and gender were also associated with leadership skills (Anderson et al., 2015; Flynn, 2008).

Alternatively, about 75 trillion dollars of wealth will be transferred from the generation of baby boomers to younger generations between 2010 and 2060 (McElravy & Hastings, 2014). Moreover, leadership positions will be transferred to younger generations within two decades (McElravy & Hastings, 2014). In agricultural management positions, the second highest median age is 55.9. This means that there are issues of wealth and leadership transfer (McElravy & Hastings, 2014). Thus, it is necessary to provide the younger generations with leadership and technical skills to sustain agrarian communities and change the long-term trend of the reduction in number of farmers.

Rationale of the Study

Youth leadership programs have largely focused on providing leadership skills to youth with the intention to build future community capacity (MacNeil, 2006). They assumed that providing them with leadership skills would help them to be effective leaders in the future (Redmond, 2012). Additionally, these programs did not focus on the intended outcomes from acquiring these skills (Redmond, 2012). However, focusing on leadership skills training does not necessarily contribute to leadership or leader development (Reddy & Srinivasan, 2015).

Consequently, community capacity might not emerge if these skills were not used. Recent research suggests that youth and community development are intertwined (Brennan, Barnett & Baugh 2007).

Additionally, a large number of studies focused on leadership skills as a gain from involvement in leadership programs and youth organizations (Flynn, 2008; Redmond, 2012; Anderson et al., 2015; Mortensen et al., 2014). These studies focused on youth who are already involved in leadership activities, yet did not address the community, neighborhood and family influences on their leadership development.

Thus, a pressing research need exists for understanding the factors contributing to youth leadership skills development within communities. This contributes to both youth and community leadership development. Such factors include civic engagement, social support, social interaction, and others. This research study is not limited to youth who already had access to leadership development opportunities, but it includes a diverse sample of youth that have different experiences at their homes, as well as their schools, and communities.

Four counties in Pennsylvania were systematically selected to study the connection between youth leadership skills and related factors. Students from rural and urban areas participated in the survey. Rural youth may face many challenges such as “the decline in farm economies, the decrease of small businesses, and the depletion in natural resources based economies and the lack of leadership problems to solve challenges of the community” (Apaliyah & Martin, 2013; p.456). Urban youth might face other challenges such as the lack of safety, lack of diversity, poverty, and exposure to risky behaviors (Berg, Coman & Schensul, 2009). Thus, including a diverse group of students was an important feature to consider in this study.

Key Concepts

Leadership skills (Dependent Variable)

Heifetz (1994) viewed leadership in terms of adaptive work. He mentioned, “adaptive work consist in the learning required to address the conflicts in the values people hold, or to diminish the gap between the values people stand for and for the reality in the face. Adaptive work requires a change in values, beliefs, and behaviors” (Heifetz, 1994; p.22). Other theorists see youth leadership as an acquisition of skills and competencies that will allow them to lead. From this latter perspective, theorists such as Van Linden and Fertman (1998) believe that every person can become a leader (Redmond, 2012). This occurs through the acquisition of leadership skills and practice (Fertman & Van Linden, 1999). Alternatively, Boyd (2001) stressed the importance of leadership skills for youth to be able to contribute to their communities. Yet, the focus was on experiential and service learning activities rather than the skills. In Boyd’s opinion, leadership skills such as decision making goal setting and problem solving are important skills for leaders and for a successful life.

Providing youth with opportunities to lead is important to prepare them to contribute to communities now and in the future (Barnett & Brennan, 2006). Youth need to be involved in real community issues and not just practice mock leadership roles (Redmond, 2012). Thus, youth-adult partnerships are necessary for a long-term success for community development (Barnett & Brennan, 2006). This means that both youth and adults are considered as important contributors to local decision-making processes (Anderson & Sandman, 2009).This will allow youth to develop their leadership skills through participating with adults in addressing real world problems. They need to share the power and responsibility with adults (Haugen & Becky, 2010).

Social support (Independent Variable)

"Social support relates to the community capacity to informally and formally sustain its membership" (Dolan, 2008; p.112). It is also a process by which an individual achieves a sense of belonging to a group of people and gets support in stressful situations (Redmond, 2012). It can be defined as "the individual belief of being loved, esteemed and valued and belongs to a network of communication and mutual obligations" (Redmond, 2012, p. 31). According to Dolan (2008), the most critical sources of social support are community based. These resources are the social networks. "Social support provides a basis for the interactional capacity that leads to community agency" (Brennan, 2008; p.60). Youth engaged in their communities can build their social support network and become leaders that are more effective (Brennan, 2008. In addition, youth engagement increases communities' resiliency (Brennan, 2008). Alternatively, social support is critical to engage youth in leadership. Youth who have access to social support, networks are more likely to access resources than their counterparts who do not have this access (Redmond, 2012). In addition, social support is a strong predictor of youth well-being (McGrath, Brennan, Dolan, & Barnett, 2009)

Social networks and interaction (Independent Variable)

Social networks facilitate the establishment and maintenance of channels of communication. Maintaining the channels of communication within the community allows the community agency to emerge and thus an increase community resiliency and social support occurs (Brennan, 2008). Alternatively, civic engagement increases as a result. (Robinson, Meikle-Yaw, 2007). The social network is the network of relationship of an individual with his strong ties such as family and friends, and weak ties such as acquaintances and colleagues (Kramer, Rosner, Eimler, Winter & Neubaum, 2014). These relationships are critical because they are the sources of social supports (Redmond, 2012). Alternatively, they are essential to providing knowledge,

awareness, and access to opportunities for engagement that might not otherwise be evident. This occurs because social support emerges from the social network (Redmond, 2012). Strong ties reflect close relationships with family and friends, while weak reflect relationship with acquaintances and community members (Granovetter, 1973). Strong ties and weak ties are sources for emotional and information support respectively (Kramer et al., 2014). According to Dolan (2008) bridging social capital occurs because of a close connection to others, while bridging social capital occurs when a person have a weak link to other networks. Both bridging and bonding social capital are critical for community development (Flora & Flora, 2003).

Civic engagement (Independent Variable)

Civic engagement is a construct that describes the different paths citizens chose to participate in their communities to enhance local conditions (Alder & Goggin, 2005). There is no agreement about defining civic engagement (Bouliane & Brailey, 2014) and what activities count as civic engagement (Ballard, 2014). The adult civic engagement literature presented different indicators to describe civic engagement such as electoral indicators, political voice indicators, and civic indicators (Alder & Goggin, 2005). Civic indicators include volunteering, community involvement, community problem solving, and others (Alder & Goggin, 2005). Volunteering and participation in community groups are forms of civic engagement (Ballard, 2014) and they are the focus of this study, Therefore, the terms community engagement, civic engagement, and community involvement are used interchangeably.

Civic engagement is critical for the community well-being (Boulianne & Brailey, 2014). Individuals engaged in their communities have a higher level of mental health than the isolated people (Dolan & Brennan, 2013). Moreover, young people engaged in their communities develop the leadership skills and social networks, and community agency that increase the community resiliency and youth social support; this will allow them to become effective leaders in the future

(Brennan, 2008). Alternatively, community engagement affects social outcomes and voting behaviors (Ballard, 2014).

Socio-demographic characteristics

Community involvement and leadership outcomes can vary according to socio-demographic characteristics. Literature has shown that youth with lower levels of education, experiencing poverty, and unemployed are often struggling in their communities and lack opportunities for engagement. They have often limited social networks and resources. Thus, skills, knowledge and community attachment are limited (Raffo & Reeves, 2010). Therefore, their leadership potential is limited. Youth who are economically disadvantaged are more likely to be socially excluded (World Bank Group, 2012). Alternatively, gender differences were found in youth engagement and leadership development (Matthews, Hempel, & Howell, 2010; Redmond, 2012). While other studies have shown that differences among males and females exist in terms of leadership skills and community involvement (Eagly & Karau, 1991; Groves 2005; Case, 2011; Foroige, 2013), most often with males having more opportunities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to measure the connection between key concepts thought to shape effective and applied youth leadership programs. Included are leadership skills, civic engagement, social supports, and social interactions among Pennsylvanian youth. Motivation and barriers for engagement are also studied. Through a mixed methods research design (qualitative and quantitative), these concepts were measured and formed the basis of seven key research questions:

1- What is the relationship of civic engagement to leadership skills?

2- What is the relationship of social interactions with leadership skills?

3- What is the relationship of social supports to leadership skills?

4- What is the relationship of socio-demographic variables to leadership skills?

5- What factors differentiate between those who have high leadership skills vs. those who have low leadership skills?

6- What do youth and teachers indicate about their experiences in youth leadership development?

Structure of the Dissertation

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Following this introductory chapter, chapter two contains a detailed literature review discussing youth and community leadership development. It discusses theories and practices of adult and youth leadership programs. Additionally, chapter 2 presents the theoretical and conceptual framework combining four concepts related to leadership skills, which are social support, social networks, civic engagement, and socio-demographics.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used to meet the research objectives. It is divided into three sections. The first section mentions the schools chosen for the study and revisits the study objectives. The second section mentions the research design and the different methods used and tools used for data collection. The third section includes the data analysis methods, in addition to ethical considerations and the limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. It has two sections: the first describes the socio-demographics of the program participants and the second mentions separately the findings of each objective. Chapter 5 discusses the findings of the study and compares them with previous research. Then it highlights the key findings of the study and provides recommendations for policy makers and extension programmers developing leadership programs.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

Many youth leadership programs claim contributions to community development while providing training in leadership skills to youth. However, these trainings can contribute to the development of a workforce, but it is not enough to develop community agency. Community agency emerges from interaction among its different social fields within the community. However, most youth leadership programs focus do not provide youth with authentic leadership opportunities that allow them to get involved in community action.

This chapter consist of two sections. The first section defines key concepts such as community, community development, and leadership. It provides a basis for understanding the difference between youth and adult leadership. In addition, it highlights the importance and describe the outcomes of integrating youth in the community development process.

The second section presents the theoretical framework that is based on the interactional theory and Bronfenbrenner's ecological model. Both theories were critical to explain the bidirectional relationship between youth leadership development and community development. Additionally, it presents an overview of the existing body of research about the different the factor related to youth leadership development. These factors include social interaction, social support, civic engagement, and socio-demographics.

Section I: Community, Leadership, and Youth

Community

Defining community

In the first half of the twentieth century, community research focused on specific aspect of the community such as organizations (Wilkinson, 1991). However, contemporary research highlights communities as an interactional phenomenon (Kaufman, 1959; Wilkinson, 1972; Wilkinson, 1991; Brennan, 2003; Bridger, & Luloff, 2003; Barnett & Brennan, 2006). According to Wilkinson (1991) and Brennan (2003), most sociological community's definition possess three components, which are locality, local society, and community field. The community is where people get their better values, their first impressions and experiences and beliefs (Barnett & Brennan, 2006; Wilkinson, 1991). Within a community, local citizens form bonds together, and develop attachment to the place and community structure (Wilkinson, 1991). Therefore, community is a social and psychological system where people make interactions (Wilkinson, 1991; Bridger & Luloff, 2003). The locality is also a major characteristic of community. Localities are the place where the interactions among local residents occur, and where the community structure exist (Wilkinson, 1991, Brennan, 2003). Nonetheless, community field was recognized as the most critical component of a community (Wilkinson, 1991).

The field theoretical approach describes community as "a process of interrelated actions through which diverse segments of local society express their common interests and needs" (Brennan, Barnett & Lesmeister, 2007; p.14). From the interactional perspective, community is a constantly changing by social interaction and voluntary community action (Barnett & Brennan, 2006; Brennan, 2003; Bridger & Alter, 2008; Flint, Luloff & Theodori, 2010). In all communities, there are different social groups or fields that have active members, who work for shared interests and goals. The community field connects the different social groups of a community to respond to the general needs of community members (Wilkinson, 1991; Bridger,

Brennan & Luloff, 2011). Social interaction occurs among community members, and forms a basis for collective action and the enhancement of social structure (Brennan, Barnett & McGrath, 2009).

Wilkinson (1991) differentiated between community and society. He indicated, "the local society is the organization of the social institutions and associations in the social life of the local population" (p.24). Yet, he admitted that community is more than the sum of the parts in a local society. He rejected the idea that community is a system and retained the fact that community is an interactive changing entity. Additionally, Wilkinson (1991) indicated that social fields are integral parts of a community, which allow discipline oriented interactions. Yet, the community field builds collective interests and actions across all fields. He indicated:

> *"*The community field, a special field among other fields of community action, pursues not any single interest, as most other fields may be said to do, but the general community interest instead. The actions in this field serve to coordinate other action fields, organizing them more or less (through an unbounded, dynamic, and emergent process) into a whole. The community field has actors, associations, and activities, as any social field does; but the interest that guides this field is an interest in structure rather than in specific goals such as economic development or service improvement. The structural interest in the community field is expressed through linking, coordinating actions, actions that identify and reinforce the commonality that permeates the differentiated special interest fields in a community" (Wilkinson, 1991; p.84).

Finally, community field changes constantly based on the social interactions (Wilkinson, 1991; Brennan, 2003; Pigg, 1999). Thus, the structure of community is not static (Wilkinson, 1991). The development of this field is central to community development. Community development efforts should empower the members of the community fields by sharing resources, interests, actions and power (Wilkinson, 1991).

Interactional theory

The interactional theory focuses on different ways leading to emergence of collective action, persistent characteristics of a locality, and mainly on social interaction that aims to address

relevant local issues (Luloff & Bridger, 2003). It provides a framework for explaining the process of community action and community development. It also helps to identify the interactional process among the different social fields that can contribute to social well-being, and helps to identify ways to improve the residents' quality of life (Bridger & Alter, 2008).

The interactional theory focuses on the process of interaction rather than the community structure (Bridger et al., 2011). Interaction between, and among social groups, promotes the development of community (Wilkinson, 1991). Social groups include cultural and fraternal organizations, youth-related groups, local government, and a variety of other groups of local people (Brennan, Barnett & Lesmeister, 2007). Participation in such groups provide a setting for community-related interactions as well as a potential forum for addressing common community needs. While a variety of social interactions take place within a community, not all contribute to the emergence of community (Brennan, 2003). Interaction among a sufficient number of diverse segments of society sets the stage for an environment where action can occur (Luloff & Bridger, 2003; Wilkinson, 1991). This reflects the fact that community is more a product of interaction than of an inherent social structure (Brennan, 2003).

Community development

There are numerous strategies and understandings for community development, which is reflected in the community development theory and practice (Garkivoch, 2011; Summers; 1986; Craig, 2007; Wilkinson, 1991). Garkivoch (2011) explored different meanings of community development such as a process to implement change, a structured program, and a desired outcome. Garkivoch (2011) listed 27 federal community programs running from 1926 until 2007 with different purposes. As a result, three approaches to community development practice were identified. The first approach consisted of providing technical expertise and support in different fields. The second approach involved collaboration among professionals and community business

persons to address a common interest. The third approach considered the community as an entity with pre-existing social inequality. It worked on building leadership skills and structures to facilitate the community development process (Garkivoch, 2011). Summers (1986) argues that rural community development is a "planned intervention that stimulates social change for the explicit purpose of the betterment of the people" (Summer, 1986; p.360). Summers identified three intervention strategies used in community development using top-down approach "authoritative intervention", bottom-up approach "clientele centered intervention", and a less frequent strategy based on fundamental system reform.

Additionally, Summers (1986) distinguished between the development *in* community and development *of* community. These two types of development are critical and reinforce one another. The development *in* community is to bring development in economic growth, modernization, and social services (Summers, 1986).The development *of* community consist in building and maintaining the channels of communication and cooperation among local groups and individuals (Brennan, Barnett & Lesmeister, 2007; Barnett & Brennan, 2006; Summers, 1986; Wilkinson, 1991). The different local groups can include social fields of business, education, health, transportation, and others. The results of the interaction among the different social fields will be the mutual understanding of common needs and opportunities for involvement among community members (Barnett & Brennan, 2006). Thus, community development stimulates social change and builds local capacities for effective communities (Apaliyah & Martin, 2013; Luloff & Bridger, 2003). Consequently, community agency emerges and community action can occur. Community action and community agency are critical for localities where citizens suffer from poverty and outside development shaping their local economy (Brennan & Israel, 2008). Community action evolves from the interactions among citizens in a common territory (Brennan, 2003).Community action is defined as "the coming together of people in a local area in order to achieve a common goal" (Harris & White, 2013).

Community action is the process that allows the local community to act collectively towards the collective good within a community (Wilkinson, 1991). Community action is based on common goals such as improving the quality of life of the neighborhood (Brennan, 2003). It is vital for the maintenance and protection of communities (Wilkinson, 1991).

Based on the interactional perspective, community development is the development of the community field (Wilkinson, 1991, Brennan, 2003, Bridger et al., 2011; Bridger and Alter, 2008). The community development process is always positive and purposive (Wilkinson, 1991). In this process, the actors across the community field develop shared interests and build common goals for the betterment of their communities (Brennan & Israel, 2008); they share power, resources and networks.

Alternatively, Craig (2007) discussed the community development and community capacity building in terms of terminology and practice. He argues that the consideration of community was overlooked in the development policies. He indicated that many community development initiatives used the community terminology to show ownership for the community while it does not really exist. He argues that the current development programs including those of the United Nations give little power and control to the community. Similarly, Brennan and Israel (2008) indicated that community power does not emerge from capacity building activities or civic engagement.

Leadership development is critical for community development (Bridger & Alter, 2008; Barnett & Brennan, 2006; Pigg, 1999). However, many leadership programs focus on teaching leadership skills that empowers individuals but do not necessarily contribute to building community capacity (Pigg, 1999, Bridger & Alter, 2008; Craig 2007). Craig (2007) mentioned the popular criticism about community capacity programs that allows individuals to learn what is missing in their communities without helping them to solve their community problems.

Therefore, it is important for leadership programs to address the needs of the communities and build community capacity based on the changes occurring within communities (Pigg, 1999).

Leadership Development

No universal consensus exists to define leadership, it is viewed as an elusive concept (MacNeil, 2006).There are different ways and approaches to define leadership (Northouse, 2013; Van Linden & Fertman, 1998; Heifetz, 1994; Ricketts, 2009). Some researchers define leadership in terms of traits and personal characteristics, while others consider it as a relational process. Despite the various definitions, four main elements characterized leadership, which are: process, influence, group settings, common goals (Rost, 1991; Northouse, 2013). Thus, leadership can be defined as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2013; p.5).

Adult leadership theories

Various definitions were used to define leadership development over time (Northouse, 2013; Rost, 1991; Van Vugt, Hoven & Kaiser, 2008). Earlier definitions of leadership were based on the trait approaches, were leaders were born and not made (Sandman & Vandenberg, 1995; Northouse, 2013). However, later definitions of leadership emphasized the fact that leadership can taught (Van Linden & Fertman, 1998). Currently leadership do not only focus on individual leaders, but it is considered more as a relational process that involves peers, followers, and immediate environment (Avolio, Walumba & Weber, 2009). Leadership of the 21st century focus on groups whether in community or organizations (Sandman & Vandenberg, 1995).

Leadership theories and approaches have been in continuous development and change. The trait theories focused on the specific qualities of leaders (Bolden, Gosling, Maturano & Dennison, 2003). Behavioral theories concentrated on the behaviors and actions of leaders rather than their qualities (Bolden et al., 2003). The behavioral approach implies that people can become

leaders by learning some behaviors through observation and learning. (Foroige, 2013). The transactional leadership is based on transactions made between leaders and followers that should be based on rewards and penalties for accomplishing a specific task (Redmond, 2012). The transformational theory assumes that people will follow leaders that motivate them. Leaders and followers are engaged in a mutual process of supporting and motivating each other. (Redmond, 2012; Tackie, Findlay, Baharanyi, & Pierce; 2004).

Servant leadership an approach where leaders develop the leadership potential of followers instead of being leader centered. “Servant leaders transcend self-interest to serve the needs of others, help others grow and develop, provide an opportunity for others to gain materially and emotionally” (Foroige, 2013, p. 24).

Recently, literature has largely focused on network leadership to create collective action. (Mehra, Smith, Dixon & Robertson, 2006; Hoppe & Reineilt, 2010; Carter, DeChurch, Braun & Contractor, 2015; Brown & Nylander, 1998). Social network development is increasingly used to reinforce the connection among leaders of different social fields, and to build leadership capacity (Hoppe & Reineilt, 2010; Uhl-Bien; 2006). Additionally, networks proved to be effective strategies to create community effective leaders (Stovall, Robinson, Nylander & Brown, 2011).

Hoppe and Reineilt (2010) described four types of networks including peer networks, organizational leadership networks, field policy network, and collective leadership network. The latter includes people interested in working for a common goal at a local level (Hoppe & Reineilt, 2010). Those networks allow the formation of weak ties needed for community agency and community action (Granovetter, 1983; Wilkinson, 1991).

Tholl (2014) described the benefits of networks in increasing leadership capacity and collective action. According to Tholl (2014), three stages are necessary to build network leadership, which are startup, value creation, and consolidation of value add. The startup phase

included the identification of key stakeholders, their identification of their common needs, and the importance of this network. Additionally, leaders identify resources to support their plans and initiatives. The value creation phase consists of the establishment of the governance structure of the network and the development of a strategic plan. The consolidation of value add is to sustain the current networks by succession planning.

Alternatively, Tremblay (2012) considered the network leadership an effective way to build capacity and make collective actions within organizational communities. It helps to build a collective power within the network by sharing costs, resources, and innovations. It is characterized by common agendas, long term planning, diversity, and collective processes.

The network leadership approach presents some similarities to the community field concepts. Both can include formal and informal leadership structures (Wilkinson, 1991; Carter et al., 2015), both change according to the interactions among the group members, include people from different social fields, and aim to reach a goal of collective interest. Unlike other leadership theories, the network leadership theory focus on the group leadership development, but not individuals. It has been used to create networks for actions between organizations as well as communities.

Organizational leadership and community leadership

In the organizational setting both management and leadership are critical. Rost (1991) argued that the leadership's definition exceeds good management. In fact, they present some similarities (Northouse, 2013). Both involve influence, working in groups, accomplishing goals, and others (Northouse, 2013). Nevertheless, management is an administrative function that is task oriented, and leadership is a process that focuses on visioning and creating positive changes (Ricketts, 2009; Raducan & Raducan, 2014). Management is a set of processes that reduce the complexity of interaction of a system of people and technology (Kotter, 1996; Raducan &

Raducan, 2014). It consists of activities such as planning, budgeting, and problem solving (Kotter, 1996). While management is concerned with short-term outcomes, leadership focuses long-term outcomes and future positive changes (Ricketts, 2009; Kotter, 199). Thus, leadership is a social process of involving others and motivating them to overcome certain barriers and reach common goals (Ricketts, 2009; Kotter, 1996).

Leadership development programs designed for community development should be based on different approaches, perspectives, and goals than those designed for organizations. Pigg (1999) rejected the use of organizational approaches used in community development. He indicated that communities are interactional fields, which have more informal leadership structure. Thus, it is not possible for leaders in communities to rely on power and authorities like their counterparts in organizations. They need to develop collective networks across the different social fields to mobilize resources for the community.

Alternately, leaders in organizations seek profits; they are paid, and have access to resources through authority. The community development process aims to make positive changes in the quality of life of citizens. It cuts across different social fields. However, organization is just a component of one social field. Consequently, skillsets, interactions, leadership behaviors, and leadership educational programs needed to create community development are more complex than those needed in organizations are.

Pigg (1999) identified leadership development as a community development process. He argued that the leadership and community development are fairly similar. He indicated that both leadership development and community field are processes that emerge through purposive interaction and aim to reach common goals. Both focus on a generalized interest rather than on individual interests. Understanding these similarities helps to plan for leadership programs based on community knowledge.

To sum up, it is critical to organize leadership programs based on the community characteristics rather than using organizational models. Community leaders cannot rely on authority and positional power to access resources. They need to develop networks across the different social fields. Additionally, leaders in organizations seek monetary profits; they are paid, and have access to resources through authority. Communities has more informal leadership structure than organizations. The community development process aims to make positive changes in the quality of life of citizens. The community development cuts across different social fields. However, organization is a component of a social field. Thus, skillsets, interactions, leadership behaviors, and leadership educational programs needed to create community development are more complex than those needed in organizations are.

Youth leadership in theory

There are major differences between youth leadership and adult leadership. However, most of the leadership literature is focused on adult leadership (Mortensen et al., 2014; MacNeil, 2006). Youth were often considered as a problem to be solved rather than useful resources for their communities (Haugen & Becky, 2010). The youth leadership literature highlighted the development youth leadership skills, knowledge, and activities (MacNeil, 2006). In addition, leadership development programs were considered as an approach to impact youth positively, but do not consider them useful resources for community development (MacNeil, 2006).

Leadership was defined earlier as an interactional process that aims to reach a common group goal, and occurs in a specific setting. The adult leadership literature considers that the practice of leadership in real situation as an important component of the leadership development process (MacNeil, 2006). Nevertheless, youth leadership literature focused largely on teaching and learning leadership skills (MacNeil, 2006). Therefore, there is a major discrepancy between

the definition of leadership as a process that builds collective capacity, and the youth leadership literature that focuses on skills acquisition.

Several definitions of youth leadership were found in literature. For example, Haugen and Becky (2010) defined leadership, "the involvement of youth responsible, a challenging action that meets genuine needs with opportunities for planning and decision-making" (p. 6). Redmond (2012) considered leadership the ability to mobilize youth to address the problem encountered by their communities. However, there is a "lack of a youth-informed framework to guide leadership and development programs" (Mortensen et al., 2014; p.451)

Integrating Community and Youth Leadership Development

It is necessary for communities to produce capable leaders for community development. "Without capable leaders, local communities are prone to inertia, decay, and manipulation. In contrast communities that nourish diverse leadership are more likely to have a vision of what they want to become and know how to get there." (Hustedde & Woodward, 1996, p. 1). Thus, it is important to develop the ability of local people to mobilize resource to meet their local needs in order to create community development (Barnett & Kumaran, 2006).

UNESCO has recognized youth as "agents for change, social transformation, peace, and sustainable development" (UNESCO, 2013, p. 7). They are the adults of the future and the long-term contributors to community development (Barnett & Brennan, 2006). They cannot be excluded from the investment in social capital because they are both a valuable resource that should be allocated properly as well as the leaders of the future. The youth engagement literature discussed the merging of youth development and community development. Community context shapes youth development and communities. Young people are influenced by the size of their communities, neighborhoods, schools attended, media and people that affect their lives (Brennan, Barnett & McGrath, 2009). "By considering an interactive and dynamic relationship between

community and youth development, stronger communities can emerge" (Brennan, Barnett & McGrath, 2009; p.331). However, the role of youth in community development has taken limited action in the past (Brennan, 2008).

Also, "youth development is a facet of community development in that it represents the positive engagement of parents, relatives, friends, and neighbors in creating the programs, opportunities, and supportive neighborhood environments that young people need" (Brennan, Barnett & Lesmeister, 2007; p.15). Youth development is a responsibility of both community and parents (Brennan, Barnett, & Lesmeister, 2007). "During adolescence, there is a heightened importance for believing that they can make a contribution, play a meaningful role, and have a place in society where they fit. Youth who feel they are valued and can make a specific desirable contribution to society have a healthy balance between autonomy and dependence" (Brennan, Barnett & Lesmeister, 2007; p.17). Besides, a bidirectional relationship between youth and their communities. This relationship affects both the community development and youth development. Thus, providing youth opportunities for leadership are important to prepare them to contribute to their communities. Youth- adult partnerships are necessary over a long-term for successful community development. (Barnett & Brennan, 2006). This means that both youth and adults are considered as important contributors to the decision-making process. (Anderson & Sandman, 2009).

Therefore, the combination of youth leadership development and community development will allow the emergence of leadership. Engaging youth in real community issues will help developing cognitive, moral and social skills, which will potentially enable them to overcome the challenges they face, and advance in their lives (Ekpoh, Edet & Uko, 2013). Such combination will also provide youth with mentoring opportunities that increase their contributions toward their communities.

Role of Youth leadership education programs

"There is a need to invest in young people's skills and capabilities to act as powerful advocates and agents of changes and social transformation to help society meet these challenges. Young people must be given a chance to. Young people who are empowered with leadership skills such as decision-making and problem solving can lead community development efforts in the future (Barnett & Brennan, 2006). The exclusion of young people from the development processes will result in future problems and challenges. For example, The Arab spring showed that it is critical to address issues of leadership and governance with including youth (Ekpoh, et al., 2013). Nevertheless, youth leadership development is a process that requires application. It is not limited to having formal leadership training. It is affected by several factors including social support, engagement.

Alternatively, most youth leadership programs occur within an organizational or programmatic context (Yu, Lewis-Charp & Gambone, 2007). These types of leadership programs focus on individuals and train them in problem solving, goal setting, decision-making, and other leadership skills (Yu et al., 2007). However, leadership programs focusing on providing training do not necessarily develop leaders or leadership (Reddy & Srinivasan, 2015). One reason for that is the gap between knowledge, internalization, and real transformation (Reddy & Srinivasan, 2015). In other terms, the gaps between knowing leadership skills, being a leader, and doing leadership, are critical. Alternatively, programs focusing on training youth as individual leaders might not contribute to community development. Hence, these programs failed to consider the community as an interactional field (Pigg, 1999).

Finally, youth leadership programs showed improvement in youth leadership skills (Redmond, 2012; Boyd, 2011), yet there was no evidence of community development outcomes. Also, Craig and Hunnun (2007) indicated that many implemented leadership development programs were not based on clear objectives. Often different stakeholders have various

expectations about the vaguely written goals (Craig & Hunnun; 2007) such as developing capacity. Unclearly stated goals make the evaluation of the leadership initiatives very complex (Craig & Hunnun; 2007). Thus, it might be difficult to measure community outcomes if any existed. Additionally, Sandman and Vandenberg (1995) indicated that many leadership programs are too short term and do not emphasize the development of groups but focuses on individuals. Thus, long-term programs are better alternatives because they were found to affect youth positively and change their behaviors (Kahn, Hewes, & Ali; 2009).

Role of schools

Schools play a major role within students' microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). "The school is always seen as a powerful, dynamic instrument for social, political scientific and technological development of nations" (Ekpoh et al., 2013; p.82).Schools play an important role in youth civic engagement and leadership development (Ekpoh et al., 2013; Ballard, Caccavale, & Buchanan, 2015; Brennan, Barnett, & Baugh, 2007). Schafft and Harmon (2011) explained the unique role of school in community development. They stated, "of all local institutions, schools may be the best place to catalyze community development because of their capacity to mobilize community members and create new linkages between educators, parents, community members, and community based developers" (Schafft & Harmon, 2011; p.246). Additionally, they argued that schools have the capacity to bring diverse community members together to reach common goal (Schafft & Harmon, 2011).

Effective leaders emerge from a continued process of education and training (Ekpoh et al., 2013). Many leadership and engagement activities are offered within the school settings. For example, Hormster and Nall (2007) found that students participating in FFA indicated that most of activities focused on building their personal leadership skills, but there was no emphasis on

community development Nevertheless, students admitted that FFA helped them to build their leadership skills, and provided them variety of personal development opportunities.

Finally, youth particularly need to develop leadership skills, have access to mentoring, develop community identity, and be able to make sustainable changes in their communities (Redmond, 2012; Van Linden and Fertman, 1998; Wheeler & Thomas, 2011). Schools can empower students to develop leadership skills and engage them in real situations to enhance community development (Barnett & Brennan, 2006). Additionally, schools play a major role in motivating students to get students involved (Barnett & Brennan, 2008). "As, service learning activities become a more standardized component of high school programs, youth are better positioned to become long-term contributors to the community development process" (Brennan, Barnett & Lesmeister, 2007; p.13). A positive school climate involves giving youth a freedom to express opinions, provide them feelings of solidarity and appreciation, and the sense of belonging (Ballard et al., 2015). "Tolerant and inclusive school climate were positively related to all civic attitudes" (Ballard et al., 2015; p.83). The partnership between community leaders, educators and youth can enhance the learning process and leads to better results (Barnett & Brennan, 2006). This can be reached by developing a network leadership among these actors.

Educational models used in youth leadership programs

Different educational models have been used in leadership programs. These models were built on different theories and purposes. Van Linden and Fertman (1998) aimed to provide an educational model that allows developing powerful youth leaders. Ricketts and Rudd (2002) expanded that work to meet the employers' expectations of career and technical education students. Additionally, Boyd (2001) emphasized the combination of service learning and experiential learning to teach leadership skills. Yet, Heifetz (1994) focused on the leadership practice and specifically within organizations.

Van Linden and Fertman Model

Van Linden and Fertman (1998) adopted a combination of the transactional and transformational leadership theories. According to them, this combination provided a unique bridge that links leadership skills training and influencing others. Van Linden and Fertman admitted that leadership is a complex process that includes social influence. They stated:

> "We define leaders as individuals (both adults and adolescents) who think for themselves, communicate their thoughts and feelings to others, and help others understand and act on their own beliefs. They influence others in an ethical and socially responsible way. For many, leadership is best described as a physical sensation: a need to share ideas, energy, and creativity, and to not let personal insecurities be an obstacle. Being a leader means trusting one's instincts, when doing leadership tasks and when acting as leader" (Van Linden & Fertman, 1998; p.17).

The authors considered that such definition is beneficial to students and their communities because it can build their leadership potential. They considered the leadership development process consisted of three stages. First, youth discover their leadership potentials, second they identify themselves as leaders and build confidence in their abilities, and finally they practice and master leadership. These stages were named awareness, interaction, and mastery respectively. For each of these stages five conceptual areas were taught which are: "Leadership information, Leadership attitude, 3- Communication skills, 4- Decision making skills, 5- Stress Management skills" (Van Linden & Fertman, 1998; p.40). The authors recognized the influence of the community on youth leadership development. Their focus was to develop leaders who are able to take decisions and influence others, yet this does not necessarily contribute to community action.

Ricketts and Rudd Model (2002)

Ricketts and Rudd (2002) developed a leadership educational model for career and technical education students based on the skills needed by potential employers. These skills included communication, motivation, teamwork, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, and problem solving skills. Ricketts and Rudd (2002) expanded on Van Linden and Fertman's educational model to build their model. They considered that leadership training should occur at three stages: awareness, interaction and integration. More explicitly, the first stage consists of introducing leadership to students, exploring it, and finally practice. They considered that at each stage students should have training in five leadership dimensions which are referred to as: "1- leadership knowledge and information, 2-leadership attitude, will and desire, 3- decision making reasoning, and critical thinking, 4-oral and written communication skills and 5- intra and interpersonal relations"(Ricketts & Rudd, 2002).

This model was established for career and technical education students. It focused on training students with individual skills because it intended to satisfy the employers' need to have employees, and definitely not community needs. Even though this model focused on providing youth the leadership skills, it did not emphasize the practice. Practicing leadership was not mentioned until the integration stage. Additionally, no descriptions of specific activities were provided.

Boyd Model (2001)

Boyd (2001) believed that leadership skills are important tools for youth satisfaction. He considered service learning an important tool to learn and practice leadership skills, and that such combination allows youth to reflect about their experiences. In his model, Boyd (2001) aimed to increase the youth's leadership skills in decision-making, goal setting, teamwork, problem solving, and others for youth. However, this model did not emphasize networking with adults to

increase youth empowerment. Boyd listed several experiential activities that teach leadership such as open discussions, brainstorming of ideas, issues and solutions. However, this model does, including the activities associated with it, and does not allow youth to practice leadership in real life.

Heifetz Model (1994)

Heifetz (1994) developed a framework and educational tools for the "adaptive leadership." He viewed leadership as an interactional process that goes beyond individual leaders to include all stakeholders. He distinguished between the technical challenges that have clear solutions and adaptive challenges that do not have clear solutions. Alternatively, Heifetz (1994) also distinguished between authority as position and leadership as an action. Thus, he separated the leadership concept from the organizational power. However, he indicated that authority and power are critical tools to practice leadership. Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009), stated:

> "People have long confused the notion of leadership with authority, power, and influence. We find it extremely useful to see leadership as a practice, an activity, which some people do some of the time. We view leadership as a verb not a job. Authority, power, and influence are critical tools, but they do not define leadership" (p.24).

Three pedagogical tools are the basis of this model, which are 1-Case in point learning: students participate in real time dynamics through discussion; 2-Below neck learning: exercising leadership with peers 3-Reflection practice: students reflect on their leadership practices and choices and why they were done in a particular way. This model really focused on the leadership practice in organizational settings, yet it did not focus much on getting the necessary skills.

Reflection on the models

The models presented above were all developed to meet the needs of organizational settings. These models showed benefits to youth personal leadership development. However, they were not intended to build community capacity. These models do not fit the definition of

community development from an interactional perspective. They do not emphasize the role of youth as real community partners. These models were more helpful to prepare successful workforce.

Van Linden and Fertman model and Ricketts and Rudd model focused on training youth and their acquisition of leadership skills. Nevertheless, Heifetz model focused on the leadership application, without putting much emphasize on training. His approach of leadership was more problem solving driven. Despite that Boyd's model included community service component, and that it used engaging educational tools such as brainstorming and discussion, it has not emphasized the necessity of real youth adult partnerships. Additionally, this model did not include a systematic way to identify real community needs and problems. Finally, while some models focus on the leadership practice, they were not developed based on community development literature. Thus, such models will not necessarily contribute directly to the community development process.

Section II: Theoretical Framework

The first section introduced a series of concepts involved in youth leadership development and community development. Characteristics such as civic engagement, social support, social interaction, and individual sociodemographic characteristics were used to explain youth leadership development and community development (Wilkinson, 1991; Brennan, 2003; Barnett & Brennan, 2006; Redmond, 2012; Ballard, 2014). However, these findings lack a unifying theoretical framework that synthesize and link them together. Interactional theory and the ecological model theory can provide this linkage. On one hand, the interactional theory describes the dynamics of interaction in the community and the processes leading to community action. It allows understanding the interactions among different social fields, individuals, and organizations towards

community development. On the other hand, the ecological theory describes the influences of these interactions on the development of youth. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model explains the ecological context of students, the different actors and processes and relationships affecting their community involvement. Therefore, both leadership development and youth development emerge from interaction with community members

Interactional theory

Community is an interactional phenomenon (Wilkinson, 1991). Three elements characterize most community definitions: 1) the place; 2) the structure reflected in the social organizations serving peoples' needs; 3) the collective action that reflects the actions of local residents towards a common interest (Wilkinson, 1991; Bridger et al., 2011; Brennan, 2003; Kaufman, 1959). For example, Wilkinson (1970) mentioned, "community is a place where people live, but it is also a cultural configuration, a field of collective action and a phenomenological experience of the individual" (p.317). He argued that community field presented the core component because it reflected the interaction among community members.

The interactional theory considers the community as a constantly changing entity. It includes a variety of social processes in which people are engaged (Wilkinson, 1991). Communities emerge from the interaction of different social fields in a shared territory. Social field is defined as "a process of interaction through time, with direction toward some more or less distinctive outcome and with constantly changing elements and structure" (Wilkinson, 1970; p.317). In localities, several social fields can exist such as social services, transportation, health, education, and others (Bridger & Luloff, 1999). These social fields are characterized by sector specific collective action. Communities have different actors, organizations, or associations in the different social fields (Bridger et al. 2011). The community field is a social field that does not

have specialized interests, but it includes the linkages among the different social fields to a common interest.

> *"*The community field cuts across organized groups and across other interaction fields in a local population. It abstracts and combines the locality-relevant aspects of the special interest fields, and integrates the other fields into a generalize completely. It does this by creating and maintaining linkages among fields that otherwise are directed toward more limited interests. As this community field arises out of the various special interest fields in a locality, it in turn influences those special interest fields and asserts the community interest in the various spheres of local activity" (Wilkinson, 1991, p. 33).

Community field develops through the connection of different social fields within a community towards a common goal (Bridger & Alter, 2008). The dynamics occurring in community field depend on the social, economic, environmental, and local political structures (Bridger & Alter, 2008; Brennan, 2003). Social well-being depends highly on community (Bridger & Alder, 2008). Communities offer the settings to individuals to express and access their needs, to get a sense of belonging, to develop, and to act collectively. Wilkinson (1991) indicated: "the community is important to social well-being because it is an important setting for expression of associational tendencies, and it is an effective process for developing individual competences into collective action" (p.73). Therefore, community development is the development of community field (Wilkinson, 1972). Thus, community development includes the interventions aiming to build the capacity of local people to collaborate for their wellbeing. These interventions should improve the adaptive capacity of the community to make a collective action. Therefore, it is important to understand the community field dynamics, and the process of community action.

Communities constantly change with different social interactions and community actions (Bridger et al., 2011; Wilkinson, 1991; Brennan, 2003). With these continuous changes, the social fields, and the community members need to develop an adaptive capacity. Adaptive capacity allows people to access and mobilize community resources in addressing local issues of common interest (Brennan & Luloff, 2007; Luloff & Bridger, 2003). The adaptive capacity occurs through

community agency. Community agency reflects the ability of local communities to address structural changes through interaction (Bridger et al., 2011). It emerges through social interaction creating local relationships across social fields (Brennan & Luloff, 2007; Bridger et al., 2011; Brennan, Flint, & Luloff, 2009). “Community agency and corresponding development can be seen as the process of building relationships that increase the capacity of local people to come together and act” (Bridger et al., 2011; p. 90). Therefore, community agency is the vehicle that can carry community action. Alternatively, community capacity building has been an ambiguous term for practitioners in the last decades (Craig, 2007). Although many development programs used the terminology of community development and community capacity to reflect community ownership, they did not make real contributions to community development (Craig, 2007). In addition, definitions provided by international and national development agencies focused on their specific roles in development and did not address the interactions among community members (Craig, 2007).

Community action occurs because of interaction among different social fields for a common purpose (Wilkinson, 1991). Community actions that are purposive and positive contribute to the community development process (Wilkinson, 1991). Kaufman (1959) indicated three requirements for the emergence of community action: involvement of local actors, presence of collective community interest, and acting for the improvement of local conditions. Five stages were suggested to build local capacity for community action, which are initiation, organization and sponsorship, goal setting, recruitment, and implementation (Wilkinson, 1991; Kaufman, 1959). First, initiation focuses on increasing people’s awareness of a specific community interest. Second, the organization and sponsorship stage allows identifying accessible organizations and resources available to the community. Third, goal setting allows setting common goals and specific strategies to address the common interest. Fourth, recruitment is the mobilization of the

needed resources (human or financial) to achieve the common goal. The fifth stage is the implementation, where resources are used to reach the common goal.

Community leadership development and youth leadership development

Wilkinson (1991) linked community development to community leadership. The author indicated that community development occurs when different actors shift from specific goals and interests to collective interests. This change towards the collective good creates the structure of relationships necessary to create community development. Then he elaborated about the centrality of the structural orientation towards community leadership. He explained the process of building the structure of community leadership by projecting similarities from the organizational leadership. Pigg (1999) rejected the practices of community leadership programs based on organizational development. He indicated:

> "Community leadership development programs should be based on what we know about communities rather than what we know about organizations. Community leaders frame their behavior in the context of the social institution we know as "community," not in formal organizations. Community leaders cannot rely on formal authority and the power derived from positions to get things done. Instead, they must rely on networks and influence, with relationships developed through extensive interactions with community residents usually representing many different points of view or interests" (Pigg, 1999; p.196).

Additionally, Pigg (1999) considered that community leadership has a more generalized scope that organizational leadership, and is characterized by mutuality and reciprocity. He emphasized the role of interactions in community leadership rather than leaders' behavior. He argued that there are common characteristics relating the development of community field to leadership development such as the common purpose, the general interests, the interaction, and the focus on the process. Alternatively, several studies distinguished between the concepts of leader and leadership development (Day, 2000; Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014; Reddy & Srinivasan 2015). Leader development focuses on individuals, while leadership

development focuses on a process involving groups of individuals, and building leadership capacity (Day et al., 2014). Several leadership theories have focused on leader development such as behavioral leadership, transformational leadership, contingency theory, and others (Reddy & Srinivasan 2015). However, the work on leadership development is relatively recent (Reddy & Srinivasan 2015). Reddy and Srinivasan (2015) defined leadership development as "the building and enhancement of a collective capacity to lead among members of a team. This collective capacity occurs through interactions, processes, and reciprocity anchored on trust" (Reddy & Srinivasan, 2015; p.45). They discussed the differences between leader development and leadership development from a theoretical and practical perspective. They argued that the focus of leadership theories was on individuals to be effective leaders. They indicated:

> "Over the many decades, several leadership theories have emerged including trait theories, behavioural theories, contingency/context/situation based theories, leader–member exchange theories, and other theories such as servant-leadership, charismatic leadership, and transformational leadership. However, the dominant focus of these leadership theories has been on identifying traits/behaviour/characteristics required of a person to be an effective leader in a given context"p.45.

Similarly, most of youth leadership development programs focused on leadership skills acquisition. They often include goals for community development that are beyond the scope of activities in the programs (Yu, et al., 2007). However, these programs consider youth as future leaders rather than current leaders (McNeil, 2006). Most of leadership development theorists explained the applied nature of leadership (Heifetz, 1994, McNeil, 2006; Northouse, 2013; Brennan, 2008; Pigg, 1999).

> "Despite the multitude of ways in which leadership has been conceptualized, the following components can be identified as central to the phenomenon: (a) Leadership is a process, (b) leadership involves influence, (c) leadership occurs in groups, and (d) leadership involves common goals" (Northouse, 2013; p.5).

However, most of youth leadership development programs do not provide youth opportunities to practice leadership in real contexts (McNeil, 2006). They are often considered

future leaders rather than actual leaders. Additionally, adults often overlook youth abilities and talents; thus, youth do not get involved in community development efforts as actors (Wheeler & Thomas, 2011; Mortensen et al., 2014). Early leadership experiences in adolescence shape youth leadership skills, behaviors, confidence, and positive development (Boyd et al., 1992). Amit, Popper and Lisak (2009) indicated that early adolescent leadership experiences allow leaders to gain confidence in their abilities, behavior, and knowledge as leaders. Therefore, engaging youth in community development is critical for creating sustainable communities (Wheeler & Thomas, 2011; Barnett & Brennan, 2006; Redmond, 2012).

Although numerous youth leadership programs claim contributions to community development, they were often based on the organizational approach for leaders' development. However, community is not an organization, yet it is a constant changing entity based on the interaction among its members. Community agency emerges from interaction among its different social fields. Many youth leadership programs teach youth leadership skills, but do not teach them how to use those skills to benefit their communities outside the community service activities. They do not provide them venues of interactions outside their microsystem. Therefore, it is questionable how they are contributing to the community development.

Bronfenbrenner (1977) was concerned about the ecological validity of research studying human development. He argued that experimental studies in these fields occurred in artificial environments, and do not necessarily represent real settings. Similarly, youth leadership programs do not provide youth with authentic leadership opportunities. Thus, it is important to understand the process of youth leadership program in its natural setting in order to build effective youth leadership programs. Effective youth leadership development occurs when youth are integrated as partners with adults in community development efforts. Yet, it is critical for adults to understand the process of youth development to achieve effective youth participation. Adults need to

optimize the social and environmental conditions that can make youth part of the community agency.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model is particularly important because it allows the identification of multiple actors, processes, and relationships affecting human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Leonard 2011; Zimmerman, Stewart, Morrel-Samuels, Franzen & Reischl, 2011; p.427). The ecological model "helps to focus attention on the multiple contexts in which youth interact with others and how those different contexts may create positive youth development" (Zimmerman et al., 2011; p.427). Consequently, the ecological model is also beneficial to understand the processes and interrelations affecting youth leadership.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) indicated that humans develop because of their interaction with their ecological environment. He provided a unique perspective on human development. He introduced the concept of the ecology of human development. He mentioned:

> "The ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger context in which the settings are embedded" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; p. 21)

Bronfenbrenner considered the ecological environment to be composed of four nested concentric systems affecting humans' interactions. Figure 2-1 shows the four systems of the ecological model: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. The microsystem refers to the direct interactions of the developing human with his immediate environment such as parents, schools, community, and peers (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The mesosystem was defined "a system of microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; p.515). It describes the interrelations among the key actors in the microsystem of a developing human (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The exosystem is part of the social context that does not affect directly the developing human, but affects actors

involved in his development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The exosystem includes different social fields operating at the local level such as parent's employers, school boards, local services (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The macrosystem involves the cultural values, the regulations, and the political and economic systems that shape human behavior and values.

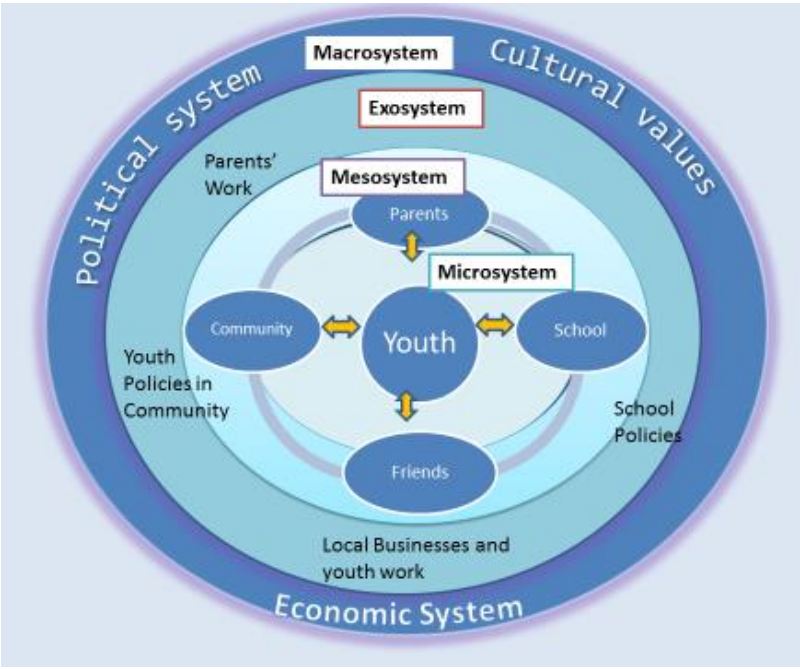

Figure 2-1 Bronfenbrenner's ecological model

Leonard (2011) used Bronfenbrenner's ecological model to understand the effects of community partnerships on students' development. These partnerships included collaborations with schools, health services, parents, local businesses, and others. Leonard (2011) concluded that successful partnerships are those achieving cultural cohesion among partners', and influencing the student's microsystem positively. Although these partnerships occurred within the mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem, they brought benefits at the students' level. Alternatively, Small and Supple (1998) restructured Bronfenbrenner's ecological model into three order effects showing how different interactions within the community can influence a child's development. Their first and second orders reflected the microsystem and mesosystem described

by Bronfenbrenner, however, the third order effect included the influences of interactions within a community on youth. Particularly, social cohesion, community identity, common goals, and collective efficacy, affect youth development and consequently their leadership development. Therefore, the quality of interactions within a community can affect youth leadership development.

Finally, the interactions among different community members affect youth leadership development. Additionally, youth form their first experiences, thoughts, and beliefs within their communities. The processes of interactions among the different social fields influence youth. However, youth can be effective partners in community development. Thus, it is important to understand the factors contributing to youth leadership development. Consequently, such an understanding allows the optimization of conditions for increased youth participation.

Factors Influencing Leadership Skills

Youth leadership and engagement activities occur in several settings such as community based organizations, schools, universities, non-governmental organizations, sport teams, and political parties (Shaw, Brady, McGrath, Brennan & Dolan, 2014). Different factors affect youth leadership development including social networks and interaction, civic engagement, social support, and socio-demographic variables (Brennan, Barnett & McGrath, 2009; Pinkerton & Dolan; 2007 Beverdige, & Berg; 2007; Eagly & Karau, 1991; Redmond & Dolan, 2014; Case, 2011; Green and Brock, 2005). The following section will discuss the connection between civic engagement, social support, social interaction, and sociodemographic variables and leadership skills. It will explain the theoretical model presented in figure 2-2. Each conceptual area plays a major role in shaping youth leadership development. These roles were identified from previous studies and aggregated in this framework. Consequently, it is expected that these factors affecting leadership skills will also influence community capacity. This study briefly addresses the

relationship between these factors and capacity building. Nonetheless, the factors shaping leadership skills are the focus of the study.

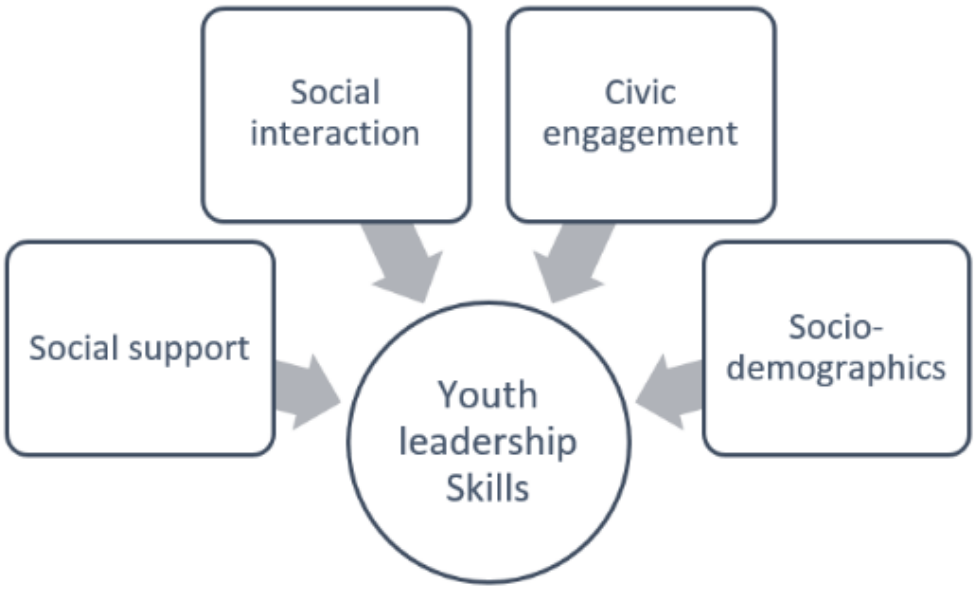

Figure 2-2 Theoretical framework

Social support

It is hard to define social support because it is a complex phenomenon. Social support plays a significant role in the psychological well-being of adolescents. It plays a major role in buffering stress and helps youth to develop self-esteem and self-efficacy (McGrath et al., 2009; Dolan, 2008; Redmond, 2012). Dolan (2008) considered the concept of social support at the community and human levels. At the community level, Dolan (2008) mentioned, "Social support relates to the capacity of a community to informally and formally sustain its membership; it is a buffer to stress and applies both in everyday living and in times of crises" (p.112). Social support is critical for humans to handle their daily challenges. Specifically, social support is important during adolescence because youth live in a transition phase that includes biological, psychological, and social changes (Pinkerton & Dolan; 2007). The sources of social support

include the individuals within a human's social network of family, friends, neighbors, teachers, and others (Pinkerton & Dolan; 2007).

Some researchers viewed social support as a multifaceted phenomenon. Pinkerton and Dolan (2007) considered a five level nested model to support that included immediate family, extended family, friends, neighborhoods, organizations, and legislations. In parallel, Kahn et al., (2009), indicated the importance of support, commitment and belonging within for youth in the developmental context. Youth support can be reflected in their interactions with their families, schools, communities, and organizations, while policies and regulations affect youth support as well. The authors emphasized the importance of the creation of networks of supports allowing youth to use their leadership skills sustainably.

Sources of social support can be both formal and informal. The social support network for every person can include immediate family or extended family members, siblings, friends, neighbors, and other adults from the community (Kernan & Morilus-Black, 2010). Social networks of support show a positive role for families. In adolescence, friends are a critical source of social support (McGrath et al., 2009). However, friends can be a source of positive or negative support. It is necessary that programs address that and educate children about the signs of a real and positive friendship and their connection to mental health (McGrath, Brennan, Dolan, Barnett, 2014). In addition, the relationship with a caring adult is a key factor that make youth attached to clubs, organization, and extracurricular activities. Mentoring relationships provide youth with support, guidance, expertise, and enables them to succeed in the leadership development process (Redmond & Dolan, 2014). Thus, it is necessary to consider fostering such relationships to improve youth involvement (McGrath et al., 2009).

There are four main types of social supports: concrete, emotional, advice and esteem support. Concrete support is known as the practical support. It includes the act of helping others physically with different tasks such as financial help, homework completion, and others

(Redmond, 2012). Emotional support "comprises acts of empathy, listening and generally 'being there' for someone when needed or in times of" (McGrath et al., 2014; p.2). Advice support consist of guiding the completion of tasks for others who have no experience in it (Pinkerton & Dolan; 2007).Finally, providing esteem support is showing another person how much he is valued. This type of support is also considered as a belonging support (Brennan, Barnett, Baugh, & 2007).

The quality of social support is a critical factor for youth development. An effective social support includes closeness, reciprocity, reliability, and durability (Dolan & Holt, 2002; Redmond, 2012; Pinkerton & Dolan; 2007). Closeness creates a feeling of comfort in accessing support. Reciprocity ensures the balance in the relationship has a mutual benefit and prevents the feeling of obligation towards others (Pinkerton & Dolan; 2007; Redmond, 2012). "The quality of support can also be a function of durability and reliability of the relationship" (Redmond, 2012; p.35)

Social support provides the emotional, esteem, and advice support that is critical for youth engaging in leadership (Redmond, 2012). "Leaders who can access support networks can also access resources, which may support their particular area of leadership thus generating external support for their cause" (Redmond, 2012; p.44). Hancock, Hyger and Jones (2012) (2012) found that the leadership skills of high school students involved in extracurricular activities were significantly predicted by parental support, and other adult support. The support was the highest predictor of the student perceived leadership skills. Redmond (2012) conducted an experimental study to test a leadership program. This study showed that social support predicted leadership skills at the third data collection phase, six months after the program delivery. McGrath et al. (2009) found that school satisfaction and social support were the greatest predictors of well-being. Alternatively, social support has shown a positive relationship with self-esteem and self-efficacy (McGrath et al., 2014). "Adolescents who are supported by their parents

are less likely to be predisposed to engage in a delinquent activity and anti-social behavior." (McGrath et al., 2009; p.313). Moreover, a person who believes that social support is available to him is reinforced by this belief (McGrath et al., 2014). If he feels social support is not available, it is difficult to him to access the available support. Thus, a child needs an adequate source and quality of social support for his well-being. This reflects the need for positive and effective social networks (McGrath et al., 2014). Brennan, Barnett and Baugh (2007) indicated that youth reported greater involvement if their teachers and parents supported them. McGrath et al. (2009) found that adult recognition and friends acceptance predicted youth engagement.

Social ties and interaction

In order to build sustainable communities, it is critical to consider the importance of social interaction. "Human interaction is the foundation of all communities" (Flora & Flora, 2003, p. 214). The interaction between, and among social groups, promotes the development of community (Wilkinson, 1991). Social groups include cultural and fraternal organizations, youth-related groups, local government, and a variety of other groups of local people. Participation in such groups provides a setting for community-related interactions as well as a potential forum for addressing common community needs.

While a variety of social interactions take place within a community, not all contribute to the emergence of community. Interaction among a sufficient number of diverse segments of society sets the stage for an environment where action can occur (Luloff & Bridger, 2003; Wilkinson, 1991). This reflects the fact that community is more a product of interaction than of inherent social structure. In addition, social interaction helps youth to access to social support. "The young person requires the support of immediate family. A family rests on the support of extended family, which in turn draws on a wider informal network of friends, neighbors, and community" (Pinkerton & Dolan; 2007; p.21).

In literature, the frequency of interaction outside of school was found to be positively related to civic engagement. This interaction raises youth awareness about their community issues and opportunities for engagement (Brennan, Barnett, & Lesmeister, 2007). Green and Brock (2005) discussed the importance of social interaction in developing individual skills. They indicated that individuals could develop negotiation and communication skills through the networks of social interaction more efficiently than in organizational settings. Barnett and Brennan (2006) found that youth involvement was related to leadership capacity and that involvement was highly related to interaction. Antonio (2001) found that interracial interaction between young people of different ethnicities helped them develop leadership skills and cultural knowledge. In addition, many researchers studied the interaction between children and parents (Beverdige, & Berg; 2007) because they acknowledged the influence of parents on the development of children. They indicated that better relationships with parents would result in better development outcomes (Waite & Cressell, 2015). While social support arises from the social network, an increased social network does not guarantee a high social support level (Redmond, 2012). Although social networks can be a source of positive support, they might also be a source of social distress and considered as toxic. This certainly will affect the well-being and leadership skills of youth. Therefore, the type and quality of social networks affect youth leadership skills positively or negatively. Finally, the social networks of family, friends, peers and others provide social support to youth, which is critical for their well-being (McGrath et al., 2009)

Civic engagement

There is no single definition of civic engagement (Bouliane & Braily, 2014). According to Alder & Gogging (2005), “Civic engagement refers to the ways in which citizens participate in the life of a community in order to improve conditions for others or to help shape the community future” (Adler & Goggin, 2005, p. 306). Ballard (2014) mentioned, “there is a debate about what

counts as civic involvement. For example, political activity and volunteerism are shown to be distinct forms of civic activities" (Ballard, 2014; p.440). Adult civic engagement literature stated several indicators for measuring civic engagement. These indicators include indicators for political voice (contacting officials, contacting print media, protesting, email petition, etc.), and other civic indicators including (fundraising for charity, community problem solving and, regular volunteering for the non-electoral organization) (Adler & Goggin, 2005). In addition, it includes civic activities such as volunteering, campaigning, or others have civic outcomes such as social and voting behaviors (Ballard, 2014). The length and consistency and frequency of participation showed positive outcomes to youth (Mueller, Bizan &Urban, 2011). For the sake of this study, volunteering and involvement in community activities are the indicators of civic engagement. Thus, the terms community involvement, community engagement and civic engagement, community participation are used interchangeably within the study.

Community involvement is an important component in the development of community. Through interactions at the local level, it can facilitate the formation of community agency. At a micro level, involvement can be measured by focusing on individual-level participation, memberships, and activeness with community groups and activities (Bridger et al., 2009; Luloff & Bridger, 2003; Wilkinson, 1991). Volunteering is one conception of civic engagement (Bouliane & Braily, 2014). Volunteering enhances youth-adult interaction and plays a significant role in community building. "Successful youth/adult partnerships encourage youth to develop the capacity to serve actively in organizations and transition into future community leaders" (Barnett & Brennan, 2008; p39).

Civic engagement helps youth to develop their leadership skills; it develops their sense of personal efficacy, personal identity, and moral development (Barnett & Brennan, 2006). Increased youth participation leads to better youth well-being and academic success and college attendance (McGrath et al., 2009). Volunteering in NGOs, local organization and youth groups

contribute to better local well-being. It helps youth to build resiliency, gives them opportunities to develop their leadership skills, allow them to avoid behavior problems (Barnett & Brennan, 2008). By volunteering, youth gain independence, grow as individuals, and become more attached to their communities (Barnett & Brennan, 2008). Hancock, et al., (2012) indicated that adolescent involvement in extracurricular activities, including sports, school, and community allowed them to gain leadership skills. Holt, Tink, Mandigo, & Fox (2008) found that high school students involved in soccer teams developed leadership skills. McGrath et al. (2009) showed that sports involvement predicted youth well-being. Roulin & Bnagenter (2013) studied the motivators of youth involvement. They found that students involved in volunteering activities were more likely to volunteer when entering the labor market, as compared with sports or artistic activities.

Motivation and barriers for civic engagement

In order to maximize the benefits from youth involvement in helping communities, it is important for extension and development professionals to understand youth motivation and barriers for youth involvement (Brennan, Barnett, & Baugh, 2007). Several of motivatiors to civic engagement were identified in the literature. Ballard (2014) identified four categories of motivation, which included personal issues, beliefs, self-goals, and responses to invitations. Others researchers, indicated barriers such as meeting school requirements, intending to get higher grades, improving chances to enter college or getting a job, feelings of responsibility, efficacy, parental involvement and the need to be valued by adults were found in literature (Brennan, Barnett, & Baugh, 2007; Brennan, Barnett, & Lesmeister , 2007; Barnett & Brennan, 2008; McGrath et al., 2014).

Brennan, Barnett and Lesmeister (2007) identified several obstacles to youth engagement including: lack of communication and awareness about engagement opportunities, mistreatment of young people, underestimation of youth capacities by adults, not being asked to participate and

others. In parallel, Mueller et al. (2011) mentioned that barriers to engagement include issues of funding, access to programs, lack of parental support, safety, neighborhoods facility, safety and funding. Alternatively,

Socio-demographic background

Youth's socio-economic backgrounds influence their leadership skills, social support, social interaction, capacity building, and civic engagement. Civic Engagement is related to social context. This includes family values, peer groups, and civic participation. Demographic characteristics also affect engagement such as: " race, gender, socio-economic status, immigrant status and the knowledge and skills youth acquire through civic classes or leadership programs that contribute to youth civic involvement" (Ballard, 2014; p.399). Research suggests that privileged youth are characterized by a high level of finance and parents' education. They have multiple resources that make them aware of many social issues (Ballard, et al., 2015). They are mainly motivated by feelings of responsibility of giving back while youth in poor conditions act for social injustice (Ballard, et al., 2015). Mueller et al., 2011), showed that in lower assets neighborhoods, girls highly engaged in extracurricular activities showed less depressive symptoms and higher levels of positive youth development (PYD). However, boys moderately engaged showed higher levels of depressive symptoms and lower levels of PYD. Alternatively, Flanagan and Levine (2010) indicated the lack of equal opportunities for civic engagement across people of different social classes and ethnicities. Barnett and Brennan (2006) showed that age, household income and rural and urban location were related to civic engagement; they found older youth, rural youth and those with higher income were more involved. Alternatively, Brennan, Barnett, and McGrath (2009) found that older youth are less likely to volunteer due to their commitments to family and school.

Gender differences in engagement and leadership skills were documented in different studies. Eagly & Karau (1991) argued that females show higher success rates in socially demanding tasks while males showed higher success in less socially demanding tasks. In the context of the evaluation of a leadership program Redmond (2012) found that males and females improved differently in their leadership skills. For example, males presented significant improvement in their problem-solving skills and social support, while females showed an increase in empathy and resilience. In addition, all participants showed an increase in different areas of leadership. Nonetheless, females appeared to benefit more than males in this program. Another study conducted by McGrath et al. (2014) demonstrated the presence of gender differences in the access to social support. Girls had higher sources of friend support and parent support than boys did. It also showed among the sources of social supports parental support only significantly related to well-being. Alternatively, Case (2011) found that females tend to be more engaged in public service activities on campus while males are more involved in Athletics. Also, Case found that previous high school involvement was predicted the involvement at the college level.

Summary

The review of the literature and theoretical framework showed many factors influencing youth leadership development. These factors included include civic engagement, social networks and interaction, social support, and sociodemographic characteristics.

Previous research on youth leadership development showed that youth develop through their daily interactions with their ecological environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The evaluation of a large number of existing youth leadership programs showed an increase in youth leadership skills without showing community benefits. Nevertheless, community development occurs when community action is based on community goals (Brennan, 2003; Wilkinson, 1991). By focusing

on the specific concepts identified in this study, a better understanding of their impact on the youth leadership development process can be achieved

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter presents an overview of the systematic methods by which the study was conducted, data gathered, and analysis methods. It presents the different steps taken for the analysis of the leadership skills and the factors shaping these in rural and urban Pennsylvania. It discusses the research design, units of analysis, sites selected, sampling, data collection procedures, variables measured and the validity and reliability of the data collection instruments.

Research Design

This study was intended to measure the relationship between the leadership skills, civic engagement, social networks, and social support. Four schools from four different counties were selected, and a descriptive correlational study was conducted using a mixed method approach (Tashakkori &Teddlie, 1998; Creswell, 2007). It included quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (interviews) methods. This strategy allowed a broad understanding of the relationship between the factors of interest through data triangulation (Tashakkori &Teddlie, 1998).

Pragmatic Approach (Mixed Methods)

The aim of this research project is to measure the connection between leadership skills, social networks, social support, and civic engagement. This will help to provide recommendations for youth leadership development to policy makers, youth programs, and schools. Additionally, providing suggestions to improve current youth leadership programs and policies requires a pragmatic approach. A pragmatic approach gives researchers the freedom to use the methods that are compatible with the research questions (Creswell, 2007). It focuses on the practical consequences of the research. While postpositivism approach considers the existence of a single reality, and the social constructivism acknowledge the presence of multiple realities

according to the different lived experiences, the pragmatic approach considers that the reality is not separate from its social context (Creswell, 2007). It allows researchers to use mixed methods to study a concern of interest (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Moreover, "it eschews the use of metaphysical concepts (truth, reality) that have often led to much endless (and often useless) discussion and debate" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; p.30). Consequently, both quantitative and qualitative methods are utilized in this research project (Maxwell, 2013).

Recently, researchers in social sciences use mixed method approaches more frequently (Collins, Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 2007). The mixed method approach allows data triangulation, validates the findings, and reduces research biases (Maxwell, 2013). Quantitative methods allow a rigorous statistical analysis and theory testing on a large population scale (Anderson, 2006). It allows testing hypothesis, to make predictions and to build models of interaction among variables of interest (Warner, 2008). Findings of quantitative methods could be generalized to the population if a random sample were selected (Warner, 2008). While quantitative methods are often known to be objective and favored over qualitative methods in many research textbooks (Maxwell, 2013), they measure objective and subjective realities that reflect the experiences of individuals and groups of people in their social context (Tobin, 2014). Alternatively, qualitative research is used to get a deep understanding of an issue where quantitative methods are not efficient. It can provide a detailed explanation of phenomena or problem and allows the understanding of different processes, which cannot be done when using quantitative methods (Maxwell, 2013). In addition, it also helps to generate new theories and hypothesis that can be tested through quantitative methods later (Maxwell, 2013). Nonetheless, it is often accused to be subjective and biased (Maxwell, 2013). Consequently, quantitative and qualitative methods reinforce one another and findings can be validated through data triangulation (Tobin, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998; Creswell, 2007).

In this study, surveys and interviews were used to collect data. Surveys served to measure leadership skills, civic engagement, social support, and social interaction on a large scale among youth. A quantitative analysis was conducted to study the connection between these variables. Interviews served to validate these findings through triangulation of data. Also, the teacher interviewees provided a different lens about youth leadership development.

Unit of Analysis

Individual high school students are the unit of analysis in this study. Their behaviors, experiences, and opinions were used to determine their level of leadership skills, civic engagement, and social support as well as factors associated with them. Focusing on this unit of analysis is appropriate because youth engagement and social support are keys leadership development. Although schools were the sampling units, individuals are the unit of analysis. This is because this data was collected at the student level, and grouping it will decrease the statistical significance of the results and might cause reductionist fallacy (Schutt, 2001; Hopkins 1982). Since the pragmatic approach allows data collection from multiple sources, agricultural teachers were interviewed in addition to students. This shows that teachers were the secondary unit of analysis. Alternatively, they were asked about their perceptions of youth engagement and leadership in their communities.

Site Selection

To ensure a broad representation of youth in Pennsylvania, four schools with agricultural programs from four different counties were selected. These counties were Centre County, Lancaster County, Lebanon County, and Philadelphia County. The four corresponding schools to

the four selected counties were named A, B, C & D respectively. Figure 3-1 shows the location of the counties selected.

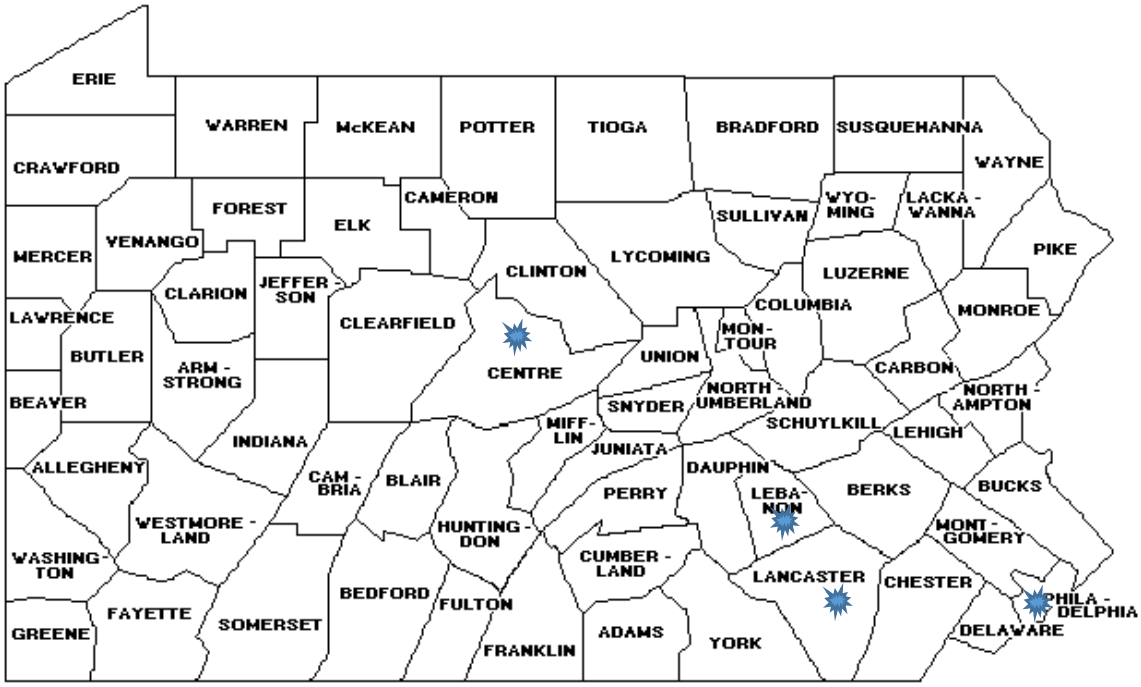

Figure 3-1 Counties Selected

Purpose of selection: rural -urban dichotomy

Originally, the aim of this research was to select rural and urban counties to get a broad representation. Yet, after looking for definitions of rural and urban, it was found that different counties can be classified as rural and urban under different definitions. The United States. Census Bureau considers that the threshold of urban areas is 2500 (United State Census Bureau, 2010). The Strategy used by the census bureau was to determine urban areas and then to classify areas outside urban areas as rural. According to Cromartie and Bucholtz (2008), rural definitions are based on economic, land use and administrative concepts. The use of different rural definitions affects the percentage of the population considered as rural; thus, rural population

varies between 17 % and 49% according to the definition used. It also affects their eligibility for rural development projects (USDA, 2013). Researchers and policy makers choose available definitions of rural or can create their own to be compatible with their purpose of application (USDA, 2013).

As a result of the subjectivity of the rural and urban definitions mentioned above, and the diversity of the population mix in Pennsylvania, three counties were selected that have a combination of rural and urban population and a purely urban County. The four counties chosen were Philadelphia, Lancaster, Lebanon, and Centre. Philadelphia is the fifth largest populated area in the United.States. and the most populated area in Pennsylvania (Census Bureau, 2010). It has no rural population, thus based on all definitions Philadelphia is always urban. Since most of Pennsylvania's counties have a mix of rural and urban population, counties having a mix of rural and urban population. Lancaster County was selected because although considered mostly urban, it still presents rural pockets. This county has the highest number of farms in southeastern Pennsylvania (USDA: ERS, 2007). Centre County is particular because it has its multicultural nature and the influence of the Pennsylvania State University. Lebanon County, while close to Lancaster County and is located in an a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), is considered entirely rural by the USDA.

Because the rural-urban dichotomy is misleading due to the diversity of population mix in Pennsylvania, and the schools can serve multiple communities, a residence variable was developed. This variable allowed students to inform us about their particular communities. The level of urbanization was measured through five categories. These categories are rural farm, rural non-farm, small town, suburbs, and city.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the Counties selected

Socio-demographic factors affect civic engagement. Thus, it is critical to understand the population context to analyze data. Table 3-1 was adapted from a data set available to the public published by the United State Census Bureau (2009-2014). The population estimates are the highest in Philadelphia and the lowest in Lebanon County. Yet, the percentage of people under 18 is the highest in Lancaster County and the lowest in Centre County. The percentage of white (non-Hispanic/ Latino) were the lowest in Philadelphia. Concerning gender, all counties had more females than males. This is in exception to Centre County where the percentage of males (52.1) is higher compared to Pennsylvania (48.9). The number of persons in households is the highest in Lancaster (2.62) and the lowest in Centre County (2.4). However, all the values are similar to the average of Pennsylvania. Concerning education, Centre County has the highest percentage of people having a bachelor degree (40.4). Alternatively, Lebanon County has the lowest percentage among the selected (19.4). The time needed to travel to work was the highest in Philadelphia (31.8 min). Household income and per capita income were the lowest in Philadelphia. Also, among counties selected, Philadelphia presents the highest poverty rate of 26% and the highest population density of 11379.5 per square mile, and the highest travel time to work 31.8 min, compared to the others.

Table 3-1 Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Research Context

	Centre County	Lancaster County	Lebanon County	Philadelphia County	Pennsylvania	UNITED STATES
Population estimates (2014)	158,742	533,320	136,359	1,560,297	12,787,209	318,857,056
Age and Gender (2013) %						
Persons under 18 years	15.5	24.3	22.8	22.2	21.3	23.3
Male	52.1	48.9	48.9	47.3	48.9	49.2
Female	47.9	51.1	51.1	52.7	51.1	50.8
Race and Hispanic Origin (2013) %						
White	89.5	91	93.9	45.5	83.2	77.7
Black or African American	3.4	4.7	3.1	44.2	11.5	13.2
American Indian	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.3	1.2
Asian	5.3	2.1	1.3	6.9	3.1	5.3
Pacific Islander	0.1	0.1	Z	0.1	0.1	0.2
Mixed Races	1.6	1.8	1.4	2.4	1.8	2.4
Hispanic/Latino	2.7	9.5	10.9	13.3	6.3	17.1
White (not Hispanic /Latino)	87.3	83.6	85	36.3	78.4	62.6
Families and Living Arrangements (2009-2013)						
Persons per household	2.4	2.62	2.52	2.56	2.48	2.63
Education (% of persons that are 25 years and older, 2009-2013)						
High school graduate or higher	92.7	83.9	85.5	81.2	88.7	86
Bachelor's degree or higher	40.4	24.2	19.4	23.9	27.5	28.8
Transportation (workers that are 16 or more years old, 2009-2013)						
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	19.9	22.5	22.9	31.8	25.9	25.5
Income and Poverty (2013)						
Median household income (dollars)	50,336	56,483	54,818	37,192	52,548	53,046
Per capita income(dollars)	25,545	26,496	27,074	22,279	28,502	28,155
Persons in poverty %	18.4	10.5	11.2	26	13.7	14.5
Geography (2010)						
Population per square mile	138.7	550.4	369.1	11,379.5	283.9	87.4

Adapted from quick facts, U.S. Bureau of Census, 2009/2014[1]
(http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045214/00,42,42027,42075,42071,42101)

[1] QuickFacts data are derived from: Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, Current Population Survey, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits (United States Census Bureau, 2009/2014)

Profiles of high schools participating in the study

In order to understand the high schools' profiles, several concepts and terminologies require clarifications. These terminologies include neighborhood schools, magnet schools, regular schools, vocational schools, and Title I school.

Based on geographical location, two school types were considered for this study: neighborhood schools, and magnet schools. Neighborhood schools (called also community schools) are those serving residents in a specific geographical zone. The neighborhood schools act (1974) mentioned "it is the policy of the United States to encourage the concept of the neighborhood school so that students are assigned to a public elementary or secondary school solely on the basis of residence within the geographic zone which that school serves" (United States. Congress, 1974; p.1-2). Magnet schools are schools attracting students from different socio-economic backgrounds and locations. The National Centre for Educational Statistics (NCES) defined magnet school as "special school or program designed to attract students of different racial/ethnic backgrounds for the purpose of reducing, preventing, or eliminating racial isolation (50 percent or more minority enrollment); and/or to provide an academic or social focus on a particular theme" (NCES, 2012; p. B-4).

Based on type of educational services two types of schools were considered, regular and vocational schools. Regular schools are public schools providing educational services that do not have an emphasis on special and vocational education (NCES, 2012). The NCES (2012) indicated that vocational schools focused "primarily on providing formal preparation for semiskilled, skilled, technical, or professional occupations for high school-age students who have opted to develop or expand their employment opportunities, often in lieu of preparing for college entry" (NCES, 2012; p. B-5).

The student teacher ratio reflects the number of students divided by the number of students reflects the amount of workload on teachers (NCES, 2012). The full time equivalent

(FTE) is “the amount of time required to perform an assignment stated as a proportion of a full-time position and computed by dividing the amount of time employed by the time normally required for a full-time position” (NCES, 2012; p. B-1).

Finally, Title I is a program that allows local education agencies (LEA) to receive financial support from state educational agencies (SEA). Schools with at least 40 % of students that have low income are Title I schools (NCES, 2012).

School (A)

School (A) is a Title I regular high school situated in Center County in a town located near an urban area. The agricultural program in this school aims to help students connect agriculture to real world issues. The school aims to provide students with the technical and leadership expertise to be effective citizens. Community service hours were required for graduation in this school.

An examination of national center and education statistics schools’ data (2014) showed that during the academic year 2013-2014 the majority of students (96%) were white and 50.9% were males. The student teacher ratio of 12.44, and classroom teachers (FTE) of 63.73. A wide range of extracurricular activities existed in this school. The school website shows an extensive list of clubs related to academics, agriculture (such as future farmers of America club, known as FFA), athletics, social clubs, and others.

School (B)

School (B) is a regular high school situated in Lancaster County near a suburban area. The educational experience in the schools is rich. It includes hands on, and agricultural production activities. The school had many initiatives aiming to involve parents and children in local community activities. However, many of these stopped being applied because of the lack of funding. Community service hours were required for graduation in this school.

An examination of national center and education statistics schools' data (2014) showed that during the academic year 2013-2014 the majority of students (88.8%) were white and 50.9% were males. The student teacher ratio of 16.01, and classroom teachers (FTE) of 64.88. In this school a wide range of extracurricular activities exist. These activities cover a wide range of student's interests such as sports, music, FFA, interactive club. Other clubs were also indicated on the school website.

School (C)

School (C) is a Title I regular high school situated in Lebanon County in a small suburb. The school philosophy statement included different educational objectives. One of those objectives was to encourage students to be effective and productive citizens in their schools and their communities. Community service hours were required for graduation in this school.

An examination of NCES data (2014) showed that during the academic year 2013-2014 the majority of students (80%) were white and 52.9% were males. The student teacher ratio of 14.75, and classroom teachers (FTE) of 101. School has more than 50 clubs, and a wide range of extracurricular activities. The school's website shows an extensive list of clubs related to community service, leadership development, agriculture (such as FFA), political, academics, athletics, social clubs, and others. This school conveys a weekly hour for students to get involved in clubs.

School (D)

School (D) is a Title I magnet school situated in Philadelphia County, characterized by a diverse student population. It is a vocational agricultural school characterized by a big network of partnerships with local businesses and agricultural institutions. Food production and community service activities are part of the curriculum. School D is a non-neighborhood school, which inhibit students from getting involved with the community.

The school website shows the existence of a large number of clubs mainly related to agriculture. These clubs include agricultural production and conservation, agricultural business, food quality, animal production, and others. Nonetheless, athletic, social, environmental clubs also exist. An examination of NCES's data (2014) showed that during the academic year 2013-2014 the majority of students (64.7%) were black and 35.5% are males. The student teacher ratio of 18, and classroom teachers (FTE) of 32.

Socio-demographics and enrollment data of selected locations

Tables 3-2 and 3-3 show the enrollment by gender and grade in the four schools, and their corresponding counties for the academic year 2014-2015. It is necessary to examine students' enrollment data and the socio-demographics of the locations selected to be able to understand the results later. In all counties, the percentage of males enrolled in high schools was greater than the female percentage. In Pennsylvania, 51.3 % of enrolled students were males while 48.7% are females. Yet, school D has a large percentage of females (64%).

Table 3-2 Enrollment by Gender and Grade in the Selected Counties

County	**Centre County**	**Lancaster County**	**Lebanon County**	**Philadelphia County**	**Pennsylvania**
Total Enrollment (Grades 9-12)	4,125	20,926	5,634	56,643	546,960
Gender					
Male	2,151 (52.15%)	10,846 (51.8 %)	2,933 (52.05%)	28,365 (50.08%)	280,628 (51.3%)
Female	1974 (47.85%)	10080 (48.2 %)	2701 (74.95%)	28278 (49.92%)	266332 (48.7%)
Grade Level					
9th	1,085	5,725	1,525	15,825	144,293
10th	1,028	5,448	1,450	15,050	138,759
11th	989	5,240	1,411	13,459	132,888
12th	1,023	4,513	1,248	12,309	131,020

Adapted from the Enrollment Data 2014-2015 of the Pennsylvania Department of Education Retrieved from http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/document/1497002/enrollment_public_schools_2014-15_xlsx

Table 3-3 Enrollment by Gender and Grade in the Selected Schools

Schools	**Centre County**	**Lancaster County**	**Lebanon County**	**Philadelphia County**
High School Selected	*A*	*B*	*C*	*D*
Total Enrollment (Grades 9-12)	816	1009	1364	510
Male	441(54%)	521 (51.63%)	701 (51.4%)	184 (36%)
Female	375 (46%)	488 (48.37%)	663(48.6%)	326 (64%)
Grade Level				
9th	235 (28.8%)	277 (27.4%)	347 (25.4%)	126 (24.7%)
10th	198 (24.3%)	235 (23.3%)	376 (27.6%)	176 (24.5%)
11th	195 (23.9%)	247 (24.5%)	328 (24.0%)	117 (22.9%)
12^{th}	188 (23.0%)	250 (24.8%)	313 (23.0%)	91 (17.8%)

Adapted from the Enrollment Data 2014-2015 of the Pennsylvania Department of Education Retrieved from http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/document/1497002/enrollment_public_schools_2014-15_xlsx

Population and Sampling

It is common in mixed method approaches to use different samples (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). A convenience sample of four schools with agricultural programs was selected. These schools had previous contacts with Penn State and expressed their interest to participate. Thus, findings cannot be generalized to Pennsylvanian youth. A total of 421 students completed the survey. Alternatively, an appropriate sample of interviewees is necessary to accomplish the objectives of the study. Participants were selected according to their ability to contribute meaningfully to the research. A total of 19 key informant interviews were conducted. Interviewees included teacher advisors of school clubs and a variety of active students.

Data Collection

The Office of Research Protection approved the data collection instrument in August 2014 (IRB# 451). Before collecting data, the approval of the school was needed. Thus, the researcher and one of her committee members contacted principals and agricultural teachers of participating schools by email. The latter received a description of the study, the consent forms, and the researcher's contact information. Passive parental consent were sent to parents. This

allowed parents the opportunity to exercise their right to refuse their minor child's participation in the study. Youth whose parents refused their participation were removed from the study. Alternatively, youth whose parents did not refuse their participation were surveyed. Consent forms were distributed to students before conducting the survey, and students were frequently reminded of their rights as research participants and were asked if they would be willing to participate (as part of their invitation and also on the survey questionnaire).

As indicated previously, four schools took part in this study, and mixed methods were used. The researcher administered the paper and pencil survey in person in one of the four schools. Yet, the other schools did not allow the researcher to administer the surveys due to their strict rules and time constraints. However, both researcher and teachers followed the same survey administration protocol. Data collection ran from December 16, 2014 to February 17, 2015. The responses to the survey were anonymous, and it took approximately 20-30 min to be completed. Four hundred ninety surveys were distributed. Ninety surveys were distributed in school A, 100 in school B and C and 200 in School D. A total of 421 questionnaires were completed leading to a response rate of 86% which is typical response rate for in-Person surveys (Groves et al., 2009). All surveys were used for the analysis, yet some included missing data.

Alongside the surveys, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with nineteen Key informant teachers and students. They were identified through the professional network of the research committee. Additional interviewees were added through snowball sampling. Data was collected until partial theoretical saturation was reached, to avoid data replication and redundancy (Mason, 2010). Theoretically, saturation is reached when no new information appears in the interviews (Mason, 2010; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson 2006; Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). Nevertheless, there are no practical guidelines to reach saturation (Mason, 2010). According to Guest et al. (2006), theoretical saturation can be reached

with 12 interviewees. Yet, Creswell (2007) considers that 20 to 30 interviews are needed to reach saturation. Alternatively, Bertaux (1981) considered that fifteen is the minimum sample size in qualitative research acceptable (adapted from Guest et al., 2006). Many researchers argue that saturation depends on the researcher judgment rather than on a particular number of interviewees (Mason, 2010; Marshall et al., 2013). They considered that their expertise, study scope, availability of participants, time constraints, and others (Mason, 2010) affected researchers' judgment about saturation. For this study, the scope of interviews was to support quantitative data and to provide details about teachers' and students' experiences in youth leadership development. The interviews conducted were not in depth long interviews. Thus, saturation was partially reached for the information gathered through short interviews.

The interviewed teachers were part of school clubs that allows youth to get involved in their communities. The teachers identified the students to interview. They were asked to select students from different levels of community involvement and leadership skills. These students were provided with passive parental consent a week before their interviews. Alternatively, all interviewees were given an interview consent form prior to the interview. They were reminded that their participation is voluntary, and they can skip questions or end the interview at any time. The length of interviews varied according to the experiences of each participant. The duration of the interviews varied between 17 and 45 min. These interviews served to find out the teachers' and youths' perspective of youth leadership skills and engagement. Teachers were asked about their experiences in the fields of youth engagement and leadership development. They provided information about the barriers and motivation for engagement and leadership development. They also discussed the benefits of engagement and leadership development at the students' level, school level, and community level. Same topics were discussed with the interviewed students. The interview questionnaire was provided in Appendix B.

Questionnaire Design

A Modified Total Design Method (TDM) was used to design surveys to ensure high response rates (Dillman, Smyth & Christian, 2009; Dillman, 1991). This method uses the social exchange theory as a framework (Dillman, 1991). It aims to maximize the benefits of participants and minimize their burden completing surveys (Dillman, 1991). The survey was made simple, easy to read and complete. It consisted of twelve pages printed in a booklet format. It was accompanied with informed consent forms and a verbal explanation of the study's benefits. Once designed, the questionnaire was reviewed by a panel of experts to ensure content validity (Norland, 1990). It was also pilot tested in a similar setting school. Students gave their comments on the survey. This was followed by an open discussion with students who completed the survey. Consequently, further adjustments were made.

The questionnaire was developed based on existing instruments, such as the life skill measure (Mincemoyer & Perkins, 2005), the social provision scale (Dolan, 2006), capacity building index (Barnett & Brennan, 2006), and others. In addition, individual items to measure leadership experiences were developed.

The reliability of the preexisting instruments were reported in many studies (Mincemoyer & Perkins, 2005; Redmond, 2012; Dolan, 2006; McGrath et al; 2014; Brennan, Barnett, & McGrath, 2009; Barnett & Brennan, 2006). Concerning civic involvement indicators, community and club involvement were used. These indicators were derived from previous studies (Butterbaugh, 2014; Barnett & Brennan, 2008; Alder & Goggin, 2005). The reason to choose that scale is that it was specifically adapted for youth involvement. Finally, social ties and interaction was measured by the frequency and type of interaction among youth. The items considered for this scale were adapted from previous studies on youth and adult engagement (Brennan, Barnett, & McGrath, 2009; Brennan, 2003). The items selected showed type and frequency of interaction with family, friends, acquaintances, neighbors, and group members. In addition, few questions

were added to measure leadership experiences based on training. Although other variables were measured, they are beyond the scope of this study and will be addressed later in journal articles.

The survey was divided into five sections. The first section measures the quality of life in the community, the community attachment and the number of years lived within the community and the social networks and interaction. The second section measures the relationship of the youth with friends in terms of number of friends, frequency of interaction, the type and frequency of activities executed with friends. The third section measures the level of involvement in the community, involvement in clubs, motivation, and barriers to involvement. The fourth section measures the number of leadership programs and frequency of training sessions as well as the leadership life skills level. The fifth sections measure the school environment satisfaction. The sixth section measure demographics including sex, ethnicity, financial issues level, location, and the family composition. It also includes the measurement of social support.

Operationalization of Concepts and Variables

Leadership skills (Dependent Variable)

While old theories view leadership as specific traits that a person is born with, more recent theories describe youth leadership as an acquisition of skills and competencies that will allow them to lead. From this perspective, Van Linden and Fertman (1998) stressed that every person can become a leader (Redmond, 2012). The Life Leadership Skills scale (Mincemoyer & Perkins, 2005) measures several types of leadership skills that are decision-making, critical thinking, goal setting, problem-solving and communication. The measurement was done according to an ordinal scale measuring the frequency of the actions. Numeric codes were given to each response category (Never =1, Rarely=2, Sometimes= 3, Often=4, always= 5). The reliability of the overall scale was Cronbach's alpha=0.879. The reliability for each leadership skills subscale was measured and reported.

Decision making: this subscale included four items which are: “I look for information to help me understand the problem”, **“**I consider the risk of a choice before making a decision”, “I think about all the information I have about the different choices”, “I think of past choices when making new decisions”. The Cronbach’s alpha for this subscale was 0.855.

Critical thinking: this subscale included five items**: “**I can easily express my thoughts on a problem”, **“**I usually have more than one source of information before making a decision”, **“**I compare ideas when thinking about a topic”, **“**I keep my mind open to different ideas when planning to make a decision”, **“**I am able to tell the best way of handling a problem”. The Cronbach’s alpha for this subscale was 0.854.

Communication: this subscale included six items**: “**I try to keep eye contact”, **“**I recognize when two people are trying to say the same thing, but in different ways”, “I try to see the other person's point of view”, “I change the way I talk to someone based on my relationship with them”, **“**I organize thoughts in my head before speaking”, “I make sure I understand what another person is saying before I respond”. The Cronbach’s alpha for this subscale was 0.864

Goal setting: this subscale included four items: “I look at the steps needed to achieve the goal”, “I think about how and when I want to achieve a goal”, “After setting a goal, I break goals down into steps so I can check my progress”, “Both positive and negative feedback help me work toward my goal”. The Cronbach’s ‘alpha for this subscale was 0.884

Problem-solving: this subscale included five items: “I first figure out exactly what the problem is”, **“**I try to determine what caused the problem”, **“**I do what I have done in the past to solve the problem”, **“**I compare each possible solution with the others to find the best one”, **“**After selecting a solution, I think about it for a while before putting it into action”. The Cronbach’s alpha for this subscale was 0.886.

Previous Leadership programs' experiences

This question started with a contingency question that asks students if they have ever participated in a leadership program, then it asks about the number and names of those leadership programs.

- **Participation in previous leadership programs: "**Have you ever participated in a leadership program?" (No=1, Yes= 2)
- **Number of programs:** "How many?" answers available were 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 or more
- **Name of programs: "**Provide a list of the leadership programs that you have been involved in"(qualitative data)

Capacity building

Capacity building is the ability to use, manage, and improve their local resources in addressing their needs (Barnett & Brennan, 2006).The following questions were used to measure the capacity building: "I am actively involved in decision-making", " I am actively involved in policy making", "My community values youth in working towards solutions", "I have a large say on how the organization grows", "My input has value", "I influence the community by being involved in community organizations". Responses were measured via a bipolar scale. Responses ranged from 1) Strongly disagree to 5) strongly agree. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.878.

Civic engagement (Independent variable)

Involvement and interaction are the foundations for community members to group together and cooperate for the benefit of the community (Wilkinson, 1991). This study used volunteering and involvement in organization and clubs as civic indicators. Several; questions were used. They were adapted from previous research studies (Butterbaugh, 2014; Barnett & Brennan, 2008; Alder & Goggin, 2005). In the beginning, youth were asked "Do you take part in any community or volunteer activities?" Answer categories for this nominal variable were 1) No

and 2) Yes. If the answer was yes, then respondents were asked " How many groups or organizations do you volunteer with?". Then youth were asked about their level of involvement with different types of clubs and organizations including social and recreational groups, community groups, sports groups, school clubs, and youth religious groups. Response categories included six-item Likert scale 1- Not involved at all, 2-A Few times a year, 3- About once a month, 4- Several times a month, 5-About once a week, 6-More than Once a week. The reliability for the latter ordinal scale was 0.75.

Social networks and interaction (Independent variable)

Social networks and frequency of interaction, and have been found to be closely related to continued levels of interaction (Bridger & Luloff, 1999: p. 389). While interaction takes many forms, the interest here will be measuring the interaction with family, friends, and acquaintances. Interaction can foster community awareness and can lead to the formation of community agency and community action (Wilkinson, 1991; Brennan, 2003). Several questions addressed this area and were treated individually. First, respondents were asked, "How often do you see or meet with at least one of the following types of people?". The following items will be presented: "Family", "Acquaintances", "Neighbors", "Community groups", and "Other social groups/organizations". This variable included the following response categories: 1) More than once a week, 2) Once a week, 3) A few times a month, 4) Once a month, 5) A few times a year, and 6) Never.

Second, youth were asked specifically about their friends. Questions included: "How important is to have a friend?" For this item, a bipolar scale was used with 1) Not important and 5) Very important presented at the extremes of the scale. Then youth were asked "How many close friends do you have?" answers to this question were: none, one, two, three, and more than three. This was followed by: "How often do you see your friends outside school?" answers to this category included: Never, 3-4 times a year, About once a month, Several times a month but not

once a week, once a week, 3-4 days a week, 5-6 days a week and Everyday. The items for this section were adapted from different studies (Butterbaugh, 2014; Brennan, Barnett, & McGrath, 2009; Brennan, 2003).

Social support (Independent Variable)

The social support is a process where an individual gets the sense of belonging to a group of people and gets support in stressful situations (Remond, 2012; Dolan, 2006). Social support provides a foundation for a capacity of interaction that allows the emergence of community agency (Brennan, 2008). The Social Provision scale was used to measure social support (Dolan, 2006). Sixteen items were used to measure social support. These items were mixed in two different ways to form eight subscales to show the sources and types of social support. These subscales were friendship support, parental support, sibling support, adult support, concrete support, esteem support, emotional support, and advice support. Each subscale was composed of four items. Items to this concept had responses of a nominal scale which are 1=Yes, 2= Sometimes, 3= No. The overall Cronbach's alpha score for this scale was 0.863.

Types of social support

a) Friendship Support: 1) Are there friends you can depend on to help you? 2) Do your relationships with your friends provide you with a sense of acceptance and happiness? 3) Do you feel your talents/abilities are recognized by your friends? 4) Is there a friend you could trust to turn to for advice? The Cronbach's alpha score for this subscale was 0.853.

b) Parent Support: 1) Can you depend on your parent(s)/guardian to help you? 2) Do you feel your talents/abilities are recognized by your parents? 3) Could you turn to your parent(s)/guardian for advice? 4) Do your relationships with your parent(s)/guardian(s) provide you with a sense of acceptance and happiness? The Cronbach's alpha score for this subscale was: 0.888

c) Sibling Support: 1) Can you depend on your brother(s)/sister(s) to help you? 2) Do your relationships with your brother(s)/sister(s) provide you with a sense of acceptance and happiness? 3) Do you feel your talents and abilities are recognized by your brother(s)/sister(s)? 4) Could you turn to your brother(s)/sister(s) for advice? The Cronbach's alpha score was 0. 903.

d**) Adult Support:** 1) Can you depend on other adult(s) (e.g. sport coach, family friend) you know to help you, if you really need it? 2) Does your relationship with this adult provide you with a sense of acceptance and happiness? 3) Do you feel your talents and abilities are recognized by this adult? 4) Could you turn to another adult for advice? The Cronbach's alpha score for this subscale was 0.909.

Concrete Support: 1) Are there friends you can depend on to help you? 2) Can you depend on your parent(s)/guardian to help you? 3) Can you depend on your brother(s)/sister(s) to help you? 4) Can you depend on other adult(s) (e.g. sport coach, family friend) you know to help you, if you really need it? The Cronbach's alpha score for this subscale was 0.672.

Emotional Support: 1) Do your relationships with your friends provide you with a sense of acceptance and happiness? 2) Do your relationships with your parent(s)/guardian(s) provide you with a sense of acceptance and happiness? 3) Do your relationships with your brother(s)/sister(s) provide you with a sense of acceptance and happiness? 4) Does your relationship with this adult provide you with a sense of acceptance and happiness? The Cronbach's alpha score for this subscale was 0.723.

Esteem Support: 1) Do you feel your talents/abilities are recognized by your friends? 2) Do you feel your talents/abilities are recognized by your parents? 3) Do you feel your talents and abilities are recognized by your brother(s)/sister(s)? 4) Do you feel your talents and abilities are recognized by this adult? The Cronbach's alpha score for this subscale was 0.739.

Advice Support: 1) Is there a friend you could trust to turn to for advice? 2) Could you turn to your parent(s)/guardian for advice? 3) Could you turn to your brother(s)/sister(s) for advice? 4) Could you turn to another adult for advice? The Cronbach's alpha score for this subscale was 0.66.

Socio-demographic variables

The socio-demographic variables for respondents included in the analysis were:

- **Gender:** (1) Male (2) Female
- **Ethnicity: (**1) White/Caucasian (2) African American (3) Asian (4) Hispanic/Latino (5) Native American and (6) other
- **Location: (**1) Rural farm (2) Rural non-farm (3) Small town (4) Suburban and (5) Urban
- **Length of Residence in the Community**: Number of years and months
- **Age:** (in years)
- **Economic Concern:** Four categories were used: (1) Not a concern (2) A slight concern (3) A big concern and (4) Don't know
- **Household:** Number of brothers, sisters, and people living in the household

Table 3-4 Variables Measured and their Corresponding Scales and Question Numbers

Variables	Measurement	Scale of measurement	Survey Question
Civic engagement	Summated index Community involvement Number of group to volunteer in the community.	IR N IR	15 (5 items) Q.13 (2 items)
Leadership skills	Summation of the subscales of decision-making, critical thinking goal setting, communication and problem-solving	O	Q.20 (24 items)
Leadership experience	Participation in leadership program Number of leadership programs Leadership programs	N I/R Qualitative	Q.19 (3 Items)
Capacity building	Summated Index	O	Q.21 (5 Items)
Social support	Sources and types of support	O	Q.28 (16 Items)
Social interaction	Frequency of interaction with family, friends, neighbors, acquaintances and school clubs	O	Q.8 (5 Items)
Sociodemographics	Gender Race Grade Financial issues Number of brothers Number of sisters Number of people living with Ethnicity Residence	N N O O I/R I/R I/R N O	Q.23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34

Validity and Reliability

Existing instruments were mainly used to create the survey (Mincemoyer & Perkins, 2005; Dolan, 2006; McGrath et al.; 2014; Brennan, Barnett, & McGrath, 2009; Barnett & Brennan, 2006). The operationalization of concept variables mentioned the used instruments to measure leadership skills, social support, capacity building, and civic engagement. These scales presented good values of internal consistency reliability that were reported in different studies as mentioned above. Experts from the field of youth engagement and development developed them. These were the main reason to use these preexisting scales. In addition, using preexisting tested

instruments helps to improve the data quality (Radhakrishna, Tobin, Brennan, & Thomson, 2012). Concerning the additional items developed by the researcher, a panel of experts reviewed these items. Also, students gave additional comments after the pilot test. This allowed making some adjustments for the survey. A second-order confirmatory factor analysis using SEM (Using Amos 22.0) was conducted to confirm the construct validity of the leadership skills and social support scales. Acceptable fit measure were obtained. Thus, a summated scale for each variable was computed using SPSS.

Two interview questionnaires were designed to collect data from teachers and students. The questionnaires were reviewed by three researchers for the content. Two researchers collected data for practical reasons. They both followed the same interview protocol to reduce bias. Moreover, the primary researcher attended all interviews to take notes, ensure that the interview protocol was followed, and to record the interviews. To ensure the qualitative data trustworthiness, many procedures recommended by qualitative researchers were used. Data analysis procedures and findings were discussed with committee members (Peer debriefing) (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative data and quantitative data were checked for consistency and differences (Triangulation) (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman 2011). Triangulation "reduces the risk of chance associations and of systemic biases due to a specific method" (Maxwell, 2013; p.128). In addition, field notes and recordings were compared to enhance reliability (Creswell, 2007).

Data Analysis

Sample validation

A sample validation was performed for using grade, gender, and ethnicity. Table 3-4 presents the sociodemographic variables of the sample by school. The grade distribution of the sample was compared to the enrollment data for provided by the department of education for

each school (2014-2015) . The sample's gender and ethnicity of the sample were compared for each school to the data provided by the NCES (2012). The selected sociodemographic variables were presented in table 3-5.

Table 3-5 Socio-demographics of the Sample by School

	School A	School B	School C	School D	Total
Grade					
Grade 9	27.0%	35.7%	28.3%	15.1%	24.6%
Grade 10	8.1%	22.6%	20.7%	28.3%	21.6%
Grade 11	23.0%	25.0%	27.2%	23.7%	24.6%
Grade 12	41.9%	16.7%	23.9%	32.9%	21.9%
Gender					
Male	53.3%	42.2%	62.0%	35.8%	46.4%
Female	46.7%	57.8%	38.0%	64.2%	53.6%
Ethnicity					
White	67.6%	91.6%	83.1%	15.1%	56.0%
African	8.1%	2.4%	1.1%	50.0%	21.4%

The overall sample characteristics was similar to the enrollment records discussed earlier[2]. Slight variations were noted, but the overall characteristics were similar. No concerns were found and the sample characteristics did not vary significantly at the school, county, and state level.

Quantitative analysis

Before analyzing the survey data, the surveys were entered manually into SPSS v.23.0. Each participant was given an ID number, and the answer categories for each question were given numerical codes. The data entry step was followed by frequencies run for all variables to clean the data. Then major outliers were removed to avoid data skewness. First descriptive statistics

[2] This includes the enrollment data for each school provided by the Pennsylvania department of education for the academic year 2014-2015 (presented in tables 3-2 and 3-3). In addition it also includes the enrollment data provided by NCES for the academic year 2013-2014, which was discussed the section describing the school profiles.

were conducted. Then they were followed by bivariate and multivariate statistical analysis. Interviews were analyzed using a content analysis framework.

The survey response rate was about 86%. Listwise deletion was used to treat missing data because it is can be used for all kind of statistical analysis, and it does not need sophisticated computational methods (Allison, 2001). Also, it provides unbiased estimates when data is missing completely at random (MCAR) (Allison, 2001). The missing data mechanism was checked with SPSS 23.0, and the MCAR assumption was met for scale variables including leadership skills, social support, capacity building, and civic engagement quantitative data helps to measure the relationship between the dependent and independent variables on a large scales. Rigorous statistical analysis were conducted; they help to measure the statistical relationship among different variables of interest for large scale population (Warner,2008), and the degree of association among variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Figure 3-2 shows he steps used to conduct the data analysis process.

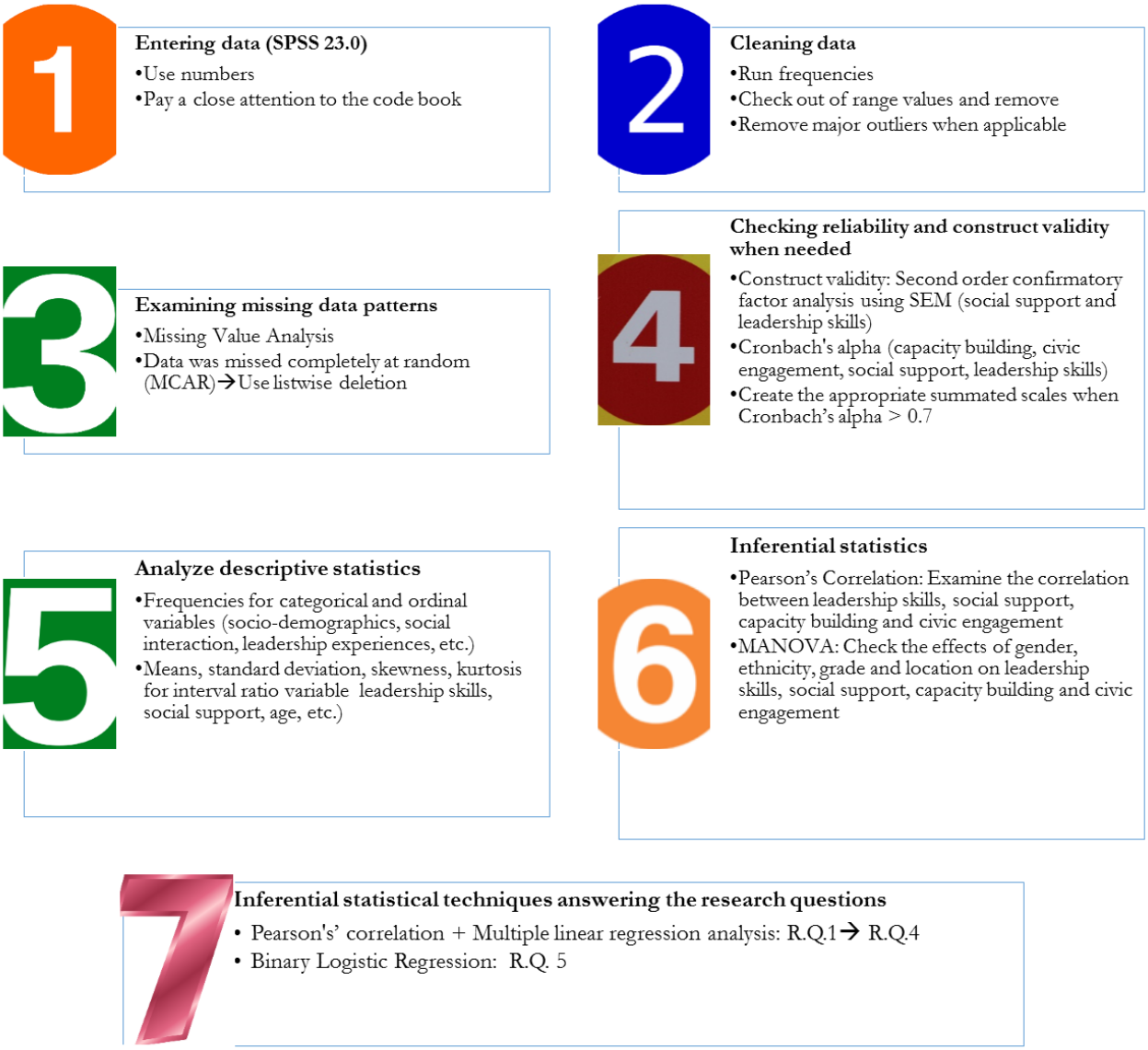

Figure 3-2 Quantitative data analysis process

In this study, the level of leadership skills was the dependent variable. The goal was to develop linear regression models for the dependent variable. Several steps were conducted to reach this goal. First, descriptive statistics were run for all variables and major outliers were removed to avoid skewing the data and obtaining biased estimates (Warner, 2008). Second, a

second-order confirmatory analysis using SEM for the life leadership skills and social support to ensure that the data fits the theoretical framework proposed by the social provision scale and Life Leadership skills scale. The models had acceptable model fit, and summated leadership skills and social support variables were created.

Third, Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted to check if the combination of leadership skills, capacity building, civic engagement, and social support differ with respect to gender, ethnicity, location, and grade. Assumptions normality and linearity were checked. The normality of each the distribution dependent variables on each level of the independent variable were checked (Stevens, 2002). These linearity and normality assumptions were met. Also, there was a low to moderate relationship among dependent variables. This allowed the use of MANOVA (Tabachnick &Fidel, 2007). Stevens (2002) suggested that the minimum number of people in each cell should be 25, and this assumption was met. After conducting the MANOVA post-hocs of t-test and ANOVA were used (Tabachnick &Fidel, 2007).

Fourth, in conduct a series of multiple regression analysis were conducted. Dependent and independent interval ratio variables were tested for normality assumptions based on skewness and kurtosis values (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) and graphical representations of the histogram (Spicer, 2005). Linearity assumption was checked using the curve estimation in SPSS, scatter plots were used to assess the homogeneity of variance across the values of independent variables (Spicer, 2005). Then, bivariate analysis were conducted on the variables of interest. It helped to measure the levels of interrelationships with independent variables to avoid multicollinearity issues (Warner, 2008; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Then four regression models were run individually to predict youth leadership skills with civic engagement, social support, social interaction, and socio-demographics. Then an overall regression model was run with the

significant predictors found in the individual regression models. A backward elimination strategy was used in all regression models. This strategy consists of entering all independent variables in the first step, and the software eliminate non-statistically significant variables in a sequence (Spicer, 2005). The respondent number was 421, which exceeded the minimum sample size proposed by Tabachnick and Fidel (2007). They proposed using of 50+8m to calculate the sample size (m was the number of independent variables) (Tabachnick &Fidell, 2007). After running the regression analysis in SPSS v.23.0, results were checked for trustworthiness. Residual distributions were checked for normality assumption (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson; 2010). In addition, tolerance and variance inflation were checked for multicollinearity diagnostics, and Durbin and Watson's statistic was used to assess the existence of autocorrelation (Spicer, 2005; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Warner, 2008; Hair et. al., 2010). All statistical assumption for linear regression were met, and no multicollinearity threats were found.

Finally, Binary logistic regression was used to differentiate between students having high leadership skills vs. those with lower leadership skills. A new nominal variable was created to classify students into these categories. This variable considered individuals situated at the upper third and bottom third leadership skills level based on percentiles. The low leadership level category (bottom third) was coded 0, and the high leadership level (upper third category) was coded 1. Since only the students with high and low leadership skills were considered, only 179 students. Alternatively, Warner (2008) mentioned that the minimal requirement suggested by some statisticians was 10 cases per independent variables. Eight dependent variables were included in the analysis, which suggests that a minimum of 80 cases is needed. Consequently, the assumption of sample size was met. Table 3-6 summarized the study research questions and the corresponding method of analysis.

Table 3-6 Research Questions and Analysis Methods

Research Question	Variables	Analysis method
1- What is the relationship between Leadership skills and civic engagement	Leadership skills and civic indicators	Linear regression
2- What is the relationship between Leadership skills and social support	Leadership skills and types and sources of support	Linear regression
3- What is the relationship between Leadership skills and social interaction	Leadership skills, and social interaction items	Linear regression
4- What is the relationship between Leadership skills and Socio-demographic variables	Leadership skills Sociodemographic Variables	Linear regression
5- What factors differentiate between those who have high leadership skills vs. those who have low leadership skills	Leadership skills nominal index, civic engagement, social support, social interaction	Binary logistic regression
6- What do youth and teachers indicate their experiences in youth leadership development?	youth engagement, social support, civic engagement, social interaction, leadership skills, and capacity building	Content analysis

Qualitative analysis

To analyze the qualitative data, a content analysis strategy was used (Elo & Kyngas, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Elo et al., 2014). The analysis was focused on leadership development and civic engagement barriers, motivation, opportunities, and suggestions for improving youth leadership development. In order to analyze interview data using a context analysis approach the researcher followed pre-analysis steps, followed by six analysis steps. During data collection, the researcher took written notes during the conduct of the interviews. Before analysis the researcher decided about the context to be analyzed and the categories of interests. Based on these categories, an interview synthesis form was developed. The researcher followed a six steps approach to analyze the qualitative data. First, the researcher listened several times to the interviews' recordings, and documented interviewee's thoughts, opinions, and

experiences on a categorized form developed previously. Second, the researcher compared these form with their corresponding field notes to ensure consistency. Only relevant quotes were transcribed to represent the points made. Third, the researcher coded the individual documents and generated themes. Fourth, the researcher created four structured analysis matrices for students and teachers of the community school and magnet schools. Fifth, the researcher compiled the information into two table that summarized findings. Finally, the researcher made a categorical aggregation, and generated themes from all interviews (See Appendix C). Figure 3-2 presents the 9 steps process of content analysis the content analysis of the interview data. These steps were adapted from Neuendorf (2002) steps of content analysis.

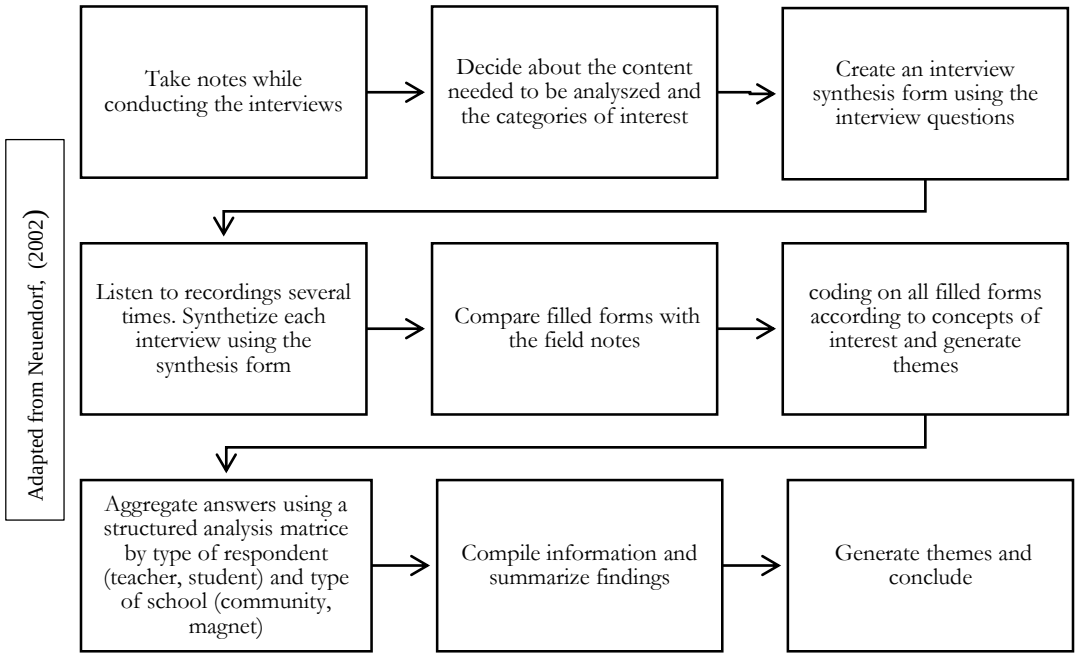

Figure 3-3 Process of content analysis of interviews

Triangulation

Triangulation involves using data from multiple sources to answer research questions (Creswell, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). It reduces biases and risks related to data

collection methods and provides a better understanding of the issues of interest (Maxwell; 2013). Consequently, the triangulation of the qualitative and quantitative data were used.

Limitations

Although the sample size was 421, it was not a purely randomly selected. Thus, results cannot be generalized to all high school students in Pennsylvania. It will serve as a foundation for future research. Moreover, while agriculture was a common subject of study among all survey participants, career and technical education schools and regular high schools follow a different curriculum. This factor also impacts the results. Although findings might apply to other urban settings, they cannot be generalized beyond respondents of these schools.

Furthermore, many types of responses bias might exist in self-reported information. According to Donaldson & Grant-Vallone (2002), situational pressure, sensitive construct, tendency to give socially accepted answer affect respondents' answers. In this study, there were no sensitive constructs, or situational pressure affecting students' answers. Thus, there are no undesirable behaviors within the survey. Self-reported information can still present some measurement errors. Qualitatively, the interview protocol was reviewed with one a member of the graduate committee. A pilot test was not conducted due to time constraints. Alternatively, the researcher is aware that the qualitative interviews consisted of surface questions rather than in depth interview questions.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

Introduction

This chapter presents the major findings of the research study. First, are the results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The researcher conducted the CFA to verify the construct validity of the social support and leadership scales, and assess the extent the data fit CFA model. Second, this chapter shows participants' demographic profiles, their levels of leadership skills, civic engagement, social support, and capacity building. Third, it presents the results of the bivariate and multivariate analysis results that measured the relationships between leadership skills (dependent variable) and the independent variables. Fourth, it presents the qualitative findings discussing youth engagement and leadership development opportunities, benefits of involvement at the personal and community level, in addition to motivators and barriers to engagement. Finally, it presents the suggestions of both teachers and students to overcome engagement and leadership development barriers.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Using Structural Equation Modelling

A CFA was performed to assess the factor structure of the social support scale and the life leadership skills scale using structural equation modeling (SEM). The second order CFA enabled testing the construct validity of these scales. Table 4-1 shows the results of the CFA analysis.

Social support scale

The social support scale contained 16 individual items that were associated with their corresponding subscales. The scale founder proposed two possible combinations of these items. These combinations consisted of four subscales including four items each. The first combination

consisted of individual items of social support based on sources of support including friends support, parents support, other adult support, and sibling support. The second combination was based on types of support, which includes esteem support, advice support, concrete support, and emotional support.

Figure 4-1 shows the AMOS output of a four-factor model based on social support sources. It showed the loadings of social support items on their corresponding factors (subscales). These loadings were significant and ranged from 0.62 to 0.91. Moreover, covariance among subscales ranged from 0.48 to 0.59.

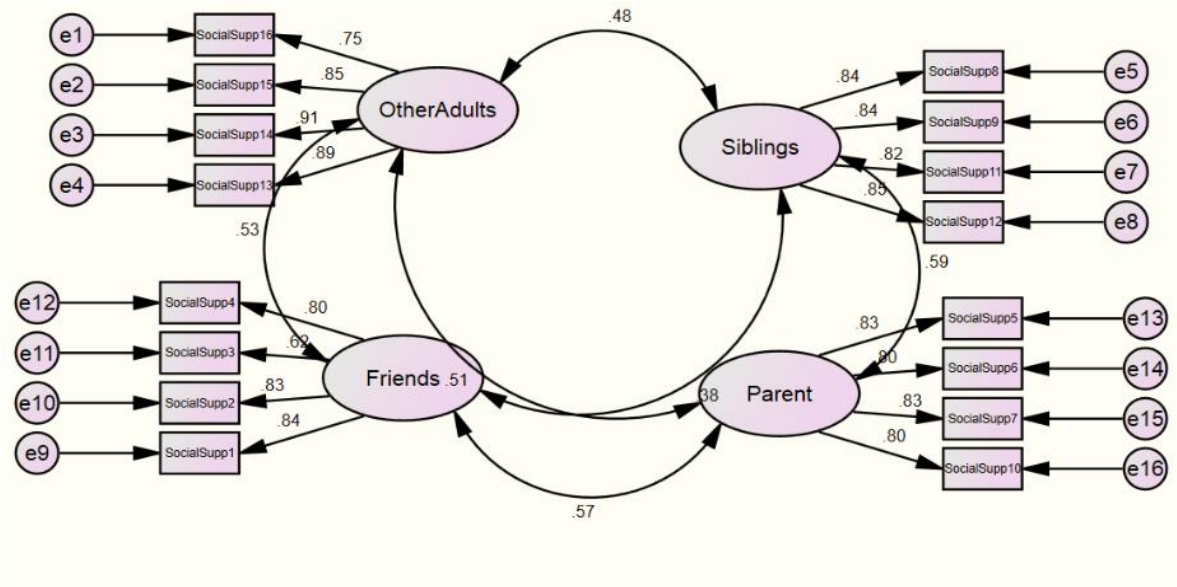

Figure 4-1 CFA for social support scale (sources)

The Chi-square value for the overall model fit was significant, χ_2 (98) = 330.4, p<0.001. Moreover, the goodness of fit indices showed acceptable model fit with CFI = 0.946, TLI = 0.925, and RMSEA = 0.075 (Hoe, 2008; Garver & Mentzer, 1999). The same approach was used to test the four-factor model based on social support types. The values of the model fit indices were CFI=0.606, TLI=0.435, and RMSEA=0.202. These values suggest

a poor model fit. Thus, the four-factor model based on sources of support was retained only. Then, a second order CFA using SEM was conducted to test the construct validity of the social support construct based on the four sources of support subscales. Figure 4-2 presents the AMOS output of this analysis. The four factors loaded significantly on the latent second order factor. Loadings ranged between 0.68 and 0.81. This analysis showed acceptable model fit with χ_2 (98) =347.386, p <.001, CFI=0.942, TLI=0.921, and RMSEA=0.077. The four-factor model of social support and the second order one-factor model showed similar fit indices. Thus, summated scores may be used at the subscale level and the overall scale level.

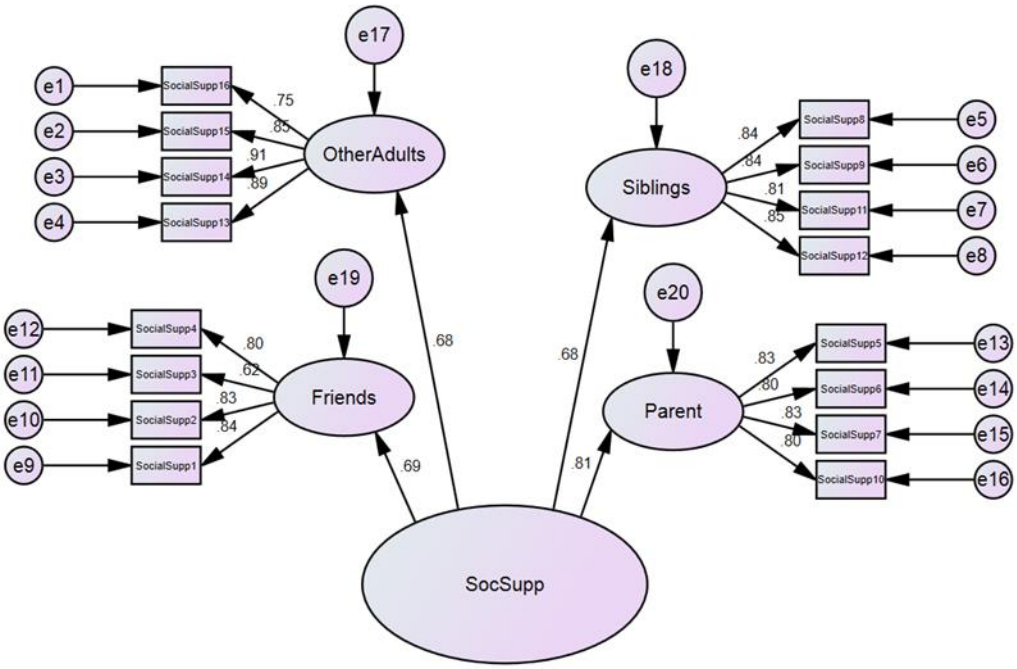

Figure 4-2 Second order CFA for social support

Life leadership skills scale

A second order CFA was performed to assess the factor structure of the leadership scale using SEM. The leadership scale contained 24 items that were associated to the corresponding subscales. All subscales were associated to a second order latent factor called

leadership skills. The AMOS output presented in Figure 4-3 shows the loadings of the individual items on the corresponding five factors. These loadings were significant and ranged between 0.69 and 0.88. Moreover, the loadings of the five latent factors were significant on the second-order latent variable. The Chi-square value for the overall model fit was significant, χ_2 (247) = 744.801, p <.001. The goodness of fit indices CFI = 0.918, TLI = 0.900, and RMSEA = 0.069 indicated acceptable model fit. These values were close to those testing the five-factor model life leadership skills. Thus, both models showed acceptable fit and may be used.

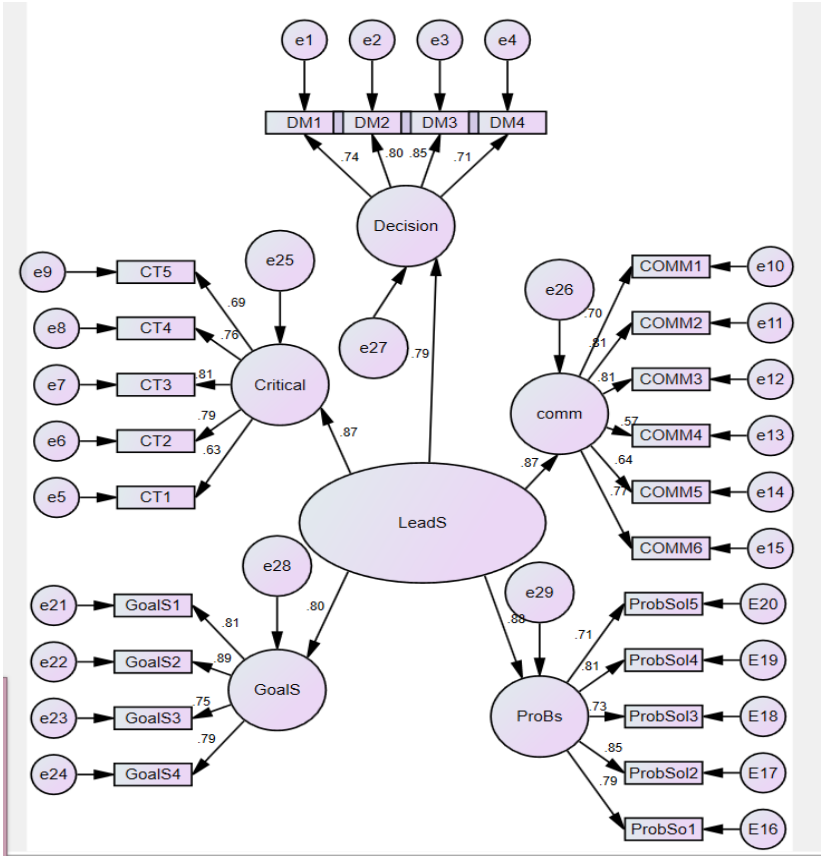

Figure 4-3 Second order CFA for the leadership skills scale

Table 4-1 Goodness of Fit Indices of the Proposed Models for Leadership and Social Support Scales

Scale	#items	Cronbach's α	$\chi 2$	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
CFA							
Social Support (sources)	16	0.921	330.340***	98	0.946	0.925	0.075
Social Support (types)	16	0.921	1785.182**	98	0.606	0.453	0.202
Life Leadership Skills	24	0.951	703.050**	242	0.924	0.906	0.067
2nd Order CFA							
Social Support (sources)	-	-	347.386*	100	0.921	0.942	0.077
Life Leadership Skills	-	-	744.810*	247	0.918	0.900	0.069

CFI= Comparative Fit index, TLI=Tucker-Lewis Index, RMSEA= Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

Descriptive Statistics

Sample socio-demographic characteristics

Data were collected from students in four different high schools. Tables 4-2 and 4-3 show the sociodemographic characteristics of participants. About 39% of the survey participants were students of school D (magnet school), and the others were students of schools A, B, and C (community schools). The majority of students (53.6%) were female. Most students were white (56%), and about 21.4% were African American. There was a similar percentage distribution of students in grades 9 to 12. About one third of the participants lived in urban areas (33.7%), and about one third (33.4 %) lived in rural farming or non-farming areas. The vast majority considered financial issues as a slight concern (43.1%) or a big concern (31.4%).

The mean age of the participants was 15.84. Their number of brothers ranged from 0 to 8. The average number of brothers was 1.38. The number of sisters and number of vehicles owned also ranged from zero to eight, with a mean value of 1.4 and 2.55 respectively. The average number of people living with was 3.78.

Table 4-2 Student Socio-Demographic Characteristics: Nominal Variables

Variable	f	%	Variable	f	%
School			**Grade level**		
A	75	17.8	Grade 9	99	27.6
B	84	20.0	Grade 10	87	21.6
C	98	23.3	Grade 11	99	24.6
D	164	39.0	Grade 12	117	29.1
Gender			**Residence**		
Male	186	46.4	Rural	70	17.6
Female	215	53.6	Rural non-	63	15.8
Ethnicity			Small town	77	19.3
White/Caucasian	223	56.0	Suburbs	54	13.6
African American	85	21.4	Urban	134	33.7
Asian	10	2.5	**Financial**		
Hispanic/Latino	32	8.0	Not a	63	15.7
Native American	6	1.5	A slight	173	43.1
Other	42	10.6	A Big	126	31.4
			Don't know	39	9.7

Table 4-3 Student Socio-Demographic Characteristics: Interval-Ratio Variables

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Age	385	15.84	1.543	0.279	0.124
Number of brothers	387	1.38	1.419	1.702	3.895
Number of sisters	379	1.40	1.457	1.687	3.716
Number of people Living with	388	3.78	1.748	0.779	0.124
Number of vehicles	379	2.55	1.605	0.986	1.057

Leadership skills, social support, civic engagement, social interaction, and capacity building

Table 4-4 presents the descriptive statistics of the social support, leadership skills, civic engagement, and capacity building. The means of the social support subscales, leadership subscales, overall social support, and overall leadership skills scales, had higher means than their corresponding theoretical mid points. The mean score for capacity building (14.963) was slightly lower than the theoretical mid-point (15). Alternatively, the civic engagement mean score (12.988) was lower than the theoretical middle point. The reliability values for all scales and

subscales ranged from 0.75 to 0.91, which represented very good to excellent reliability. All skewness and kurtosis values showed that all the scales presented in the table followed a fairly normal distribution.

Table 4-4 Descriptive Statistics of the Social Support, Leadership Skills, Civic Engagement, and Capacity Building Indicators*

Variable	N	#Items	Cronbach's alpha	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Social Support Subscales							
Parent support	395	4	0.888	9.797	2.283	-0.797	-0.195
Sibling support	389	4	0.903	8.818	2.623	-0.34	-0.950
Friend support	394	4	0.853	10.229	2.051	-1.066	0.402
Other adult support	396	4	0.909	9.431	2.524	-0.629	-0.659
Leadership Skills Subscales							
Decision making	413	4	0.855	14.295	3.799	-0.598	0.407
Goal setting	403	4	0.884	14.279	3.920	-0.487	0.062
Communication	400	6	0.864	21.835	5.216	-0.605	0.674
Critical thinking	413	5	0.854	17.265	4.476	-0.314	0.167
Problem solving	403	5	0.886	18.049	4.551	-0.618	0.532
Total Summated Scales							
Summated civic engagement	381	5	0.750	12.988	6.459	0.780	0.032
Summated leadership skills	382	24	0.951	86.119	18.559	-0.689	1.147
Summated capacity building	397	5	0.878	14.963	4.892	-0.004	-0.128
Summated social support	385	16	0.921	38.239	7.401	-0.550	0.082

* The summated social support scale ranged 16 to 48 with a mid-point of 32. Social support subscales ranged from 4-12 with a theoretical mid-point of 8. The summated leadership scale ranged from 24 to 120 with a mid-point of 72. Problem solving and critical thinking scales ranged from 5 to 25 with a theoretical mid-point was 15. Decision-making and goal setting scales ranged from 4 to 20 with a middle point of 12.Communication scale ranged from 6 to 30 with a theoretical mid-point of 18. Capacity building ranged from 5 to 25 and the theoretical middle-point was 15. Civic engagement ranged from 5 to 30 with a mid-point of 17.5.

Table 4-5 shows the frequency distribution of social interaction items. Most of the students (71%) met their immediate family more than once a week. About one-third (32.1%) met with their extended family members a few times a month. Also, about one-fourth of students met with their school groups or clubs (26.3%) and their acquaintances more than once a week. In addition, about one-fourth (26.9 %) never met with their neighbors.

Table 4-6 shows the frequencies of students' interaction with their friends. It shows that most of the students (51%) had more than 3 close friends, about 22.6% had 3 close friends, and

18.3% had 2 friends. About one-fourth (24%) met with their friends outside school about once a week, and 16.7% of them met with their friends outside school every day. The majority of students (62.6%) contacted their friends by phone or email on a daily basis.

Table 4-5 Frequencies of Social Interaction

	Never	a few times a year	once a month	few times a month	once a week	more than once a week	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Meeting frequency with immediate family	2.4%	3.1%	4.3%	11.5%	7.7%	71.0%	100%
Meeting Frequency with extended family	1.9%	25.8%	13.4%	32.1%	15.0%	11.7%	100%
Meeting frequency with acquaintances	7.7%	14.4%	15.2%	19.9%	17.9%	24.9%	100%
Meeting frequency with neighbors	26.9%	13.5%	11.5%	18.5%	15.1%	14.4%	100%
Meeting frequency with school clubs or members	19.5%	6.7%	10.6%	15.9%	21.0%	26.3%	100%

Table 4-7 shows the frequencies of students volunteering in community groups, and the number of groups they were involved in at their communities. Most of participants (50.6%) did not volunteer in any community groups. Those who were involved were mainly involved in one (19%) or two groups (15.4%).

Table 4-8 shows the level of students' civic involvement using different civic engagement indicators. Most of the students were not involved in social (58.5%), community (61.1%), or religious groups (34.8). Only 14.8% of youth were involved in religious groups for about once a week. About 16.4% and 15.4% were involved with school groups for once a week and more than once a week respectively. In addition, 23.9% of students were involved with sports groups for more than once a week.

Table 4-6 Frequencies of Interaction with Friends

Variable	f	%
Number of close friends		
Zero	10	2.4
One	24	5.7
Two	77	18.3
Three	95	22.6
More than three	214	51.0
Frequency of seeing friends outside school		
Never	34	8.1
3-4 times a year	24	5.7
About once a month	22	5.2
Several times a month but not once a week	78	18.6
About once a week	101	24.0
3-4 days a week	61	14.5
5-6 days a week	30	7.1
Every day	70	16.7
Contacting friends by phone or email		
Rarely or never	28	6.7
1-2 days per week	34	8.1
3-4 days per week	41	9.8
5-6 days per week	54	12.9
Every day	263	62.6

Table 4-7 Frequencies of Volunteering In Community Groups

	N	%
Volunteering		
No	213	50.6
Yes	205	49.4
Number of groups		
0	213	51.2
1	79	19
2	64	15.4
3	26	6.25
4	17	4.1
5	17	4.1

Table 4-8 Frequencies of Involvement of Civic Engagement Items

	Not involved at all	A few times a year	About once a month	Several times a month	About a week	More than Once a week	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Social/recreational group involvement	58.6%	9.5%	7.5%	4.9%	6.8%	12.7%	100%
Community group	61.6%	9.4%	8.6%	7.1%	8.1%	5.2%	100%
Sports group involvement	42.1%	8.6%	6.2%	8.6%	10.6%	23.9%	100%
School clubs involvement	34.8%	9.2%	15.4%	8.7%	16.4%	15.4%	100%
Youth religious organization	53.4%	9.6%	6.2%	7.1%	14.8%	8.9%	100%
Other groups	63.9%	4.3%	7.5%	6.8%	8.2%	9.3%	100%

Leadership experiences

The majority of the students (67.8%) did not participate in leadership programs previously. Only about one-third of them (32%) previously participated in leadership programs. Most of the students who took part in leadership programs received training in decision making, goal setting, critical thinking, problem-solving, service learning, and got opportunities to partner with adults to solve real community problems. Table 4-9 shows the frequencies of leadership experiences.

Table 4-9 Leadership Experiences

Experience	No		Yes		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Participation in Leadership program	271	67.8	129	32.3	400	100
Training in decision making	26	20.6	100	79.4	126	100
Training in communication	20	15.9	106	84.1	126	100
Training in goal setting	19	15.1	107	84.9	126	100
Training in critical thinking	24	19.4	100	80.6	124	100
Training in problem solving	18	14.6	105	85.4	123	100
Service learning opportunity	35	28.0	90	72.0	125	100
Adult partnership opportunity to solve real community problem	45	36.0	80	64.0	125	100

Bivariate and Multivariate Analysis

Preliminary analysis

Table 4-10 presents Pearson's correlation values among leadership skills, social support, civic engagement, and capacity building. Leadership skills presented moderate correlation with social support (0.413), capacity building (0.413), and civic engagement (0.304). In addition, a moderate correlation existed between capacity building and social support (0.358), as well as between capacity building and civic engagement (0.435). Yet, a low correlation existed between social support and civic engagement (0.202).

Table 4-10 Pearson's Correlations among Leadership Skills, Social Support, Capacity Building, and Civic Engagement

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
Leadership skills	86.119	18.559	1			
Social support	38.239	7.401	0.413**	1		
Civic engagement	12.988	6.459	0.304**	0.202**	1	
Capacity building	14.963	4.982	0.413**	0.358**	0.435**	1

** $p < 0.01$

A series of correlations and backward multiple regression analyses were conducted to predict/explain leadership skills by social support, civic engagement, social interaction, and socio-demographics. A final overall regression model was established. Only the first and last step for each analysis are reported. The first step shows the full model, while the last step shows the reduced model.

Multivariate analysis of variance between socio-demographics in terms of leadership skills, civic engagement, capacity building, and social support

Table 4-11 reports the means and standard deviations for the dependent variables for the corresponding socio demographics. Females had higher leadership skills than males, and rural students have higher capacity building than urban students.

Table 4-11 Group Means of Social Support, Leadership Skills, Capacity Building, and Civic Engagement

Variable	Social support		Leadership skills		Capacity building		Civic engagement	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Gender								
Male (0)	37.989	6.540	82.483	18.521	15.176	4.799	12.812	6.025
Female (1)	38.787	7.801	89.790	17.096	15.166	4.905	13.833	6.929
Location								
Rural (0)	39.209	7.605	85.970	18.823	15.718	5.102	14.158	6.858
Urban (1)	37.464	6.663	86.718	17.340	14.528	4.462	12.394	5.992
Grade								
Grade 9	37.547	6.935	85.212	18.527	13.821	4.922	13.452	5.997
Grade 10	37.618	6.671	82.678	17.394	14.067	4.593	12.169	5.490
Grade 11	40.417	7.092	89.113	16.894	16.291	4.707	14.310	6.767
Grade 12	37.903	7.659	87.066	19.047	15.938	4.740	13.204	7.209
Ethnicity								
White	39.251	7.507	87.145	17.310	15.594	4.992	14.157	6.626
African American	37.709	6.728	86.629	21.359	15.161	4.545	12.119	5.822
Other	36.958	6.735	84.020	17.110	14.152	4.650	12.444	6.643

Table 4-12 shows the results of the MANOVA analysis between socio-demographics and social support, leadership skills, civic engagement, and capacity building. All assumptions were checked and t test and ANOVA were used as post-hoc tests. Results showed that gender, grade, and rural/urban residence had significant differences among the four dependent variables. Ethnicity had no effect on social support, capacity building, and civic engagement and leadership skills. Leadership skills differed by gender, and capacity building differed by grade and rural/urban location.

Table 4-12 Effects of Socio-demographic variables on MANOVA of Social Support, Capacity Building, and Civic Engagement and Leadership Skills

	MANOVA	Tests between subjects effects			
Variable		Social support	Leadership Skills	Capacity building	Civic engagement
			F Sig		
Gender	0.044	0.631	0.008	0.736	0.725
Grade	0.018	0.075	0.119	0.050	0.326
Rural-Urban	0.054	0.157	0.985	0.017	0.116
Ethnicity	0.920	0.311	0.454	0.907	0.888

Tables 4-13 (a) and 4-13(b) show the results of the post hoc tests. Results showed that females have significantly higher leadership scores than males and that rural students capacity building scores have significantly higher than urban students. In addition, the mean differences of capacity building for students in different grades showed that capacity building scores were significantly different among grades 9 and 11, grades 9 and 12, grades 10 and 11, grades 10 and 12. No significant difference was found between grade 11 and 12. Students in grade 11 presented the higher capacity building scores, followed by students in grade 10, and those in grade nine had the lowest. Thus, capacity building is positively related to grades.

Table 4-13 (a) Post hoc Tests

Dependent Variable	Group	Post hoc tests	df	sig	Effect Size
Leadership skills	(Males vs. Females)	t = -4.543	367	<0.001	Cohens' d = 0.9 (Large)
Capacity Building	(Rural Vs. Urban)	t = 2.557	381	0.011	Cohen's d = 2.7 (Small)
	(Grade)	F = 8.204	385	<0.001	η^2= 0.017 (Small)

Table 4-13(b) Mean Differences in Capacity Building by Grade level

	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Grade 9	0	-0.311	-2.713*	-2.379*
Grade 10	0.311	0	-2.402*	-2.608*
Grade 11	2.713*	2.402*	0	0.333
Grade 12	2.379*	2.068*	-0.033	0

* p <0.05

R.Q. 1: Relationship between leadership skills and civic engagement indicators

In Table 4-14, the means, standard deviations, and correlations of leadership skills and indicators of civic engagement are presented. It shows that leadership skills had significant relationships with all civic engagement indicators at the 0.01 with correlations level ranging from 0.145 to 0.264. Table 4-15 shows the results of the backward linear regression. The fourth step of the analysis showed that the number of community groups volunteering with, the level of involvement in school groups, and the level of involvement with sports groups were significant predictors of leadership skills. The R^2 was 0.111 with F (3,337) = 14.054, p<0.001. Thus, the final model presented 11.1 % of the overall variance in leadership skills.

Table 4-14 Means, Standard Deviations, correlations of Leadership Skills and Indicators of Civic Engagement

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Leadership Skills	86.119	18.559	1						
2. Social or Recreational group involvement	2.297	1.847	0.177**	1					
3. Community group involvement	2.064	1.596	0.199**	0.442*	1				
4.Sports group involvement	3.086	2.105	0.205**	0.324**	0.408**	1			
5. School clubs involvement	3.090	1.902	0.264**	0.313**	0.371**	0.246**	1		
6. Religious groups involvement	2.468	1.849	0.145**	0.365**	0.388**	0.330**	0.327**	1	
7. Number of community groups	1.077	1.4001	0.211**	0.280**	0.386**	0.257**	0.301**	0.277**	1

* p <0.05, ** p <0.01

Table 4-15 Backward Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Youth Civic Engagement Indicators Predicting Leadership Skills (n=341)

Variable	*B*	*SEB*	*β*	*Sig.*	R^2	*Adjusted* R^2	*F value*
Step1							
Number of community groups	1.568	0.759	0.120	0.04	0.113	0.097	7.083***
Social-Recreational group	0.312	0.584	0.032	0.594			
Community group involvement	0.03	0.719	0.003	0.965			
Sports group involvement	0.978	0.496	0.114	0.05			
School clubs involvement	1.836	0.555	0.191	3.309			
Religious group involvement	0.239	0.575	0.024	0.678			
Constant	17.398	2.203		<0.001			
Step 4							
Number of community groups	1.691	0.727	0.129	0.021	0.111	0.103	14.054***
Sports group involvement	1.095	0.461	0.128	0.018			
School clubs involvement	1.949	0.526	0.203	<0.001			
Constant	74.923	2.086		<0.001			

*** p <0.001

R.Q. 2: Relationship between leadership skills and social support

Table 4-16 presents the means, standard deviations, correlations of leadership skills, and the subscales of social support. It shows that leadership skills had significant relationships with all subscales of social support at p= 0.01. The correlation values ranged from 0.270 to 0.390. Table 4-17 shows the results of the backward linear regression conducted. The third step of the analysis showed that only the friend and other adult support were significant predictors of leadership skills. The R^2 was 0.182 with F (2,356) = 39.563, p<0.001. Thus, the final model accounted for 18.2% of the overall variance in leadership skills.

Table 4-16 Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Leadership Skills and Indicators of Social Support

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Leadership Skills	86.119	18.559	1				
2. Parent support	9.797	2.283	0.296**	1			
3. Sibling support	8.818	2.623	0.270**	0.539**	1		
4. Other adult support	9.431	2.524	0.351**	0.497**	0.445**	1	
5. Friends support	10.229	2.051	0.390**	0.525**	0.368**	0.509**	1

** p <0.01

Table 4-17 Backward Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Youth Social Support Predicting Leadership Skills (n=359)

Variable	*B*	*SEB*	*β*	*Sig.*	R^2	*Adjusted* R^2	*F value*
Step1							
Friends support	2.350	0.550	0.260	<0.001	0.190	0.181	20.722***
Parent support	0.229	0.536	0.028	0.670			
Sibling support	0.615	0.422	0.087	0.146			
Other adult support	1.207	0.432	0.164	<0.001			
Constant	42.908	4.929		<0.001			
Step3							
Friends support	2.613	0.500	0.289	<0.001	0.182	0.177	27.632***
Other adult support	1.480	0.406	0.289	<0.001			
Constant	45.396	4.709		<0.001			

*** p <0.001

R.Q. 3: Relationship between leadership skills and social interaction

Table 4-18 shows the means, standard deviations, correlations of leadership skills with the social networks and interaction items were presented. The frequency of interaction with immediate family, extended family, neighbor's acquaintances, school club members, and the frequency of contacting friends by phone or email were significantly related to leadership skills. The correlation values ranged from 0.110 to 0.244. Table 4-19 shows the results of the backward linear regression conducted. The seventh step of the analysis showed that only the meeting frequency with immediate family and the meeting frequency of school group members were significant predictors of leadership skills. The R^2 was 0.091 with F (2,358) = 17.947, p<0.001. Thus, the final model accounted for 9.1% of the overall variance in leadership skills.

Table 4-18 Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Leadership Skills and Indicators of Social Interaction

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Meeting frequency with immediate family	5.319	1.251	1								
2. Meeting Frequency with extended family	3.677	1.364	0.281**	1							
3. Meeting frequency with acquaintances	4.005	1.614	0.188**	0.293**	1						
4. Meeting frequency with neighbors	3.248	1.802	0.016	0.227**	0.309**	1					
5. Meeting frequency with school clubs or members	3.908	1.842	0.102*	0.184**	0.292**	0.289**	1				
6. Number of close friends	3.140	1.058	0.079	0.143**	0.154**	0.093	0.118*	1			
7. frequency of seeing friends outside school	5.002	2.036	0.071	0.129**	0.323**	0.194**	0.212**	0.234**	1		
8. contacting friends by phone and email	4.167	1.274	0.053	-0.027	0.047	0.014	0.051	0.139**	0.268**	1	
9. Summated leadership skills	86.119	18.560	0.182**	0.136**	0.158**	0.118*	0.244**	0.088	0.098	0.110*	1

* p <0.05, ** p <0.01

Table 4-19 Backward Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Youth Social Interaction Predicting Leadership Skills (n=361)

Variable	*B*	*SEB*	*β*	*Sig.*	R^2	*Adjusted* R^2	*F value*
Step 1							
Meeting frequency with immediate family	2.356	0.85	0.147	0.006	0.106	0.086	5.213***
Meeting frequency with extended family	0.492	0.753	0.036	0.514			
Meeting frequency with acquaintances	0.64	0.667	0.055	0.338			
Meeting frequency with neighbors	0.404	0.571	0.039	0.48			
Meeting frequency with school or club members	1.968	0.556	0.191	0.001			
Number of close friends	0.599	0.941	0.033	0.525			
Frequency of seeing friends outside school	-0.07	0.521	-0.008	-0.134			
Contacting friends by phone and email	1.08	0.771	0.075	0.161			
Constant	54.04	3.09		<0.001			
Step 7							
Meeting frequency with immediate family	2.656	0.814	0.166	<0.001	0.091	0.086	17.947***
Meeting frequency with school or club members	2.404	0.522	0.234	0.001			
Constant	62.367	4.72	13.198	<0.001			

*** p <0.001

R.Q 4: Relationship between leadership skills, and socio-demographic variables

Table 4-20 shows the means, standard deviations, correlations of leadership skills with the socio-demographic variables. It shows that leadership skills had a significant relationship with gender. No significant relationship was found between leadership skills and number of brother and sisters, number of people living with, number of family vehicles owned, and rural-urban location. Table 4-21 shows the results of the backward linear regression conducted. The ninth step of the analysis showed that gender was a significant predictor of leadership skills. The R^2 was 0.041 with F (1,322) = 13.634; p<0.001. Therefore, gender accounts for 4.1% of the variance in the leadership skills.

Table 4-20 Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Leadership Skills and Socio-demographics Indicators

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Leadership Skills	86.119	18.559	1						
2. Number of brothers	1.38	1.419	-0.056	1					
3. Number of sisters	1.4	1.457	0.018	0.266**	1				
4. Number of people living with	3.78	1.748	-0.033	0.391**	0.357**	1			
5. Number of vehicles owned	2.55	1.605	-0.038	0.007	0.052	0.215**	1		
6. Gender	0.54	0.499	0.231**	-0.003	0.045	0.062	-0.111*	1	
7. Rural-Urban	1.472	0.499	0.036	0.115*	0.150**	0.045	-0.252**	0.091	1

* p <0.05, ** p <0.01

Table 4-21 Backward Linear Regression Analysis Summary for Youth Socio-demographic variables Predicting Leadership Skills (n=324)

Variable	*B*	*SEB*	*β*	*Sig.*	R^2	*Adjusted* R^2	*F value*
Step1							
Gender (0=male, 1=female)	6.982	2.033	0.192	0.001	0.053	0.026	1.953***
Grade Level	0.975	0.886	0.062	0.272			
Recoded Ethnicity (1=white, 2= African American, 3=others)	-1.347	1.409	-0.61	0.34			
Rural/Urban (0= rural, 1=urban)	0.887	2.263	0.024	0.695			
Financial situation	0.56	1.106	0.028	0.613			
Number of Brothers	-0.915	0.804	-0.069	0.256			
Number of sisters	0.463	0.887	0.032	0.602			
Number of people living with	0.099	0.717	0.009	0.89			
Number of vehicles owned by family	0.031	0.705	0.003	0.965			
Step 9							
Gender (0=male, 1=female)	7.342	1.988	0.202	<0.001	0.041	0.038	13.634***
Constant	82.358	1.453	56.683	<0.001			

*** p <0.001

R.Qs 1-4: Overall model predicting leadership skills

Table 4-22 shows the results of the backward linear regression for the overall model. Prior significant predictors were used only to test the final model. Summated scales of social support and civic engagement were used. The model was significant, and R^2 value was 0.274 with F (5,300) = 22.692, p<0.001. Participation in leadership programs, meeting frequency with immediate family, gender, social support, and summated civic engagement were significant predictors of leadership skills. The final model presented 27.4 % of the overall variance in leadership skills.

Table 4-22 Overall Model: Backward Linear Regression for Predictors of Leadership Skills (n=306)

Variable	*B*	*SEB*	*β*	*Sig.*	R^2	*Adjusted* R^2	*F value*
Step 1							
Gender (0=male, 1=female)	5.329	1.748	0.152	0.003	0.277	0.262	19.085***
Participation in Leadership program (0= No, 1=yes)	5.495	1.936	0.147	0.005			
Meeting frequency with immediate family	1.383	0.69	0.101	0.46			
Social support	0.852	0.124	0.350	<0.001			
Summated civic engagement	0.376	0.151	0.139	0.013			
Numbers of community groups involved in	0.79	0.704	0.063	0.262			
Constant	35.863	5.55		<0.001			
Step 2							
Participation in Leadership program (0= No, 1=yes)	5.898	1.904	0.158	0.002	0.274	0.262	22.629***
Meeting frequency with immediate family	1.322	0.688	0.097	0.056			
Gender (0=male, 1=female)	5.466	1.745	0.156	0.002			
Social support	0.87	0.123	0.357	<0.001			
Summated Civic engagement	0.441	0.139	0.163	0.002			
Constant	5.466	1.745	0.156	0.002			

*** p <0.001

Another multiple regression analysis model was conducted using dummy coded variables for each type of school. However, no significant changes was found in the overall all regression model. Consequently, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare leadership skills between schools. The overall model was significant, and the post-hoc test shows that students of school A had significantly lower leadership skills than their counterparts in schools B and D.

R.Q. 5: Factors differentiating between those who have high leadership skills levels vs those who have low leadership skills levels.

A backward logistic regression was conducted to show the factors distinguishing youth of high and low leadership skills level. Table 4-23 shows the results of the backward logistic regression. The final model was reached at the sixth step (c^2= 62.378; df =5; p <0.001). The percentage of individuals classified correctly in lower and higher leadership skills level was 76.5%. The Nagelkerke R^2 was 0.407, which means that this model explains 40.7% of the variance in the leadership skills level. The results showed that four were significantly related to leadership skills level at the last steps. Social support, gender, participation leadership program, and number of community groups that youth volunteer in, were positively related to leadership skills. These results indicate that females tended to be 2.253 times classified in the higher leadership skills category than males. Moreover, youth who had already participated in a leadership program tend to be classified for 2.817 times in the higher leadership skills group than those did not. In addition, a one-unit increase in the social support level, results in a 1.146 increase in the odds of the level of leadership skills level. Alternatively, a one unit increase of number of community groups volunteering in results in 1.486 increase in the odds of the leadership skills level. In other words, an increase of one unit of social support will result in 15% increase in leadership skills, and the increase in one unit in number of community groups volunteering in will result in an increase of 48 % of leadership skills.

Therefore, females, those who had previously participated in leadership programs, those who have higher levels of social support, and those who volunteer in more community groups tend to have higher leadership skill levels.

Table 4-23 Binary Logistic Regression: Factors Differentiating Youth with High and Low Leadership Skills Levels

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1						
Rural/Urban (0=rural, 1=urban)	0.679	0.406	2.789	1	0.095	1.971
Social support	0.137	0.030	21.586	1	<0.001	1.147
Civic engagement indicators	0.027	0.034	0.646	1	0.422	1.027
Meeting frequency with school groups	0.029	0.115	0.062	1	0.803	1.029
Meeting frequency with immediate family	0.106	0.159	0.447	1	0.504	1.112
Gender (0= male, 1=female)	0.777	0.375	4.281	1	0.039	2.174
participation in leadership programs (0=no, 1=yes)	0.894	0.422	4.500	1	0.034	2.446
Grade	-0.021	0.171	0.016	1	0.901	.979
Number of community groups volunteering in	0.432	0.182	5.601	1	0.018	1.540
Constant	-8.432	1.640	26.428	1	<0.001	<0.001
Step 6						
Social support	0.136	0.027	25.371	1	<0.001	1.146
Gender	.812	.361	5.060	1	0.024	2.253
participation in leadership programs	1.036	.407	6.490	1	0.011	2.817
Number of groups volunteering in	.396	.162	5.981	1	0.014	1.486
Constant	-6.475	1.148	31.823	1	<0.001	0.002

Low Leadership Skills Levels=0 High Leadership Skills Level=1

Qualitative Findings

Overview

This study is a mixed method study, in which the intent of the qualitative research component was to supplement the quantitative data providing more understanding of the research results. The interview questionnaire contained questions about leadership opportunities and barriers, as well as civic engagement opportunities and barriers. In addition, interviewees were asked their opinions about perceived solutions to overcome the barriers mentioned.

The answers showed that most of the interviewees related students' engagement to leadership development. Several interviewees pointed out those who are involved tend to have higher levels of leadership skills. Those who are not involved tended to have lower leadership skills. Most of the teachers considered leadership development as a process rather than a particular event. In addition, many interviewees emphasized that leadership development opportunities are related to leadership conferences. Some interviewees did not see a practical difference between both concepts and mentioned the same information concerning youth engagement and leadership development. Because of this close relationship between youth engagement and leadership development in the school settings, the opportunities for both youth engagement and leadership development were combined into one category in the analysis. Also, this was applied to barriers, motivation, and perceived solutions.

Qualitative sample

The qualitative sample consisted of nine students and ten teachers. Table 4-24 (a) shows the characteristics of the students including school type, gender, and involvement. Table 4-24 (b) shows gender and location for teachers. Teachers' experiences varied between 8 and 39 years of teaching, in addition to one intern teacher. Teachers and students provided a variety of perspectives in the interviews. Consequently, the researcher presented findings by school type

(Community School and Magnet School) and by the group of interviewees (Students and Teachers).

The researcher classified schools A, B, and C in the community schools category, which served their local communities. These schools were located in counties of rural and urban populations. School D was located in an urban county. All, teachers and students in school D, identified their school as a magnet school. It is important to mention the classification of rural and urban location is different from the classification of community school and magnet school. However, most of the community school students were rural and those of the magnet school were urban.

Table 4-24 (a) Qualitative Sample of Students

	Males		**Females**		**Total**
	Involved	Not involved	Involved	Not involved	
Community Schools	1	1	2	1	5
Magnet School	0	1	3	0	4
Total	3		6		9

Table 4-24(b) Qualitative Sample of Teachers

Teachers	**Males**	**Females**	**Total**
Community Schools	2	2	4
Magnet School	2	4	6
Total	4	6	10

Involvement and leadership development opportunities

In the community schools, teachers and students (those who are engaged) mentioned several engagement opportunities existed. These included FFA, 4-H, scouts, YMCA, sports clubs, FBLA, and others. Also, these community schools required their students to take part in community service to graduate from high school. Interviewees mentioned that clubs such as FFA

and others included leadership positions (FFA officers) and involved students in leadership conferences such as ACES. Alternatively, one teacher mentioned they executed a mock UN trial to facilitate students' application of their leadership knowledge. It is critical to mention that students, who were not involved, were not aware of the available opportunities in their communities. On the other hand, the students who are highly involved were knowledgeable about both school and community opportunities for engagement.

In the magnet school, teachers and students mentioned a wide range of engagement opportunities. Most of these opportunities were offered through the school. These opportunities included specialized Ag clubs, sports clubs, land judging club, zoo crew, career development events, and others. They also mentioned having the community support agricultural program (CSA) tied to their coursework. In this program, students helped producing organic food that is sold to the community. The financial returns of this program would benefit the school and the neighboring community. Moreover, the school had partnerships with local NGOs and universities. Furthermore, students have many opportunities for leadership development such as SLLC, ACES, Penn State Conferences, and others. Students were mainly aware of opportunities in their school, yet not in their communities. They showed a high detachment from their specific communities.

School efforts to increase students' engagement and leadership development

Teachers of the community schools mentioned efforts to increase their students' engagement. For example, school B devoted a weekly school hour period for club involvement. More than fifty clubs existed in school B. These clubs addressed a variety of students' interests such as community service, sports, photography, subject discipline clubs, etc. In addition, school C used to send representatives to the students' parents to build a connection with them that should increase youth engagement. However, this was stopped five years ago because of funding issues.

School D teachers expressed the considerable efforts the school initiated to engage students and develop their leadership skills. For example, the school adjusted the FFA model to meet their urban students' needs, offered paid volunteering opportunities to students to allow them to pay the costs of participation in leadership conferences, and offered transpasses to reduce the transportation costs for students who desired to engage. In addition, the school used to offer a summer session that helped to recruit students early for activities.

Students outcomes of engagement

Interviewees discussed many positive outcomes of civic involvement at the student level such as improvement in skills, increasing the social network, career related benefits, and personal satisfaction. All teachers agreed that involvement improved their students' leadership skills in decision-making, critical thinking, team building, and others. It also improved their social skills, and their self-confidence. Involved students mentioned that their involvement improved their leadership skills, helped them to develop more friends, and provided them with positive feelings. Teachers and students mentioned career related benefits such as building a resume, applying to college, and finding a job. Students did not mention any benefit related to their communities. However, students in community schools mentioned their positive feelings about helping their communities. One female student mentioned learning ways to affect community.

Community outcomes of engagement

Most of the students mentioned they have not used their leadership skills efficiently to benefit their communities. They would use them in future community plans. Students in community schools were more involved in their communities, and participated in different community service activities. Despite of the students' community involvement in these schools, teachers mentioned that communities' benefits were limited to the activities they conducted

through school clubs. In addition, teachers mentioned that the community service requirement did not result in long term volunteering.

On the other hand, students in school D did nothing for their specific communities because their main involvement was through their magnet school. Teachers mentioned the same thing too. Yet, they hoped students would use their skills to benefit their communities in the future. They said the only benefiting community was the school and its neighboring community. They also mentioned that their alumni used their skills in the jobs they have to benefit the community.

Quality of opportunities

Students mentioned that leadership training programs focused on individual leadership skills such as decision-making, goal setting, critical thinking, team building, conflict management, public speaking and others. These trainings focused on students' outcomes rather than community outcomes. The students were given leadership trainings that benefited them at the personal level, but they were not trained to use these skills at the community level. They participated in previously planned activities organized by adults. Students' of school C mentioned receiving appraisal support from community leaders, encouraged them to participate in community activities. However, none of the students mentioned getting the opportunity to practice real youth adult partnerships. In addition, some students expressed their interest to widen their experiences by including other adults from the community. A student mentioned "having adults in the lives of teenagers is great because they lived what we go through. Their experiences can help us to enrich our community and enrich the activities for the future so we can have a successful environment". School's D teachers said their students could not relate to the community activities conducted at the school level. These activities addressed the neighboring

area of the school. Students came from different communities and did not have a sense of belonging to that community which limited their interest.

Reasons for involvement

It was previously mentioned that students in School D were mostly involved through school, while the students in community schools were involved in both community and school opportunities. Students in School D mentioned that teacher support, parental support, desire to develop new friends, and parental pressures were reasons to get involved. Students in Schools A, B and C shared with those in School D that parental and family support was a main reason for involvement. A student indicated "A lot of my older cousins did it and it is something that I value and it gives a lot of fun opportunities to be helpful of my community and to just have a fun lifestyle as a high school student". Alternatively, students also mentioned other reasons such as having a voice that can be heard, having a specific interest in agricultural education, having specific interest in sports, and getting tangible rewards such as food and gifts.

Teachers mentioned several reasons driving youth to volunteering and community engagement activities. These included having the passion and drive, parental support and high student motivation. Also, teachers revealed some students volunteer to use it as evidence for college applications or to put on their resumes. Not surprisingly, school D teachers emphasized the role of teacher and school support to engage students.

Survey qualitative question: reasons for being more involved in community activities

In addition to the interviewees' answers, a survey question addressed the reasons to get more involved. This question helped to provide additional details about the students' reasons for involvement. A total 283 (67.2%) students answered this question. Answers were coded and grouped by themes. Table 4-25 shows all themes with their corresponding examples. These themes included individual or personal growth, serving the community, personal satisfaction,

opposing to local situations, increase in the social network, being rewarded, filling up time, and others.

Table 4-25 Reasons for Getting More Involved in Communities

Category of reasons	Examples of Answers
Individual and personal growth	- Resume - More stuff on a college application - Gain experiences and skills - To have a voice - To have an impact
Serving the community	- Because we are the future of this town and I want to be able to help - I feel it a duty as a citizen - To help community and young children - Give back
Personal satisfaction	- Feel more important - Fun experience - I enjoy helping others
Opposing to current situations in their communities	- I am unhappy with the way things are - Making the community less polluted - To help hungry youth in my community
Increase their social network:	- Get to know more people - Make friends
Get rewarded	- Appreciated - Because it makes you look good
To fill up time	- Has extra-time - Something to keep you busy - I feel I have nothing to do at home
Other:	- Earn community service hours - I am not involved enough

Barriers of youth engagement and leadership development

Students and teachers mentioned their perceived barriers to youth engagement and leadership development. They stated youth personal barriers such as lack of interest, lack of motivation, and systemic barriers such as time and transportation. Nonetheless, teachers discussed more student systemic barriers. Also, teachers pointed out teacher related barriers. It is important to mention that the classification of barriers based on frequencies does not reflect the level of significance of these barriers within schools. It only shows the relative importance of issues for a

small group of people. Tables 4-26, 4-27 (a), and 4-27 (b) show the barriers mentioned by students and teachers in both community schools and magnet schools.

Table 4-26 shows the obstacles for engagement and leadership development from student's point of view. Students pointed out several barriers such as communication and outreach issues, lack of passion, lack of time that can be caused by work, and schoolwork. In addition, students mentioned that transportation, isolation, and their focus on entering college would limit their participation and leadership development.

Table 4-27 (a) shows that teachers of both types of schools discussed common barriers such as lack of parental support, financial issues, and time. The most frequently mentioned barriers by teachers in community schools were the lack of parental support, time, and financial issues. In school D the most frequently mentioned barriers were safety, transportation, family resources, lack of communication and awareness about involvement opportunities, and diversity issues. The less frequently mentioned barriers addressed important issues also. Some of these barriers faced students in both school settings too such as having family obligations, poverty, lack of adult support, lack of interest, and focus on academics. Other barriers were specific to school settings and locations. These barriers are indicated in table 4-27(b). Teachers also indicated barriers existed at the teacher level too. These barriers included the lack of time, workload, and lack of resources. In addition, two teachers from the magnet school mentioned the complexity of rules in the Philadelphia school district as a major barrier inhibiting them to get their students involved.

Table 4-26 Barriers to Youth Community Civic Engagement and Leadership Development (Students' Perspective)

Community schools (A, B & C)	**Magnet school D**
Most frequently mentioned barriers according to school type (more than 2 students	
- Communication and outreach issues : lack of awareness about opportunities - Time - Lack of interest and passion - Work - School work	- Communication and outreach: lack of awareness about opportunities - Time - Lack of interest - Lack of parental involvement
Frequently mentioned themes : Outreach issues, interest, time, work, school work, lack of parental involvement	
Less frequently mentioned barriers (mentioned by one student)	
- Lack of knowledge about community issues - Technology dependence (gadgets, cell phones, videogames) - Transportation - Getting ready for college - Financial barriers	- Workload - Social isolation - Safety - Lack of awareness about the benefits of involvement. Many students focus on the short term rewards (money for example), rather than the long term rewards - Lack of self-discipline - Need to focus on college - The student focus is on themselves, families and friends, not the community. - Lack of sense of community, and cooperation among local residents in neighborhoods/ - Location and distance - Lack of local leadership structure
Common themes : Focus on college, Isolation, Transportation **Other themes**	
Lack of community knowledge, technology dependency, financial barriers	Safety, Parents support, lack local leadership structure, lack of sense of community, lack of awareness about benefits, lack of self-discipline, and focus on self and immediate environment.

Table 4-27 (a) Barriers to Youth Community Civic Engagement and Leadership Development (Teachers' Perspective: Frequently Mentioned Barriers)

Community schools (A, B & C) teachers	**Magnet school D**
Most frequently mentioned barriers (3 teachers or more)	
- Lack of parental support for participation and their pressure on doing other things - Financial issues of students - Time	- Safety concerns - Lack of parental support and engagement (because of fear, income, lack of awareness about importance) - Transportation and distances - Lack of communication and awareness about opportunities (although many emails and flyers are sent, students do not know about the involvement opportunities - Lack of awareness about the value of involvement - Time concerns - Financial issues - Diversity issues: students feel discriminated when they go to conferences where they are not used to be a minority
Common themes: Lack of parental support, financial issues, and time. **Other themes**	
-	Safety, transportation, communication gap, and diversity,

Students and teachers' answers about barriers for engagement presented similarities and differences. In the community schools, although both agreed that time is barrier, their prioritizing of the other barriers was different. Students' viewed the lack of interest and outreach issues as main barriers, while teachers considered the lack of parental engagement and financial issues as important barriers. In the magnet school, the situation was different. Despite the fact that safety was the main concern for teachers, it was not the case for the interviewed students. Both teachers and students agreed that low parental involvement, lack of communication and outreach of opportunities affected youth involvement. Financial issues and diversity were emphasized by teachers, yet barely mentioned by students.

Table 4-27 (b) Barriers to Youth Community Civic Engagement and Leadership Development (Teachers' Perspective: Less Frequently Mentioned Barriers)

Community schools (A, B & C)	**Magnet school D**
Less frequently mentioned barriers (less than 3 teachers)	
- Focus of the school on going to college - Not understanding the value of involvement - Lack of motivation and confidence in their abilities - Lack of interest of students and parents - Family obligations - Increase in the number of clubs and opportunities: there is so much else to do. In addition, parents require from them a lot. Therefore, they care less about community. - Technology influence: with the social media influence, people worry about themselves rather than what is happening in their community. Also, they are satisfied with the easy relationships with texting). - Decrease of volunteering among adults due to change in the job market and the increase of women workers. Families do not have time to do volunteering together like in the past. Also, change in family structures such as having single mothers. - Housing development: house in a specific community are now closer to each other, which made easier for kids to get into trouble. When it was more rural people didn't have the chance to hang out so they used to volunteer more.	- Lack of communication with student's communities - Peer pressure: some think that it is not cool to be in FFA for example - Lack of adult support to push them for involvement - Urban life: in urban areas with higher poverty, it is easier that students are untraced - Lack of interest - Focus of students of tests rather than applying to real situations - Family obligations - Law procedures: it takes a long time to take permission to let students participate in events outside Philadelphia, and even to allow community people to enter school - Political issues: among 500 SD in PA, only in Philadelphia the school board is appointed not elected. Most of these people do not have children in the Philadelphia school district. Thus, they have no buy in for the community.
Common themes Academic focus, Family obligations, lack of interest, lack of adult support, Poverty,	
Other themes	
Urbanization, ignoring the value of involvement, decrease of volunteering among adult, technology, increase in the number of activities, decrease in community attachment, lack of motivation and lack of confidence in abilities	Urban life, political issues, Pennsylvania law, detachment from communities, peer pressure, Lack of awareness

Teachers mentioned barriers that can limit students' engagement with the consideration of students' and parents' concerns and socio-economic status. Nevertheless, students were more concerned about their specific concerns. The students' sample included six highly involved students and three noninvolved students. This number of non-involved students was not enough

to consider all students' barriers. Thus, the teachers' answers seemed to be more comprehensive because their large experiences.

Solutions to eliminate barriers of engagement and leadership development

Students and teachers identified many suggestions to overcome the leadership development and involvement barriers. Although suggestions were classified based on school types, most of them were relevant to both school types. These suggestions included raising students' awareness about involvement opportunities and their parents, increase parental involvement, engaging students in meaningful and real issues, providing more adult support at the school and community level, providing students with financial support, building partnerships with NGO's and local institutions, and others. More details about the suggestions of teachers and students were provided in Appendix F.

Teachers and students at the community schools agreed that early involvement (middle school or before) would enhance students' community engagement and their leadership skills. Yet, this can still be relevant to all schools. However, school D is only a high school and an early involvement would not be applicable at this school. The students of school D did not have opportunities at the local level. One student suggested that increasing opportunities at the local level would be helpful, while another mentioned the necessity of contacting local people. Although safety was main concerns for the magnet school teachers, these teachers did not provide specific suggestion to overcome this barrier. They proposed that better communication and reassuring of parents would help to minimize safety concerns.

Summary

This chapter discussed the main findings of this research study. The quantitative results indicated that youth social support, civic engagement, leadership training, gender, and interaction with immediate family were significantly related to youth leadership skills. Females, students

who are more engaged, had higher social support, and participated in leadership training had higher leadership skills. Moreover, rural students had higher capacity building scores than urban students. The qualitative findings provided more details of the factors affecting youth leadership development. Interviewees viewed a strong connection between leadership skills and civic engagement. Also, they stated the importance of social support, parental involvement and leadership training. However, none of the interviewees argued that gender is related to leadership skills. In addition, interviewees provided details about the opportunities, motivation, and barriers to youth engagement and leadership development. Also, they provided solutions to overcome these barriers.

Chapter 5

Summary, Discussion, and Conclusion

This study aimed to measure the relationship between leadership skills, social support, capacity building, and engagement. It reflects input from 421 students enrolled in agricultural programs at Pennsylvanian high schools, who participated in the survey and nineteen teachers and students who took part in the interview. Interviews were designed to provide an overview of the school and community conditions, and to identify the opportunities, barriers, and motivators that influence youth leadership development and civic engagement. Moreover, it provided details about the perceived suggestions of teachers and students to enhance youth leadership development and civic engagement. The data helped to answer the research questions of the study, identify differences between community and magnet schools, provided the basis for policy development suggestions, and enabled suggestions for future research.

Different factors were found significantly related to leadership skills, such as leadership training, civic engagement, social support, gender, frequency of interaction with school members, and frequency of interaction with immediate family. In addition, gender, grade, and location (rural/urban) differed with capacity building and leadership skills. Females, students who had previously participated in a leadership program, those who are more engaged, those who have higher social support, rated themselves having higher leadership skills. Interviewees indicated the available opportunities for youth leadership development and civic engagement. These opportunities lacked of real youth adult partnerships and were more like educational activities. Mostly, they did not lead to long-term involvement. Community schools provided more student and community connection than the magnet school. The magnet school engaged its students with neighboring community members to the school, and not members of their proper community.

This chapter discusses the findings of this research study by research question, and compares them with previous studies. It explains the implications of the findings at the youth,

school, and community level. Then, it discusses the overall findings based on a Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory and the interactional theory. Afterwards, it provides practical recommendations for schools, community leaders, and policy makers. Finally, it gives recommendations for future research.

R.Q. 1: Relationship between Leadership Skills and Civic Engagement Indicators

The regression model focusing on civic engagement showed that the number of community groups volunteering in, the level of involvement in school groups, and the level of involvement with sports groups were significant predictors of leadership skills. This model presented 11.1 % of the overall variance in leadership skills. These relationships were seen at the bivariate level. In the final overall model, the civic engagement items were combined. Engagement predicted leadership skills. These findings are similar to other studies. Holt et al., (2008) found that high school students involved in soccer teams developed leadership skills. Hancock et al., (2012) indicated that adolescent involvement in extracurricular activities, including sports, school, and community allowed them to gain leadership skills. McGrath et al. (2009) indicated that sports involvement predicted youth well-being. Barnett and Brennan (2006) found that the greatest predictor of involvement was leadership capacity.

Interviewees also admitted the strong relationship between involvement and leadership skills. Students who were involved mentioned that their participation allowed them to improve their leadership skills and put them into application. Teachers agreed that involvement improves leadership skills. However, they were concerned about the non-active involvement of students. In that case, students register in clubs to increase their chances of being hired, while not being actively involved. Teachers were also concerned that their current efforts are not leading to long term volunteering. More than 50% of students were not involved in any group in their communities. Interviewees from the community schools were concerned about the increasing

detachment of youth from their communities. Also, those of the magnet schools shared the same concern. Students who were highly engaged in the magnet schools indicated their lack of participation in their communities.

More details about the barriers and motivations about youth involvement are addressed in the next sections. Based on these findings, civic engagement is positively related with leadership skills. Those who are more involved have higher leadership skills. Therefore, it is important to address the students' population who are not engaged. Also, it is necessary to provide them venues for participation at their local level as well as in school. It will be important to address their barriers of participation and motivators in each type of involvement. Roulin and Bangerter (2013) studied the motivators of youth involvement. They found that students involved in volunteering activities were more likely to volunteer when entering the labor market, as compared with sports or artistic activities (Roulin & Bangerter, 2013). In this study, about 70% of the students indicated not being involved at all in community groups or being involved once a year. However, it was only 50% who indicated not volunteering. These differences in percentages showed that some students are not seriously involved. Therefore, it is important to be careful about these number of community groups volunteering when assessing students engagement.

Engagement in school clubs and member was significantly related to leadership skills. This finding shows the importance of the school's role in developing students' leadership skills. This is not surprising because all these schools had a community service component in their curriculum. Also, most of the interviewed students had access to leadership programs through their school clubs. This shows that schools are playing a critical role in developing their students' leadership skills. However, the students interviewed at the magnet school indicated not using their skills to benefit their local communities, including those who are highly involved. Also, those of the community schools indicated not using their skills beyond the sets of activities required. Therefore, it is important to address the quality of those programs claiming contribution

to community leadership development. Schools can enhance student's development by including them in real problems, particularly those at the community level. The leadership process can be enhanced if partnerships between schools, local leaders, and educators was established.

R.Q. 2: Relationship between Leadership Skills and Social Support

The regression model focusing on social support showed that friends support, and other adult support predicted leadership skills. These relationships were also seen at the bivariate level. These variables explained 18.2% of the variance in leadership skills. These were the greatest predictors of leadership skills. In the final overall regression model the social support items were added, and support was a significant predictor of leadership skills. These findings were similar to those of previous research. Hancock et al. (2012) found that the social support was the highest predictor of the student perceived leadership skills. McGrath et al. (2009) found that school satisfaction and social support were the greatest predictors of well-being.

Interviewers emphasized the role of the adult support and friends support in leadership development and involvement. They mentioned that the presence of more adults would capture the interest of more youth to get involved. Many of the students indicated that they got involved to widen their connections. They mentioned that they met most their friends from the groups in which they were involved. In addition, some interviewees mentioned that peer pressure can inhibit youth from involvement in clubs such as FFA. Alternatively, other students indicated that parental support affected involvement. The next section will discuss in details the social networks.

Because the social networks provide social support to youth, it is important to establish positive social networks for youth. These networks are built through social interaction. Brennan, Barnett, and Baugh (2007) indicated that youth reported greater involvement if they were supported by their teachers and parents. McGrath et al. (2009) found that adult recognition and

friends' acceptance predicted youth engagement. Friends can be a source of positive or negative support. Consequently, it is important to create positive relationships among peers for collective interests. The leadership process in community context, is not an individual process. It is a group process that improves and grows with time. However, youth are supported with individual leadership training, but they are not supported with training allowing them to act collectively.

Youth need to develop leadership skills and have the support to act collectively. Adults other than parents may contribute to youth engagement in meaningful ways such as mentoring and real partnerships. Adults need to foster youth to enhance the community development process. However, these adults need to be aware of the foundations of mentoring. Mentoring is not giving a person a task to accomplish, but a process seeking to maximize the benefits for the mentees.

R.Q. 3: Relationship between Leadership Skills and Social Interaction

The regression model focusing on social interaction showed that frequency of interaction with immediate family and with school or club members predicted leadership skills. These variables explained 9.1% of the variance in leadership skills. These relationships were also seen at the bivariate level. In the final overall regression model, only meeting frequency with immediate family was included. Meeting frequency with school members was removed from the overall model to prevent multicollinearity. On the other hand, meeting frequency with friends outside school, meeting frequency with acquaintances, and meeting frequencies with neighbors were not significant.

These results suggest that social interactions shape leadership skills. This was also shown in other studies. Green and Brock (2005) found that informal interactions had relevant benefits on developing individual skills that they do not develop in the organizational setting. This included communication and negotiation skills, developing networks of individuals for mutual benefits,

and others (Green & Brock, 2005). Antonio (2001) found that interracial interaction helped developing leadership skills and cultural knowledge. Alternatively, Barnett and Brennan (2006) found that youth involvement was significantly related to leadership capacity, and that involvement was highly related to interaction

Meeting frequency with immediate family was an important factor shaping leadership skills in this study. In fact, psychological experts conducted a large amount of research studies about the interaction among children and parents (Beverdige, & Berg; 2007) because they recognized the influence of parents on the development of children. They indicated that better relationships with parents will result in better development outcomes (Waite & Cressell, 2015), and consequently better leadership skills. Also, the meeting frequency with school clubs and members was significantly related to leadership skills. This finding is not surprising since schools offer a variety of leadership programs and involvement opportunities. This finding is parallel with another study who considered school as mediating institution in providing leadership skills (Ballard et al., 2015). Horstmeier and Nall (2007) found that FFA members in high schools indicated significant gains in terms of individual leadership. Additionally, McGrath et al. (2009) found that school climate was a predictor for well-being.

In the interviews, students who were highly engaged indicated that positive interactions with their parents allowed them to get more involved and seek for opportunities. They were more likely to have parents and relatives with previous involvement. Moreover, many students acknowledged their teachers' efforts in getting them involved and helping them to develop their skills. They mentioned that the more the person is involved the higher his leadership skills are.

Students and teachers listed several barriers inhibiting students' involvement through school and community. These barriers included schoolwork, time, and others. In the community schools, some students expressed closeness to their communities. They mentioned feelings of gratification and satisfaction for helping others. On the other hand, the students who were not

involved mentioned having time barriers for interaction outside school and home. Also, a teacher who had 39 years teaching experience teaching several generations was concerned about the youth detachment from their communities, and their dependence on technology. He indicated that more youth are satisfied with the use of technology and gadgets for communication, which undermined the need for real interaction. In addition, many teachers and students were concerned about the lack of parental involvement, not only in the community, but with school as well. One teacher mentioned that many parents involve their kids in some activities and leadership programs to put responsibility on others. They do not reinforces the skills the kids learned. Therefore, it was just a fun time they had. Moreover, different interviewers indicated that parents are role models for their kids, and if they are not involved, their children are less likely to get involved.

The lack of safety in some urban neighborhoods inhibited students at the magnet school from involvement in clubs and leadership development programs. Some students indicated their total detachment from neighborhoods, while others thought they should start interacting with their communities. Parents in this school were concerned about the safety of their children because of the crime and drugs affecting their city. Thus, it is critical to address the safety concern, not only because it is inhibiting youth participation and interaction, but also because research showed a positive relationship between social skills and feelings of safety (Lee, Borden, Serido, & Perkins, 2009).

In this study, students' interaction with immediate environmental actors predicted their leadership skills. Thus, it is important to consider schools and immediate family members in implementing policies for youth leadership development. While interaction with family and school builds skills it does not necessarily direct youth to using them for community development efforts. These findings suggest that it is necessary to address families and schools in leadership development programs. Youth do not develop as individuals in isolation from their environment.

Bronfenbrenner viewed that the interaction of a child with peers, family, community, and school affected his development. In addition, he indicated that the child development depends also on the interaction among a child's family, community, peers, and school. Yet, a large number of interviewees mentioned their concern about the lack of parental involvement with the school and with the community. Detachment from community was not a concern for youth, but also for their parents who are busy making livelihoods.

The interactional theory and Granovetter (1973) theory emphasized the importance of interaction among community members, and the importance of the balanced week and strong ties in communities. The positive relationship between leadership skills, and interaction with parents and school members, indicates that strong ties (Granovetter, 1973) played major roles in developing youth leadership skills. However, weak ties (Granovetter, 1973), are critical to build community capacity. Youth need to access venues of interaction outside home and school to connect to their communities. Interacting only with school and family will enhance leadership skills that benefit youth at the individual level, and offers them increased employability opportunities. Gans (1961) indicated that individuals with fewer weak ties are unlikely to participate in collective actions (Cited by Granovetter, 1986).

In fact, youth leadership programs focus on the individual skills of the youth and expect the emergence of community action and community agency in the future. However, their educational models were based on organizational leadership, which focused on employability skills (VanLinden & Fertman, 1999; Ricketts & Rudds, 2002; Boyd 2001). Yet, these programs were not designed based on a community field theory that allows the emergence of agency. Community agency emerges from the interaction of different community groups and individuals that interact together for a common interest (Wilkinson, 1991). It is the local relationships that increase the capacity of people to use, manage, and improve their local resources in addressing their needs (Barnett & Brennan, 2006).

Consequently, it will be beneficial to activate the weak ties for youth and link them to their wider community. Schools, families, and communities need to cooperate to integrate youth in the community development process. It is not the sole responsibility of the school to develop youth leadership skills; it is a shared responsibility among parents, school, community and government. New initiatives should address students' leadership development in the context of community. They can benefit from the existing technology to connect youth not only to their communities but also to the world. Technology can facilitate communication among parents, schools, community members. It will also increase their participation and awareness about opportunities. Moreover, research should test the ecological validity of youth leadership programs for community development. Youth develop through their daily interactions with schools.

R.Q 4: Relationship between Leadership Skills, and Socio-Demographic Variables

The regression conceptual model focusing on sociodemographic showed that gender was a significant predictor of leadership skills. This relationship was also seen at the bivariate level. Gender accounted for 4.1% of the variance in the leadership skills. Females were more likely to rate themselves higher in leadership skills than males.

These differences can be attributed to the gender differences in the acquisition of the social and behavioral skills. Different studies of students from elementary school to college level concluded that females had higher social and behavioral skills than males did (DiPrete & Jennings, 2012; Downey & Vogt Yuan, 2005; Rosenbaum, 2001; Jackson & Moore, 2008; Entwisle, Alexander & Olson, 2007). DiPrete and Jennings (2012) conducted a longitudinal study of students from kinder garden to fifth grade, to understand the contribution of the acquisition of the social and behavioral skills on the gender educational gap. They found that females enter school with higher social and behavioral skills than males, which gives advantages to females in educational achievement and growing over time. Social and behavioral skills explained

significantly the educational gap between males and females (DiPrete & Jennings, 2012). Other studies showed that gender differences in social and behavioral skills explained gender gaps in educational achievement among high school students (Downey & Vogt Yuan, 2005; Rosenbaum, 2001). Jackson and Moore (2008) indicated that gender differences behaviors emerge from the school and family environment. Entwisle et al. (2007) indicated that gender differences in social behaviors are attributed to the fact that the role of student is more suitable for girls than boys. Yarrish, Zula, and Davis (2010) found that female college students in Liberal Arts in northeastern Pennsylvania rated their cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills higher than males. Gurian and Stevens (2004) argue that males and females have different learnings styles and paths of development. They explained the differences in girls' and boys' mindsets, and suggested different strategies for schools to optimize their educational outcomes.

Gender differences in self-perceived leadership skills were documented in literature (Eagly & Karau, 1991; Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995; Yarrish et al., (2010); Al-Alawneh, Meqdadi, Al-Refai,, Khdair, & Malkawi, 2011; Alexander, Guta, & Poole, 2014; Haas, Mincemoyer & Perkins, 2015). Haas et al. (2015) conducted a study on leadership skills of 4-H youth between the ages of 8 and 18. They found that females had higher self-perceived leadership scores than males over time. Al-Alawneh et al., (2011) found that the gender of the respondents has an effect on teamwork interpersonal skills among Jordanian college students with females scoring more than males. Another study among Saudi Arabian college students showed that females rated themselves higher than males in communication and working in groups (Alexander et al., 2014). Yet they scored lower than man in decision-making skills, which was attributed to the social gender role in the Saudi Arabian culture that assigns men to leadership positions. Groves (2005) found that women leaders in managerial organization had higher social and emotional skills than men. According to Eagly & Karau (1991), females were more successful than males in tasks requiring high social interactions, whereas males were more successful in less

socially demanding tasks. The social theory of sex differences suggests that the social expectation of gender role influences a person's leadership behaviors and effectiveness (Alexander et al., 2014). Eagly et al. (1995) indicated that men were more successful than women in leadership roles socially defined as masculine (ex: coach, military), and women were more successful than men in roles less perceived as masculine (ex, social service). Redmond (2012) indicated in the evaluation of the Foroige youth leadership program that females appeared to benefit more than males.

The findings from previous literature suggest that males and females develop different levels of leadership skills according to the social environment and organizational setting. In addition, their mindset and development occurs in different paths. In this study, it is important to refer to the social environments and organizational settings of the different types of involvement to understand differences among males and females. Although not part of the main research questions, further analysis was conducted to understand gender differences in leadership skills. Female students were more involved in school clubs and social clubs than their male counterparts were. This was similar to findings in Case's (2011) study that showed that female students tend to be more involved than men in college settings. In Penn State for example there is a tendency of having more females in leadership roles in the FFA collegiate officers that has 7 females and one male only (J. Ewing, personal communication, October 2015), and Penn State Ag advocate that 20 female students and 7 males (J. Lonie, personal communication, October 2015).

Case (2011) found that females tend to be more engaged in public service activities on campus while males are more involved in Athletics. Case (2011) found that previous high school involvement predicted the involvement at the college level. Thus, the pattern of involvement continues from school to college. Since it is not understood why females are more involved than males, it is worthwhile for future researchers to understand the factors affecting engagement of males in high schools and university with considering the social theory of sex differences, and

understanding the expectations for males' students from involvement. Although there is a culture of equalizing men and women, yet there are biological, psychological, and physical differences between both genders. Their expectations, motivations, needs, ambitions, and interests are different. These differences affect their learning methods and acquisition of skills.

It is important to keep females involved, and allowing them to develop their leadership skills. Yet, it is also important to address male concerns, and provide them with roles meeting their interests and their perceptions about themselves. While females can enjoy public service, males for example might be more interested in coaching. Therefore, leadership programmers, schools, and policy makers need to provide males students with opportunities meeting their interests to get involved. It is important that they consider the gender differences in the nature of learning. Gurian and Stevens (2005) emphasized the nature-based approach of learning that gives teachers different strategies based on gender that maximizes males and females educational outcomes. These differences should be considered for the design of leadership programs. Alternatively, Haas et al. (2015) found that gender based 4-H projects (groups of males only or females only) resulted in a higher improvement of leadership skills for both males and females than the mixed gender projects.

By considering the gender differences in learning methods in leadership programs, both males and females will be able to develop and improve their leadership skills. Indeed, it is important to recruit more males for clubs, but it is more important to include them in opportunities that meet their needs and expectations. However, the number of male students was limited in the interviews. One male student, who was not involved in his community, indicated the lack of local leadership structure prevent him from involvement. He thought that providing opportunities at the local level would improve his participation. Another male student mentioned having time issues. Yet, he thought that he might be involved in the presence of rewards. Male students also mentioned that technology dependency is increasing. They indicated that many

students are busy with their gadgets or videogames, so they do not find time for involvement. Another male student indicated that more adults need to be included in their leadership programs and involvement opportunities. He perceived that including more adults would enrich the activities, build community structure, and encourage students to get more involved.

Ignoring gender differences in programming seemed to be benefitting females more than males. Thus, it is necessary to address male's interest and concerns in future planes. Also, including a diversity of female and male adults will be beneficial for all students. If the male involvement continues declining, there are consequences that can happen. While there was a huge emphasis towards women's rights and women's' leadership development, it is time to think about men rights and needs. This will allow both genders to develop their leadership skills and grow in parallel with fulfilling their different needs. It will also allow grow and development of the wider community. Finally, it is important to revise the school processes and family structures producing those gender gaps (DiPrete & Jennings, 2012).

Discussion of the MANOVA analysis

The MANOVA analysis showed that gender, grade and rural/urban residence had significant differences among social support, capacity building, civic engagement, and leadership skills. Females had significantly higher leadership scores than males, and rural students had significantly higher capacity building scores than urban students. Students in grade 11and 12 had the highest capacity building scores, followed by students in grade 10, and those in grade nine had the lowest scores. Thus, capacity building increases with the grade level.

The differences of leadership skills by gender were discussed earlier. This analysis adds a different dimension to the discussion. Although females had higher leadership skills, this was not associated with higher capacity building, civic engagement, or social support scores. Females met more frequently with school clubs than males though not significantly. This has the potential to explain why females had higher leadership scores than males. Nevertheless, it shows that females

do not present higher capacity building than males. Thus, their contributions towards their communities might not differ. This implies that schools, researchers, and local leaders should cooperate to identify ways to increase females' contributions towards their communities and empower them with leadership capacities opposed to just with skills. On the other hand, they should find ways to improve males' involvement and provide them suitable opportunities to enhance their leadership skills, and maximize their contributions towards their communities.

Although rural students had higher capacity building than their urban counterparts, the effect size of that significant difference was 0.27. This raised attention towards the critical situation of lower contributions towards communities in both rural and urban settings. Likewise, teachers were concerned about the increasing detachment from communities in all settings. Because leadership development is a process, those of the higher grades have significantly higher capacity building scores. The effect size for this difference was small (0.017), which implies that there is a need to maximize students' capacities and contributions toward their communities in meaningful ways. Barnett and Brennan (2006) found that youth involved in community efforts have the capacity to better their communities. Likewise, Brennan, Barnett, and Baugh (2007) concluded that youth involvement was associated with increased capacity.

R.Q. 5 Factors Differentiating those Who Have High Leadership Skills Levels Vs those Who Have Low Leadership Skills Levels.

The backward logistic regression indicated that females tended to be 2.253 times in the higher leadership skills group than males. Moreover, youth who had already participated in a leadership program tend to be classified 2.817 times in the higher leadership skills group than those who have never participated in any leadership program. Alternatively, a one unit increase in number of volunteering groups results in 1.486 increase in the odds of the leadership skills level. Therefore, females, those who had previously participated in leadership programs, those who

have higher levels of social support, and those who volunteer in more community groups tended to be in the higher leadership skills group.

In the overall linear regression model social support, gender, meeting frequency with immediate family, and participation in a leadership program were predictors of leadership skills. On the other hand, in the binary logistic regression the individuals with the top 33% (higher skills) and those with the lowest 33% (lower skills) were considered. This analysis shows that the differences between those with the lower level leadership skills and higher leadership skills are explained by gender, participation in leadership programs, number of community groups volunteering, and social support.

The influences of gender and social support have been widely discussed previously. The participation in leadership programs was a factor between those who had higher and those who had lower leadership skills. This finding fits previous literature of evaluation of youth leadership programs (Redmond, 2012; Smith, Genry, & Ketring, 2005; Keselman, Ahmed, Williamson, Kelly, & Dutcher, 2015). However, about 69% of students have never participated in any leadership program. Thus, it is necessary to increase the number of leadership development opportunities. Programs can be delivered online or with a mix of online and in person strategies. This will be possible since the majority of students have internet at home (see Appendix G)More partnerships with youth organizations can facilitate increasing the students' access to leadership programs.

Although the number of community groups volunteering was not significant at the overall linear regression model, it distinguished the higher and lower leadership skills group. This shows the positive relationship between communities volunteering and leadership skills. This implies that more community involvement opportunities need to be provided to students, to increase their leadership skills.

R.Q.6 Youth and Teachers Experiences in Leadership Development

There is a variety of opportunities for leadership development and student engagement in all schools. These opportunities were not accessible to all students. Also, all schools had a community service activities in their curriculum. These activities involved tasks such as cleaning highways, packaging Christmas food for the community, removing snow and many others. These activities, considering the real application of the skills, were limited in scope. The lack of interest in involvement was considered a barrier for engagement. Thus, it is important to modify the types of activities to meet students' interests. For example, the efforts of FFA were noticeable in the individual leadership skills level of involved students. FFA provided them the opportunity to enhance their leadership skills and to work collectively in teams. However, they were not provided opportunities to make sustainable changes in their communities. These findings were similar to an analysis, conducted by Horstmeier and Nall (2007) at the national level, about the role of FFA members and their activity contests. They concluded that the FFA activities emphasized the improvement of personal leadership skills but did not focus of communities.

Students did not have real youth-adult partnership outside the school setting; the only adult they partnered with was their teacher. This implies the possibility of the lack of application and understanding of the concept of youth adult partnership. Additionaly, many students mentioned that having more interaction with adults is interesting to the average students because they can learn and develop more from adults' experiences.

The majority of students did not participate in leadership programs. This implies that schools need to increase students' participation and maximize their access to leadership programs. School can partner with other youth organizations to maximize their efforts. Students expressed the interests in their communities however they need to make real contributions. Youth should be engaged in real community policies and programs. This will help youth to develop their

cognitive, moral and social skills, and allows them to overcome the challenges they face (Barnett & Brennan, 2006).

Interviewers listed several reasons for youth involvement including parental support, family history of involvement, having the passion and drive, teacher support, and others. This shows the importance of cooperation among schools and parents to increase students' involvement. Alternatively, students wanted to have a voice and to be heard. Thus, policymakers and local leaders need to facilitate the youth empowerment process. Local leadership structures need to be established and commit to accepting youth as fundamental partners for sustainability.

Several barriers to youth engagement and leadership development emerged in different contexts. These barriers included funding, access to programs, lack of parental support, safety, parental support, timing, lack of interest, community detachment, school districts' rules, political issues, lack of mentoring, focus on academics, and others. These barriers cannot be eliminated without sustainable partnerships between schools, youth organizations, researchers, and local leaders. Such partnership will allow providing teachers, parents, and local leaders with the necessary tools to maximize youth involvement and community outcomes. Partnerships also allow continuous interactions among the key stakeholders and the discussion of emerging youth needs. In addition, policymakers need to revise the rules that were established based on overreaction to particular events. The current rules limit students' interactions outside the school setting. This also causes barriers to teachers who are limited in their choices for activities. Teachers suggested that earlier planning for activities would be helpful to overcome timing issues. Collective teachers' efforts in planning for activities at the end of each year might help those teachers reduce the stress of the bureaucratic work.

The outcomes of involvement and leadership programs showed significant outcomes at the students' level. However, most of the students were not provided opportunities to use these skills to make valuable contributions towards their communities. It is important for programmers

to understand that leadership at the organizational level is different from leadership at the community level. While some similar skills are needed in both settings, it is important to understand that the leadership at the organizational level is based on management, but community leadership is based on interaction. An organization can be an entity of a wider community, yet the community is another entity. Older teachers mentioned that their efforts did not have the same impact that it had before in planning for long-term youth volunteering. This fact is associated with the constant change in the community field. With more barriers and changes in the community, it is necessary to create innovative and effective ways to allow the emergence of community agency. Sustainable communities do not emerge simply from a community service activity. It cannot be built with short leadership where community service is viewed as an experiential activity, and not as a component of our lives. Although theorists of leadership recognize that leadership is a long-term process, many leadership programs tend to be short term. This does not undermine the role of the efforts of the current leadership programs. They are making noticeable efforts to empower youth with non-academic skills that increased their well-being and employability in the job market.

Practitioners, tend to consider many youth programs to be leadership programs that improve community development. The main strategy they used to create community development was by engaging youth in community service. In addition, they claim to have real youth-adult partnerships when the only adult can be the teacher or volunteer in a youth organization. Is that what young people are expecting out of their involvement? It is important to examine their different interest and build sets of innovative involvement ideas in the new Era. A simple community service task might satisfy younger adolescents, but what do older adolescents need? In an educational class setting, teachers are trained to provide appropriate challenge level for students. Does that challenge happen in community service activities? Are these students interested anymore in the types of community service provided? The concept of youth-adult

partnership seemed misunderstood by different organizations. For example, in schools the only adults are the teachers. While the notion of the youth-adult partnership intended to give youth the power to share decisions with adults, in these schools it was not applied outside the youth's clubs activities or service learning. Mortasen et al. (2014) raised attention to youth expectations and understandings of leadership. In this study, youth considered leadership widely available, creates changes and involves shared action, adult mentors, and strong personality traits (Mortansen et al., 2014). Thus, it is important to provide youth opportunities to make real sustainable changes collaborating with adults. Finally, it is time to acknowledge the community as a constantly changing entity, and to design long-term programs preparing youth to become long-term active citizens in their communities. It would be beneficial to communities to test the ecological validity of those programs. McNeil (2006) was critical of the youth leadership programs that expect youth to contribute to the future by giving them a set of skills. The findings in this study confirm his recommendation about considering the practical context in youth leadership programs as compared to those of adults.

Recommendation

It was previously indicated that youth leadership development field is a multilevel and longitudinal process. This study showed several important predictors of leadership skills: civic engagement, social support, social interaction, gender, and participating leadership programs. Students who had higher levels of social support, civic engagement, social interaction, those who participated in leadership programs, and females, scored higher levels of leadership skills. Several challenges facing youth leadership development were discussed with interviewees such as the lack parental involvement, lack of access to opportunities, and others. Obviously, there is no simple solution for the complex challenges facing youth leadership development. Effective intervention should occur at multilevels including schools, families, communities, and decision making.

Based on the research findings, recommendations for each conceptual area related to leadership skills was provided. Table 5-1 shows the recommendations associated with their related findings. Increased student involvement in school clubs and community groups is needed to develop their leadership skills. This happens with providing them meaningful experiences that have appropriate level of challenge, to address the barriers for involvement, and to allow them to make sustainable changes. It is also suggested that, more adults should be involved within the youth leadership development activities. In addition, activities that include youth and their circle of friends can affect their leadership skills positively. The frequencies of interaction with school and immediate family predicted leadership skills; thus, parents and schools should have more support to maximize youth's benefits and leadership potential. Finally, it is important to increase the accessibility of leadership programs for students in schools, and to address the areas of interest for both genders. Recommendations to each research finding were discussed individually after each research question. Additional details are provided within the following paragraphs.

Table 5-1 Findings and Related Recommendations

Quantitative findings: leadership skills were positively related to				
Civic engagement	**Social support**	**Social interaction**	**Gender**	**Participation in leadership programs**
- Involvement in school clubs and outside school	- Friends - Other adults	- Parents	Females	Yes
Qualitative findings: associated findings from interviews				
Concerns: lack of active involvement, detachment from communities, lack of interest, lack of time, rules lack of parental involvement, safety, transportation	The presence of other adults encouraged youth for involvement. as well as friends	Positive interaction with parents helped in seeking opportunities	The number of interviewed males was limited. Nothing specific applies	- Not accessible by all students - Concerns: teachers' time and school resources
Recommendation for practice				
Increase involvement in school clubs and outside school: o Address the barriers to engagement o Provide appropriate level of challenge in the application of skills	Increase access to social support o Involve more adults with youth o Establish mentoring programs o Provide real youth adult partnerships o Make collective leadership activities to involve youth and their friends	- Involve parents	- Search for strategies to increase male's involvement and leadership skills - Keep females involved and invest their skills in their communities	Increase accessibility to leadership programs o Training teachers o Increasing the availability of resources

In order to enhance the youth leadership development process, it is necessary for youth to build collective leadership networks among schools, community organizations and officials, universities, Extension, businesses, and other social fields. This will allow youth to have more access towards leadership development opportunities, social support, and engagement. It will also build effective communication with parents and connect schools with local communities. According to Silvia (2011), there are four necessary operations to build network, which are activation, framing, mobilizing, and synthetizing. The activation of the process of building this network can start with a series of public forums that involve youth, parents, school members, community officials, city government personnel, youth agency personnel, and private sectors.

These forums will help identify the barriers related to youth leadership development, determine ways to overcome the barriers, increase the resource availability in the community to fund youth leadership development, exchange information and opinions, and coordinate of activities and efforts among stakeholders. Such forums should give youth the voice to express their needs and interests in their communities. Framing can occur after several forums, where a shared leadership committee of all stakeholders can identify common goals and establish a working agenda, and a system of governance and allocation of resources. This leadership committee should have regular meetings to share new ideas. Mobilizing resources for the common good is one of the benefits of the network leadership. One type of product can the establishment of manuals for best practices of youth involvement to serve teachers and youth organizations, assessment and evaluation tools, parental involvement curriculum, and gender specific involvement and leadership development curriculum. Synthetizing and evaluating the followed strategies can help to improve the network leadership. Annual awards can be given to leadership programs following the best practices criteria that should be identified earlier by the leadership committee.

Increase student's involvement

About 35 % of the students were not involved at all in school clubs or outside school clubs, and about 61% of students were not involved in community groups. This can be addressed through the network leadership. This network should include formal and informal leadership influences. Formal leaders can be members of youth organizations, community, or school system. Key individuals in the community should be identified through this network to open avenues for youth participation. Schools can prepare a group of student leaders who can better inform their peers about the available opportunities and encourage their participation. Additionally, technology can also be used in favor of youth involvement. Online activities can be included in many leadership programs sessions at the local, national, and international level. These activities

can include webinars, discussions, videos, educational games, information exchange, and many others.

Additionally, it is important to address the barriers to engagement and provide students with opportunities that fulfill their needs and interests. Committees involving school personnel, parents, community members, and youth should be established to address these concerns. Regular meetings and discussions can help in addressing these concerns and finding resources. These resources can be accessed through the network for youth leadership development described above.

Increase access to social support

Friends support and other adults support were major predictors of youth leadership skills. Thus, increasing students' access to friend and other adult support is critical. Effective interventions can occur by helping youth to form positive relationships with each other. This can involve the creation of support groups for youth at the school level, involving youth in collective physical or entertainment activities, and others. Additionally, support networks between groups of current students and successful graduates can increase student's social support. These networks can be established by inviting graduates to seminars, events, and leadership activities.

Adult support can be increased through valuable mentoring programs established at the school level. These programs allow youth to have frequent contacts with their mentors, discuss with them personal and academic issues, and can lead to positive youth outcomes in academics and family. Mentors can be teachers, counselors, staff, and community members. These mentors should agree to a long-term time commitment to ensure positive youth outcomes

Involving parents

The majority of students were not involved in leadership programs or community activities. It was suggested by teachers that a better communication with parents could address

many of the parental concerns and increase students' involvement. In parallel, the frequency of interaction with parents was a significant predictor of youth leadership skills. Thus, a positive and sustainable communication between schools and parents needs to be established. Schools can follow several strategies to involve parents in the youth leadership development process such as implementing parental education programs, to involve parental committees in planning activities, make multiple contacts monthly with parents whether by phone, emails, or home visits. This will help to inform parents about the availability of opportunities, ways that these opportunities benefit their kids, and the logistics associated with them. Additionally, informing parents about different opportunities will help them to share the decisions with their children about the types of experiences that benefit their children's development. Schools can encourage parents to provide feedback with a regular communication by making educational tools, fact sheets, schedules, and lists of activities, available to parents. Parents can share their opinions through the parental committees, online blogs, or emails according to their preferences.

Because many parents work, different strategies can be used to keep parents involved such as online video conferencing, online blogs, Facebook groups, surveys, brochures, and others. Schools using these tools can address parents' concerns and try to solve them at minimal costs. Regular emails, videos, and webinars, can show parents the impact of involvement on children including their psychological and social development. Additionally, seasonal programs involving students' families and community groups can enhance the youth leadership development process, and to activate the week ties within the community.

Establish opportunities for males and females leadership development

Females presented higher summated leadership skills than their males counterparts. These skills included communication, critical thinking, problem solving, goal setting, and decision-making. A practical use of this finding is to include females students in community

initiatives and development activities requiring high level of skills in these areas. These activities can be identified through committees involving school and community organizations.

Males scores were lower than their females counterparts. Further research should be conducted to understand the gender differences in youth leadership development. This research should be conducted with the cooperation between schools, youth organizations, Extension, and universities. This will potentially help to increase females' contribution towards their communities and increase males' participation. Meanwhile, it is important to give male students a voice to express their needs and expectations of leadership development opportunities. Male advocacy group can be formed within schools, which should initiate this process. Additionally, mentors can be assigned to male students to show them male examples of successful males community leaders.

Increase access to leadership programs

About 68% of the students did not participate in any leadership program. However, participation in leadership programs was significantly related to leadership skills. Providing more scholarships for students, and increasing the human and financial resources at the school level, would increase students' involvement in leadership programs. This can occur by expanding the grant writing capacity for school personnel, and establishing a foundation for the local school that includes a fundraising committee. Thus, it will be possible in the future to include leadership development within the curriculum.

Additionally, using technology can help students to access these leadership programs. Several techniques can be useful such as video conferencing, videos, online blogs, online forums, and others. These activities, can be followed by class discussions to reinforce the learning process. Nevertheless, such programs should be established through the network of stakeholders identified above.

Limitations

This study could not determine whether these results would be obtained in other schools, counties, or states. A larger sample of schools with representative sample of students would be needed to make such a conclusion. However, these results are encouraging because the overall sample was similar to the students' population in several sociodemographic characteristics. Two types of schools were included: neighborhood and magnet schools. There was no significant difference in leadership skills across the two types of schools. However, the findings cannot be representative for both types of settings. Further research in different schools and communities can better explore the factors shaping youth leadership identify site-specific ways to contribute the development of community.

Lastly, this study focused on youth as individuals, and showed how their leadership skills are formed. Other adult and friends support were important predictors of leadership skills. This shows one facet of youth leadership development as a positive interactional process that can be an asset for community development. Further research, should explore the multi-level longitudinal process of youth leadership development, and explore ways to integrate youth into community action.

Conclusion

This research effort has contributed to the body of knowledge about the conditions and factors associated with youth leadership development. This research is particular because it measures leadership skills, civic engagement, social support, and social interactions of students who have different levels of involvement and support. While previous studies focused on leadership skills of students involved in clubs such as 4-H and FFA, this study explained the factors shaping leadership development at the larger social context. This study can give recommendations for policy makers and program developers, to assist schools, youth

organizations, and communities in developing youth leadership. Youth can sustain their skills, and contribute to the community action process only if they build their networks of leadership, have access to mentors, and are considered as equal partners with adults.

Study findings have implications for theory development and future research. The analysis of variables and conceptual areas show that leadership skills were mainly influenced by social support and civic engagement. It explained about 18% of the variance in leadership skills in the regression analysis. Social support was far more important predictor explaining leadership skills than social interaction, and sociodemographic variables. Yet civic engagement was somewhat important to the analysis as well. These findings support recent research indicating that social support and youth involvement were critical factors shaping leadership skills among youth (Hanckok et al., 2012). Future research will better consider the importance of social support and civic engagement in models exploring the youth leadership development process.

From an applied perspective, this study can be used to better assess the process and issues of the youth leadership development field. It can also be used to encourage increased support networks of youth leadership development. Increased cooperation among schools, families, youth organizations, local officials, and other social fields can improve the youth leadership development process. Such cooperation can allow the integration of the youth leadership development within the community development process effectively. It will allow them to be involved in more community initiatives, groups and organizations, and to make decisions related to challenges facing their communities. Therefore, youth can be effective contributors towards their communities.

This study has a wide range of implication on policies at multiple levels. Yet, it has the greatest potential for schools and community groups. It helps them to enhance the youth leadership development experience, and strengthen the factors influencing leadership skills positively. At the school level, more partnerships with local organizations will help students to

build their networks of support and act collectively. Also, it will increase their access to leadership development programs and involvement opportunities. Alternatively, regular communication with parents will help informing them about the benefits of leadership development, addressing their concerns, increase their involvement in activities, and sustain the youth leadership development process.

At the community level, local groups and organizations can recognize the youth leadership potential and the skillset they possess. Additionally, this research shows them the necessity of building the networks of social support for youth. These networks can allow a sustainable youth involvement and leadership development. Also, it will allow them to get involved in the community action process. Nevertheless, adults in communities require training to understand the requirements of youth adult partnership, provide mentoring to youth, and value their contributions.

This study also has implications for policy makers and program developers. It highlighted attributes of youth leadership skills that should be considered for future policies. Program developers can use this information to develop better youth leadership development programs that involves more opportunities for engagement and social support. This implies the importance of training adults to provide the necessary support for youth to achieve their goals. Alternatively, policy makers need to facilitate the youth leadership development process. They need to review rules and regulations limiting youth access to interaction and support from the larger community. In addition, policy makers can establish efficient procedures to allow the cooperation between schools and community organizations. Nevertheless, professional development for teachers and community organizations is needed. Policy makers need to facilitate the adult's access to professional development to reduce the complexity and the stress associated with the youth worker job. They need to initiate a national and international cooperation policy, and action plans

among researchers, educators, organizations, businesses, schools, and communities to build a positive sustainable youth leadership development strategy.

This study confirmed the interactional characteristic of the youth leadership development process. Quantitative and qualitative methods showed that social support, interaction, and engagement were critical to youth leadership development. It showed the centrality of the collective efforts needed to develop youth as future leaders. Thus, it supported the role of the field theory.

Finally, this study contributed to the body of knowledge about the leadership development process. It showed that leadership skills depend mainly on social support and involvement. From this perspective, it is important to build the networks of social support for youth at multiple levels, and to give them the ability to act. Consequently, local leaders and schools should cooperate to increase the venues of interaction for youth and integrate them in the leadership development process. Researchers and educators should cooperate to develop youth leadership programs that satisfy their interests and ambitions. These programs should be long term because leadership development is a process and not a set of skills. Future research studies can address students from other disciplines with a more representative sample can show the generalizability of findings. Additionally longitudinal studies can benefit the enhancement of the youth leadership development process.

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Appendix A

The Survey

Youth, Community, Support, and leadership skills in Pennsylvania

PENNSTATE

1855

'Youth, Community, Support and leadership skills in Pennsylvania'

Section A: About where you live

The following questions ask you about where you live and your feelings about where you live. (Answer question 1, and then check the best answers for the remaining questions)

1- How long have you lived in your area?

_____ years _____months

2- Where did you live before?

- ❍ I have lived here all my life
- ❍ Another part of this county
- ❍ Another part of Pennsylvania
- ❍ Outside of Pennsylvania

3- For each of these statements below, please indicate which best describes your level of agreement.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
People look after each other where I live	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There are good places to spend my free time (parks, shops)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Most people here would take advantage of others if they could	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Most people who live in my area trust one another	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Where I live is a friendly place	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Generally, I feel safe in the area where I live	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
People say hello and often stop to talk to each other	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Youth are very involved in the local community	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There is always someone to talk to where I live	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Girls in this area don't have the same opportunities as boys	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Youth always get the blame for any trouble here	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Small towns don't have the same problems as cities	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

4- If you had to move away from the community where you live for some reason, which of these statements sums up how you would feel about that?

I would be very sorry to leave				I would be very happy to leave
❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

5- How strongly do you agree that you can influence decisions that affect your community?

Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

6- Overall, how interested are you in knowing what goes on in this community?

Very Disinterested				Very Interested
❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

7- How would you describe your feelings toward your neighbors? Would you say you are….:

Very Distant	Somewhat distant	No feelings either way	Somewhat close	Very close
❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

8- How often do you get together or meet with the following types of people?

	Never	A Few Times A Year	Once a Month	A Few times a Month	Once a Week	More than Once a Week
Immediate Family (parents, siblings)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Extended Family (cousins, others)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Acquaintances	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Neighbours	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
School clubs/groups members	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Section B: About what you like to do

These questions ask about what you like to do outside of school and who you like to spend time with. (Check the best answers)

9- How important is it to you to have good friends?

Not important				Very important
❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

10- How many 'close friends' do you have?

❍ None ❍ One ❍ Two ❍ Three ❍ More Than Three

11- How often do you see your friends outside of school?

Never	❍	About once a week	❍
3 or 4 times a year	❍	3 or 4 days a week	❍
About once a month	❍	5 or 6 days a week	❍
Several times a month, but not once a week	❍	Every day	❍

12- How often do you talk to your friends on the phone or send them texts or emails?

Rarely or never	❍	5 or 6 days a week	❍
1 or 2 days a week	❍	Every day	❍
3 or 4 days a week	❍		

Section C: About your Involvement with Clubs and Organizations

These questions ask about your involvement with clubs and organizations and how satisfied you are with them. (Check the best answers)

13- Do you take part in any community or volunteer activities?

❍ No ❍ Yes

If YES, approximately how many groups or organizations do you volunteer with?

❍ 1
❍ 2
❍ 3
❍ 4
❍ 5 or more

14- In general, how would you describe your level of involvement in your community?

Not at all active				**Very Active**
❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

15- For the following clubs or groups, can you check the box for your level of involvement?

	Not involved at all	A few times a year	About once a month	Several times a month	About once a week	More than Once a week
Social /recreational group (ex: choir, dance, music)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Community group (4H, Scouts, YMCA…)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Sports groups	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
School clubs (FFA, FBLA…)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Youth religious organizations	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Other groups_____	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

16- Listed below are reasons for <u>NOT</u> getting involved in clubs or organizations. Please tell us how strong of a reason they are in shaping your involvement.

	Not a reason	A slight reason	A strong reason
Too much to do for school	❍	❍	❍
Too much to do around the house	❍	❍	❍
Too much to do on the farm	❍	❍	❍
I have a part-time job	❍	❍	❍
It costs too much money	❍	❍	❍
They are not located near enough	❍	❍	❍
There is no one to bring me	❍	❍	❍
I don't like the people who go there	❍	❍	❍
I am not that interested in what's available	❍	❍	❍
My parents wouldn't approve of my involvement	❍	❍	❍
I wouldn't be taken seriously by adults	❍	❍	❍
I have not been asked to participate	❍	❍	❍
I don't see an identified role for youth in organizations	❍	❍	❍
Organizations don't give young people a say in things	❍	❍	❍
Friends wouldn't approve of my involvement	❍	❍	❍
I don't have skills to offer	❍	❍	❍
I would feel intimidated by others	❍	❍	❍
I don't have transportation to meetings	❍	❍	❍
I don't have time to commit	❍	❍	❍
I'm not sure of the real benefit of volunteering	❍	❍	❍
I wouldn't be recognized for my efforts	❍	❍	❍
I have people to take care at home (parents, siblings, relatives…)	❍	❍	❍

Did any of the leadership programs that you have been involved include any of the following: (Check Yes/No)

	No	Yes
A training in decision making	❍	❍
A training in communication	❍	❍
A training in goal setting	❍	❍
A training in critical thinking	❍	❍
A training in problem solving	❍	❍
An adult partnership opportunity to solve real community problems	❍	❍
Service learning opportunity	❍	❍

Section D: About your Leadership Skills

20- The following statements describe how you might make a decision in everyday life. Check the answer that corresponds to how often you did what is described For example, if you circle 5 for a statement, that means you always do what is described in the statement

Decision-making

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I look for information to help me understand the problem	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I consider the risk of a choice before making a decision	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think about all the information I have about the different choices	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think of past choices when making new decisions	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Critical thinking

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I can easily express my thoughts on a problem	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I usually have more than one source of information before making a decision	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I compare ideas when thinking about a topic	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I keep my mind open to different ideas when planning to make a decision	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am able to tell the best way of handling a problem	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Communication

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I try to keep eye contact	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I recognize when two people are trying to say the same thing, but in different ways	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I try to see the other person's point of view	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I change the way I talk to someone based on my relationship with them	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I organize thoughts in my head before speaking	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I make sure I understand what another person is saying before I respond	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Goal setting

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I look at the steps needed to achieve the goal	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think about how and when I want to achieve a goal	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
After setting a goal, I break goals down into steps so I can check my progress	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Both positive and negative feedback help me work toward my goal	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Problem solving

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I first figure out exactly what the problem is	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I try to determine what caused the problem	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I do what I have done in the past to solve the problem	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I compare each possible solution with the others to find the best one	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
After selecting a solution, I think about it for a while before putting it into action	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Everyday skills

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I am determined when I have a goal in mind	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I reflect on what I have achieved	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I consider myself to have good self-control in difficult situations	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am known for inspiring other people to action	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
People follow my lead easily	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I have high expectations of myself	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I know how to access opportunities to be a leader	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am known for resolving conflicts	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I try to do the right thing	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am grateful for things in my life	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Helping others is important to me	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

21- Capacity Building: Consider the youth group or organization that you have been most involved in, for each of these statements below, please indicate which best describes your level of agreement.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I am actively involved in decision making	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
My community values youth in working towards solutions	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I have a large say on how the organization grows	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
My input has a value	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I influence the community by being involved in community organizations	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Section E: About School

22- These questions ask you about what it's like for you in school. For each of these statements below, please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree. (check the best answer)

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
I like being in school	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Most of the students in my classes will help me out	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Other students accept me as I am	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The students in my class enjoy being together	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel pressured by the schoolwork I have to do	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I sometimes feel bullied in school	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I have good relationships with my teachers	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The rules in this school are fair	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel I am doing well in school	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
School is an important place to meet friends	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
There is too much emphasis on tests at school	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Section F: About you

23- Are you Male or Female? ❍ Male ❍ Female

24- How old were you on your last birthday? _____

25- Where do you live?

- ❍ Rural (farming)
- ❍ Rural non-farming
- ❍ Small town
- ❍ Suburbs
- ❍ Urban

26- Thinking about money and financial issues, how much do you think these cause 'concern' for your family:

Not a concern at all	A slight concern	A big concern	Don't know
❍	❍	❍	❍

32- Do you have internet in your home? ❍ No ❍ Yes

Do you use it for ….?

	No	Yes
Social networking	❍	❍
School assignment	❍	❍
Games	❍	❍
Coordinate activities for clubs or groups	❍	❍

33- Which of the following best describes your racial or ethnic background?

- ❍ White/Caucasian
- ❍ African American
- ❍ Asian
- ❍ Hispanic/Latino
- ❍ Native American
- ❍ Other _____

In the space provided below, please feel free to offer any information that you feel would help us better understand the issues, needs, and concerns you face.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thanks so very much for your time and opinions!

Your responses will help to better understand your needs and the support that is available to meet these.

Participants should not provide any identifying information about themselves or others

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Interview questions for adults

1- Do you think youth in this school district are engaged in
   a. Community activities (why yes or why not?)
   b. Types of activities
2- In your opinion, what are the main obstacles that inhibit participation?
3- Given your experience, what suggestions do you have to improve Youth volunteering and participation in community activities?
4- What are the current leadership opportunities or programs available to youth in this school district?
   a. Do these programs include youth/adult partnerships?
   b. Do these programs help to solve real community problems?
5- What are your perceptions about the youth leadership activities and skills in their communities (examples of skills include: decision making, goal setting, problem solving, communication, critical thinking…)
6- Do you think that the school district is benefitting from the youth leadership skills in terms of community development?
7- What are the barriers for youth leadership development? And how they can be eliminated?

Interview questions for youth

1- Tell me about yourself and about your engagement in your community
2- Do you think youth in this community are Participating in community activities?
3- What are the main obstacles that keep youth from participation in your community? What about you?
4- Given your experience, what suggestions do you have to improve Youth participation in community activities?
5- What are the current leadership opportunities or programs available to you and other youth in your community?
6- Do these programs include youth and adult partnerships?
7- Do these programs help to solve real community problems?
8- How do you see leadership skills among youth in your community or school?
9- How do you evaluate yourself in terms of leadership skills (ex: decision-making, goal setting, problem solving, communication, critical thinking…)
10- How your community from your leadership skills?
11- What do you think prevent youth from developing leadership skills?
12- What would you change so that youth can develop more leadership skills?

Appendix C

Interview Summary Example

	African American Student in Environmental Sciences. 12Th Grade.
Self-introduction	He likes being outside, freedom, and sports. He is not so highly engaged. He would like to be a veterinarian in the future. He has done some training in leadership academies yet not involved in leadership organization for the moment
Youth involvement in his community	The majority of young people in his community are not involved in community activities. The respondent thought that youth care about themselves and their families and friends but not about the community. They do not help other people and they act as lacking the sense of community. Yet, the respondent said about himself if he was able to contribute for his community he will. He also indicated that his colleagues at FFA at school are highly engaged and enjoy community service activities.
Obstacles to youth involvement	Time, location and environment are main barriers. Also to the lack of understanding of the importance of contributing to the community cause a lack of motivation to participate for youth. The lack of cooperation among the local residents inhibit the respondent from participation. He perceives that these people do not want to change and he cannot do anything by himself. There is a lack of leadership structure and network in his community. Also, there is a lack of programs that allow youth engagement.
Motivation	- Build a Resume - Find a job - Positive feelings after helping people
Available opportunities for leadership	In his community, there are no opportunities except those asking for voting. Yet, in his school, he mentioned that FFA provided leadership and engagement opportunities despite that he is not involved. He mentioned that youth need to go to different communities to get engaged.
Suggestions	- Provide more opportunities for leadership training and civic engagement - Help youth to create goals for themselves and their communities - Allow them to take decisions that benefit their communities - Remove the trash from the community and provide more recreational spaces. - Church is considered a safe and trusted place among local people. Thus, this space can be used to organize leadership activities and training.
Youth-adult Partnership	Just with their club advisors or coaches in sport
Solving real community problems	Not integrated with real community problems. In his community, he perceived youth very detached from the community. They do nothing besides sports which is not helpful for their community. In his school, he mentioned that youth are motivated for community service because they have to do it and they enjoy it.
Leadership skills level of	The interviewee mentioned that he makes smart decisions with some exceptions. He is good at leading teams and he has improved in setting goals and thinking critically. Yet, his communication skills were not satisfying to him
Barriers to leadership development	- Youth don't know why they need it so they don't see a value - They think about short term money rewards rather than long-term - Youth are self-centred and did not develop a sense of community
Solution	- Make them realize the importance of leadership training - Engage parents and families as a whole - Develop a local leadership structure that facilitate activities of leadership and engagement.

Appendix D

Questionnaire Administering Protocol

Teacher, Test Administrator, or Test Proctor:

General instructions to the students

- Hello class. Today, you will be completing a survey instrument as part of a study by Sarah Osmane, a student at Penn State University. This is a very important study to help them understand how you are progressing to become a leader in school and your community.
- This survey measures your leadership skills and their relationship to civic engagement social support, capacity building, and social support.
- Information gathered will be used to help make recommendations to improve leadership programs. Your Input is very valuable, so be as accurate as possible.
- The survey will take between 20-30 minutes to complete. You are free to participate or not. Participation is voluntary and you can skip questions if you do not want to answer and you have the right to leave the survey whenever you want.
- Your information you supply will be kept confidential. Only the research team will have access to it.
- The Penn State research team values your input and thank you for your participation.

Distributing the questionnaire

- Give one survey to each student
- Tell students to not put their name on the paper
- Make sure that each student has a pencil or pen.
- Ask the students to begin answering the questions
- Encourage students to answer all questions

Assisting students

- Students should answer each question to the best of their ability.
- If a student does not understand a word or question, you may explain it.

Collecting the survey

- Collect all questionnaires
- If a student name is on the paper, erase it or redact it with a black marker
- Place all questionnaires in an envelope
- Mail envelope and completed questionnaires to:

Sarah Osmane
009 Ferguson Building
Penn State University
University Park, PA 16802

Appendix E

ANOVA Output for Differences of Leadership Skills Between Schools

Between-Subjects Factors

		Value Label	N
School	1	A	69
	2	B	80
	3	C	88
	4	D	145

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: Life_Leadership_Skills1

School	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
A	80.9130	23.20148	69
B	90.4813	16.57691	80
C	84.4886	15.65284	88
D	87.1793	18.22303	145
Total	86.1191	18.55957	382

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]

Dependent Variable: Life_Leadership_Skills1

F	df1	df2	Sig.
2.708	3	378	.045

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: School

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Life_Leadership_Skills1

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Model	2836892.723[a]	4	709223.181	2103.479	.000	.957
School	2836892.723	4	709223.181	2103.479	.000	.957
Error	127449.027	378	337.167			
Total	2964341.750	382				

Estimated Marginal Means

School

Dependent Variable: Life_Leadership_Skills1

School	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
A	80.913	2.211	76.567	85.260
B	90.481	2.053	86.445	94.518
C	84.489	1.957	80.640	88.337
D	87.179	1.525	84.181	90.178

Post Hoc Test

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Life_Leadership_Skills1

	(I) School	(J) School	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Games-Howell	A	B	-9.5682*	3.35209	.026	-18.3008	-.8356
		C	-3.5756	3.25358	.691	-12.0589	4.9077
		D	-6.2663	3.17675	.205	-14.5544	2.0218
	B	A	9.5682*	3.35209	.026	.8356	18.3008
		C	5.9926	2.49382	.081	-.4810	12.4662
		D	3.3019	2.39272	.514	-2.9040	9.5079
	C	A	3.5756	3.25358	.691	-4.9077	12.0589
		B	-5.9926	2.49382	.081	-12.4662	.4810
		D	-2.6907	2.25265	.631	-8.5255	3.1442
	D	A	6.2663	3.17675	.205	-2.0218	14.5544
		B	-3.3019	2.39272	.514	-9.5079	2.9040
		C	2.6907	2.25265	.631	-3.1442	8.5255

Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square(Error) = 337.167.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Appendix F

Strategies to Overcome Barriers to Youth Engagement and Leadership Development

Table A Students' suggestions

Community schools (A, B & C)	**Magnet school (D)**
- Communication and outreach of opportunities and programs to students - Include more adult participation to improve youth volunteering and participation in the community - Increase students awareness about involvement benefits at the personal and community level - Increase student's motivation - Increase parental involvement and awareness about benefits of involvement - Early childhood involvement - Decrease attachment to technology - Providing incentives such as food	- Increase the leadership and engagement opportunities at local levels - Increase the number of teachers working with students - Mentoring youth and developing positive thinking among them - Make youth aware of the long term benefits of involvement - Mentoring youth - Involvement of parents - Construct enjoyable involvement experiences where youth can bring their friends, and include activities of interests in the after school programs so more students can join - Help youth to make goals and take decisions, not only for themselves but also to their communities - Allow summer session for early recruitment of students - Contacting people in neighborhoods, and use safe places in communities such as church, or community centers
Common themes: Raise Awareness about benefits, parental involvement **Other themes**	
Outreach, adult participation, motivation, incentives, early involvement, and decreasing attachment to technology	Opportunities at the local level, teacher support, mentoring, meaningful experiences, and training.

Table B Teachers' suggestions

Community Schools (A, b & C)	**Magnet School (D)**
Proposed solutions with similarities	
- Marketing programs and opportunities to students (use peer marketing) - Provide opportunities during school hours when lunch is provided - Develop youth motivation for involvement using the student's social group of parents, families, and friends. - While teachers are aware of the budget cut, and the financial obstacles, they did not think that increasing the funding from the school district was possible. - Engage parents to show the importance of community service, and consider their opinion about what needs to be done in the community. - Collaboration with 4H or with school - Engage student's in real problems - Facilitate procedures that helps community people to get involved with students (the law is difficult)	- Outreach: increase youth awareness about available opportunities (use peer marketing). - Motivate students - Make youth think about long term benefits - Increase parental involvement ,make parents understand the value of engagement and reassure them - Increase financial and human resources for school: this will allow getting new personal and allow teachers provide their students more time to their students. - Establishing connection with nonprofits and organizations and universities - Providing meaningful opportunities for youth that meet their needs - Increase of adult support and mentoring
Themes: Outreach, parental involvement, resources, partnerships, adult support, engagement in real and meaningful issues	
Other proposed solutions	
- Integrate leadership development in the curriculum - Make a long lasting volunteering by creating a real connection with local people so they see a value when they leave the schools - Address middle school kids because they are more impressionable	- Communicate funding opportunities for kids - Support activities for low income families - Offerning transpasses : one teacher mentioned that this would not solve the safety problem. - For diversity: Exposure, this means preparing students to see different people. - Increase student's interest in shared Philadelphia properties such as fairmount park - Follow up students to identify their barriers and concerns - Summer session: it was cut because of funding. It helps to involve students early.
Themes: Integrating leadership development in the curriculum, sustainable volunteering, early involvement, financial support, diverse exposure, and developping interest in shared community propreties.	

Appendix G

Internet Usage

Internet usage

Table C-1 Having Internet at Home

Having Internet at home

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	22	5.2	5.5	5.5
	Yes	380	90.3	94.5	100.0
	Total	402	95.5	100.0	
Missing	System	19	4.5		
Total		421	100.0		

Table C- 2 Usage of internet among students who have internet connection at home

	No	Yes
	%	%
Social Network	14.0%	86.0%
School assignment	9.5%	90.5%
Games	28.8%	71.2%
Group activities	55.1%	44.9%

VITA

Sarah Osmane

Education

Ph.D. in Agricultural and Extension Education and International Agricultural Development, December 2015 (Dual-title)
The Pennsylvania State University, University Park
Dissertation Title: Community Leadership Development: Youth in Pennsylvanian High Schools with Agriculture Programs

Master Engineer Agronomist in Environment and Natural Resources, July 2011
The Lebanese University, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Graduated 1st of class
Thesis: Integrated Membrane Operation for Seawater and Brackish Water Desalination
Research completed at the University of Calabria

Bachelor of Sciences in Environment and Territory Management, July 200**9**
The Lebanese University, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Graduated 1st of class

Certifications

Graduate Certificate in Survey Research, May 2015: The Survey Research Center at the Pennsylvania State University
Cleaner Production Expert Certificate, May 2011: Industrial Research Center, Hadath, Lebanon

Academic Presentations

Osmane,S., Smith, M., Bagget, C., & Brennan, M. (2015).Youth Leadership Development in Pennsylvania. Poster Presentation at the Annual Graduate and Undergraduate Research Expo of Gamma Sigma Delta Association, *Pennsylvania State University, University Park.*

Bowen C., & Osmane, S. (2014). Consumers' Health Insurance Literacy vs. Overall Financial Literacy. Poster Presentation at the 29th Annual Graduate Exhibition of the Penn State Graduate School, *Pennsylvania State University, University Park.*

Manuscripts

Bowen C., & Osmane, S. *(under review)* Predictors of Consumers' Health Insurance Knowledge. *Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning.*

Osmane S. (Submitted). European Integration and Rural Development, Actors, Institutions and Power, by Michael Kull, 2014, Ashgate publishing limited, 188 pages. $98.96, ISBN: 978-1-4094-6854-. *Rural Sociology.*

Languages

Arabic (Native), French (Fluent), English (Fluent), Italian (Limited Working Proficiency), Hebrew (Limited Working Proficiency)