

FACTORS MOTIVATING FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION MEMBERS TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

By

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To Sara Ann Crow and Janice Marie Roberts,
the women who taught me what it means to be a lady

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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This study examined the factors that motivate Florida Farm Bureau Federation members to participate in the policy development and implementation process. In addition, this study sought to understand the perceptions and concerns of active FFBF members regarding major agricultural issues in the state of Florida such as immigration and energy crops. The theoretical framework used in this study included Vroom's Expectancy Theory, examining the expectancy, instrumentality, and valency of an individual's decision making.

The research design was a census study of intangibles. The population frame consisted of the active members of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation ($n=21,000$). At the duration of the study, 1757 active members had responded giving the survey an 8.4% response rate, reaching saturation of the population (Dillman et al., 2009).

The study found that Florida Farm Bureau members are only mildly aware of the policy development and implementation process at Florida Farm Bureau. Members are willing to contact elected officials on issues that are important to them, though electronic correspondence is not an effective or desired method. In regards to the perceptions and concerns of FFBF members on immigration and energy crop issues, the study found

that members are not willing to shift farming operations to an energy crop and do not identify a need for foreign labor. However, those willing to shift production were more aware of the policy process at Florida Farm Bureau and perceive to have a greater impact on the process.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Since John Dewey's *Democracy and Education* (1916), a high level of education has been considered to be a strong indicator of civic engagement (Egerton, 2002). Enrollment in four-year institutions has risen over 23% since 1995 (U.S. Department of Education, 2008), but civic engagement continues to decline (Putnam, 1995). In addition to the rise in education, a lax in voter registration requirements and ending of racial barriers to voting have had little to no effect on voter turnout (Patterson, 2003). In fact, since 1960, the number of registered voters who actually voted has declined steadily (Patterson, 2003) from 63% to 51% in 2000. This decline threatens the legitimacy of the nation's governance, which requires "active accountability" (King et al., 2008, p. 320) from its' citizens in the form of political activism to remain viable (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Until recently, active citizenry has been a concern among Americans since the development of the nation. The very foundation of the United States stemmed from citizens' need to play a part in the decision-making process. Without public participation, decision-making is ineffective (King et al., 1998). But, according to Putnam (1995, p. 65) "Americans have become disengaged psychologically from politics and government." This poses a problem for organizations that rely heavily on the inputs and participation of its members in the development and implementation of policy (King et al., 1998).

Grassroots organizations have long relied on the participation of key members for inputs and feedback in the policy development and implementation process. Like other grassroots organizations, the Florida Farm Bureau Federation (FFBF) has looked to the members of its organization for participation, which is the foundation of Farm

Bureau. The Grange, The Farmers Alliance, The Agricultural Wheel, The Ancient Order of Gleaners and The Equity are agricultural organizations that began calling on its members for participation in the late 1800s years before the first polices were developed by the Farm Bureau organization (American Farm Bureau Federation, 2009). These organizations illustrated the necessity of member involvement in the agricultural industry even before the idea of active citizenry gained momentum.

Farm Bureau

The foundation for Farm Bureau began during the 19th century, though official establishment did not occur until after the turn of the 20th century. The Morrill Act of 1862 established land-grant universities with the mission of teaching, research, and extension, which answered farmers' needs for gathering and disseminating current science and information. Furthering the extension arm of the land-grant mission, the Hatch Act of 1887 developed agricultural experiment stations, which took information to farmers through off-campus opportunities. But it was not until the boll weevil devastation of the South's cotton industry in the 1920s that the need for extension became evident (AFBF, 2009). In response to the disaster, Dr. Seaman Knapp traveled throughout the state of Texas educating farmers on methods of dealing with and eradicating the boll weevil, becoming what is considered the first "county agent" (ABFB, 2009, Sanders, 1966).

During a partnership between New York's Broome County Extension Service, the USDA, the Binghamton Chamber of Commerce, and the Lackawanna Railroad; John Barron, a Broome County Agent, became the first "farm bureau" representative (AFBF, 2009). The partnership was housed within the Binghamton Chamber of Commerce until 1914, when the Broome County Farm Bureau separated and began operating

independently. Similar independent agricultural organizations were established in Missouri, North Dakota, Vermont, Minnesota, Iowa, West Virginia and Illinois (AFBF, 2009). The passage of the Smith Lever Act of 1914, which provided funds for educational efforts, only encouraged the further expansion of extension services (AFBF, 2009). The concept of county farm bureaus continued with the Smith Lever Act until it was formally adopted in 1916 at a joint meeting of county agents (AFBF, 2009). The primary goals of these county farm bureaus began as social and educational functions. As farmers' needs for representation and influence grew on a local and state level, many farm bureaus began working together to form state farm bureaus (AFBF, 2009). In 1915, Missouri became the first statewide farm bureau (AFBF, 2009).

When the need for a national, unified voice became apparent to protect agriculture on a national level, farmers from 30 different states met in Chicago in 1919 to establish the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF). Offices in Chicago and Washington, D.C. were created once the organization was formally ratified in 1920, with the then AFBF President saying, "What's good for farmers is good for America" (AFBF, 2009). This statement signifies the widespread appreciation and power held by the agricultural industry during that time. The goal of the American Farm Bureau Federation was to provide a platform from which farmers could speak for themselves on policy issues, rather than administrators which is reflected in the organization's current motto as "The Voice for Agriculture" (AFBF, 2009).

The organization continued its mission of active participation through the development of policy. In response to the growing agricultural problems throughout the nation, farmers outlined specific policies that would combat current crises and prevent

future ones from occurring under AFBF President James Howard. By creating “agricultural blocs” in Congress in the early 1920s, AFBF was able to pass agricultural legislation developed and advocated by farmers. Legislation continued to pass, including increasing the monetary supply for the federal farm loan system to aid those devastated by boll weevil and other agricultural disasters, as well as a \$100 million dollar grant for highway construction in rural areas. After Farm Bureau’s success in Congress in the early 1920s, The New York Times deemed the organization “the most forceful group of influence in national politics today” (AFBF, 2009).

The plummet of the citrus industry after the Great Depression left Florida citrus growers in need of a voice and vision to repair Florida’s citrus industry. Citrus growers called for a state organization that represented the specific interests of Florida farmers on Capitol Hill (FFBF, 2009). As a result, the FFBF was created in 1941 at a meeting of farmers in Orlando, Florida, similar to the beginnings of American Farm Bureau. Goals for the organization were outlined with the specific task of “representing farmers in legislature” (FFBF, 2009). On November 15, 1941, the first FFBF convention was held where the charter was approved and first president elected. Within one year the state federation reached 1,180 members and 17 county Farm Bureaus had been established (FFBF, 2009). FFBF understood that for its work to be effective it needed to have a “link to policy influence” (Harper, 1997, p. 773).

The government’s inadequacy to overcome “inequality and environmental degradation” (Miller, 1994, p. 5) has resulted in the continuous growth of grassroots and non-governmental organizations across all industries (Miller, 1994). Just as civic engagement can be used to regain trust in the government (Putnam, 1998),

participation in grassroots policy development has been shown to “strengthen civil society and good government” (Miller, 1994, p. 2). These organizations give marginalized groups the necessary channels for policy influence and development, which are essential to a healthy society (Miller, 1994). The need for organizations in the agricultural industry, like AFBF, remains ever present as governmental and societal demands of the agricultural industry continue to change (Hermansen, Noe, & Halberg, n.d.).

On national, state and local levels, Farm Bureau has continued its mission of developing policy through member participation and inputs, but as the issues facing agriculture have become increasingly complex and diverse, the need for a collaborative and assorted group of policy developers has become more vital. As a result, with participation in grassroots organizations declining (Putnam, 1995), the need to understand what motivates members to participate in the policy process has become increasingly important.

The decline of civic engagement over the last few decades in America and worldwide (Putnam, 1995) has become a growing concern. Research has shown that a lack of civic engagement, where political efficacy is formed (Leighly, 1991), can result in an eventual distrust of government institutions (Bowler & Karp, 2004). The perpetuating and revolving nature of participation in political activities combined with the need for trust in government (Putnam, 1995), calls for an understanding of the factors which can counter this growing mistrust, thus overcoming political inactivity. Currently, the majority of motivation and decision-making studies looking at participation motivation have been focused on participation in general areas of the organization, both agricultural and non-

agricultural. They have not identified specific factors that may influence participation in one sect of an organization versus another, factors such as opinions on industry “hot topics” or competencies with communication mediums. Also, a number of studies report the benefit of empowerment as a result of participation in volunteer political activities, which can be harnessed to create buy-in among members (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Such participation also increases political knowledge and encourages further participation (Leighly, 1991).

Statement of the Problem

The decline of active citizenry and participation in grassroots organizations (Putnam, 1995), along with a lack of knowledge about the variables which motivate FFBF members to participate in the policy development and implementation process establishes the need for this research.

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to ascertain the specific factors which motivate certain members of the FFBF to participate in the policy development and implementation process. Additionally, empowerment derived from participation in the policy process will be analyzed for its influence on member participation and potential to create sustainability in member participation. A secondary purpose of this study will be to understand the perceptions and concerns of active FFBF members regarding major agricultural issues in the state of Florida such as immigration and energy crops, based on the desire of the FFBF organization to understand perceptions of its members.

Objectives

This research will address the following objectives:

1. Determine the perceptions of FFBF members as they relate to FFBF's organizational policy development efforts.
2. Determine the perceptions of FFBF members as they relate to their personal ability to make an impact on Farm Bureau's policy development efforts.
3. Determine differences, which exist among FFBF members related to Florida Farm Bureau's policy development efforts.
4. Determine differences, which exist among FFBF members related to personal impact on Florida Farm Bureau policy development efforts.
5. Determine the perceptions and concerns of FFBF active members on immigration and energy crop issues.
6. Determine the differences, which exist among FFBF members related to needs for foreign labor, energy crop issues, electronic correspondence and participation in the policy process.
7. Determine the relationship between aptitude with electronic correspondence, dependence on foreign workers, and energy crop issues with participation in the policy process.

Significance of the Study

As Florida's agricultural population becomes increasingly diverse, the need for a sundry of voices and opinions in the policy development and implementation process is essential to ensure that all sectors of the industry are represented on local, state and federal levels. Findings from this study will provide the information necessary to ascertain the specific factors that motivate members in the FFBF to participate in the policy process and serve as a guide to learn from and target those specific motivators to encourage a balanced and diverse policy process. Understanding the factors that motivate action can also be used to regain trust in governmental and non-governmental organizations, which Putnam (1998) says is necessary for meaningful and lasting civic engagement. Furthermore, because of the self-realization aspects of political activities, participation will be revolving and sustained (Leighly, 1991).

Additionally, understanding the motivating factors behind policy participation at FFBF can be extended to other grassroots agricultural organizations in Florida. Lastly, findings from this study will generate suggestions for similar organizations, as well as provide Florida Farm Bureau with feedback of current issues in the industry, members' perceptions towards those issues, and what steps can be taken to deal with those issues. Florida Farm Bureau seeks to understand the relationship among these variables, which will direct the importance of social capital contributions in organizations, making understanding these motivations vital (Portes, 1998).

This information will provide FFBF with the tools necessary to create sustainable participation in activities with the goal of increasing participation in the policy process among formally non-participative members

Definition of Terms

1. *Civic Engagement* – An individual's participation in voluntary organizations where action is taken through political decisions for the goal of improving American life and holding the government accountable (Sander & Putnam, 2006).
2. *Active Citizenry* – Membership and activity participation in civil society, where associations and networks between family and government is voluntary (de Weerd, Gemmeke, Rigter, & van Rij, 2005).
3. *Florida Farm Bureau Federation* – FFBF is a grassroots, non-governmental organization with the mission to “increase the net income of farmers and ranchers, and to improve the quality of rural life” (FFBF, 2009) and “be the most effective, influential and respected Farm Bureau in the nation, to truly be recognized as Florida's Voice of Agriculture” (FFBF, 2009).
4. *Active members* – “Persons engaged in the production of agricultural products for sale, including lessees and tenants of the land used for the production of such products, and/or leasers and landlords who receive as rent, either in kind or in cash, all or part of the crop raised on the leased or rented premises” (FFBF, 2009).
5. *Agricultural Policy* – Legislation that specifically affects the food, beverage and fiber industries.

6. *Electronic correspondence* – Communication via e-mail, electronic alert systems, and online polling.
7. *Empowerment* – “Process by which individuals gain mastery or control over their own lives and democratic participation in the life of their community” (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988).
8. *Social Capital* – “networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit” that encourage civic engagement (Putnam, 1995).
9. *Aptitude* – Member’s ability to open, read, and respond to FFBF e-mail alert systems, as well as the ability to open, formulate, and send an electronic message to a Congressional member on a specific issue after receiving an e-mail alert.
10. *Immigration* – Active members use of foreign workers in agricultural production and the ability to attain reliable workers annually.
11. *Energy Crop* – A renewable crop that is harvested for use as a bio-fuel and produces energy that in turn can be sold back to the grid for a profit to the farmer (Basford, 2008).
12. *Policy Process* – The development and implementation of agricultural policy, as initiated by the Ag Policy Division in the FFBF but carried out by members.

Limitations

A key aspect to the validity of this study is its ability to generalize to larger grassroots populations. As with any study, there are a few key limitations that may affect this study’s generalizability. First is the use of sampling in that a convenience sample was used. Limitations occur in the ability to extend the study’s finding to other grassroots organizations based on the unique structural and philosophical frameworks of FFBF. In addition, generalizability limitations occur because it can be suggested that the active members being sampled are already prone to be more participative than non-active members. Because active membership can be achieved through buying insurance and other non-agricultural related benefits, a limitation occurs when participants not concerned with agriculture are included in the study because of the inability to differentiate between these individuals when sampling occurs. A “not

applicable” option will be provided on the questionnaire to identify these individuals and remove them from the sample.

Basic Assumptions

For the study to be valid and reliable, several assumptions are taken into account. First, it is assumed that all contact and member information received from FFBF is correct and valid at the time of the study. The assumption that subjects will respond to the questionnaire truthfully without the effect of self-reporting biases is made as well. It is also assumed that participants will have a clear understanding of the terms used in the questionnaire through the use of operational definitions. This study also assumes that participants have an interest in agricultural issues based on his/her involvement with FFBF, opposed to other reasons for attaining active membership. For the study to be valid, the assumption is made that Florida Farm Bureau members will have an opinion on the topics discussed in the questionnaire and want to complete the instrument. The assumption that the information is timely and relative is also being made.

Chapter Summary

Even though strong indicators of political activism, such as education and availability of participation opportunities, are on the rise (U.S. Department of Education, 2008), participation in political activities has continued to decline since 1960 (Patterson, 2003). Grassroots organizations are experiencing the effects of this decline most readily because of their reliance on member participation to define and set policy (Putnam, 1995). The foundation of the FFBF mirrors this philosophy of member participation, being formed by concerned farmers across the United States seeking a unified platform to influence and make policy that directly relates to and affects the personal farmer

(AFBF, 2009). Understanding the factors that motivate FFBF members to participate in the policy development and implementation process is a vital to the organization as it seeks to fulfill its mission. This research will provide a better understanding of the nature and behavior of grassroots members' participation, specifically in the policy process, adding to the current body of knowledge and having the ability to extend the information to similar organizations in an effort to recruit and sustain an active member population.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Overview

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the specific factors, which motivate FFBF members to participate in the policy development and implementation process. To accomplish this, the roles of motivation, empowerment, and the expectancy theory were investigated. In addition, other variables such as demographic information, industry affiliation, aptitude with electronic correspondence, and opinions and relationships to specific industry issues were explored.

In addition to the theories of expectancy, motivation, empowerment, and social capital is also included as a supplement to these other theories. A review of the relevant findings pertaining to the political participation in volunteer and grassroots organizations follows. Lastly, a conceptual model is included that illustrates the link between the theories mentioned above, the sundry of factors being studied, and participation in the policy development and implementation process.

By understanding the factors, which motivate members of Florida Farm Bureau to participate in the policy process, a better knowledge of how to increase participation was expected. The effects of empowerment, aptitude with electronic correspondence and opinions on industry-specific issues were indicated by the literature to have an effect on such participation.

Theoretical Framework

Expectancy Theory of Motivation

The concept of expectancy revolves around the mental processes one goes through when making a choice or decision (Montana & Charnov, 2008). In 1964, Victor

H. Vroom introduced the Expectancy Theory of Motivation (Droar, n.d.) with the idea that individuals make choices based upon the alternative, with the purpose of maximizing the positive and avoiding perceived negatives (Montana & Charnov, 2008). Looking at personality, skill, knowledge, experience, and abilities as influences of an individual's motivation to make a particular decision, Vroom's expectancy theory suggests that the relationship between a people's behavior and their goals is not as elementary as scientists originally thought (Montana & Charnov, 2008).

Vroom's theory differs from other theories involving motivation in that it separates effort, performance, and outcomes (Droar, n.d.). For effort to be a result of motivation, performance and outcomes must be linked (Droar, n.d.). Choices are made based upon which option has the greatest motivating force (MF) involving three different variables (Fitz-enz, 2001), expectancy (E), instrumentality (I), and valance (V) (Droar, n.d.). Below is an illustration of the relationship (Fitz-enz, 2001).

$$MF = \text{expectancy} \times \text{instrumentality} \times \text{valence}$$

Fitz-enz (2001) suggested that if any of these elements carries a probability or value equaling zero, the entire equation will equal zero, resulting in no motivation to accomplish the desired task (Fitz-enz, 2001).

The linkage of these variables is viewed through probability. Expectancy probability (E) is seen as a relationship between effort and performance (Droar, n.d.). This relationship is described as the effort-performance expectancy (E>P), which is the belief that increased effort will lead to increased performance (Droar, n.d.). This relationship involves the past experiences, self-confidence and perceived difficulty of the performance goal (Fitz-enz, 2001). The relationship can be affected by several

factors found commonplace in an organization, such as having the necessary resources to accomplish the task, having the necessary skills, and having the needed support to accomplish the task (Droar, n.d.).

The performance–outcome expectancy ($P>O$) describes the Instrumentality Probability (I) relationship, which is based on the idea that if one meets the expected performance goals, he or she will receive a greater reward (Fitz–enz, 2001). The effort–performance expectancy is the assessment of the probability that one’s efforts will lead to the required performance (Montana & Charnov, 2008). This relationship is typically affected by the level of understanding of the relationship between performance and outcomes, level of trust in the individuals who decide the outcomes, and the transparency of the outcome decision process (Droar, n.d.).

Valence is the third variable of the construct. According to Vroom, valence is the strength, preference, or value an individual places on a specific outcome (Vroom, 2005). The concept can be broken down into two parts, positive and negative valence (Vroom, 2005). For valence to be considered positive the outcome must be “strongly preferred,” whereas an outcome that is to be avoided is considered to be negatively valent (Vroom, 2005, p. 239). Valencies have “roots in relatively stable motives, or needs, the strength of which vary both within and across persons” (Vroom, 2005, p. 239). The positivity or negativity of a valence can be inherent in the outcome itself or in the “perceived instrumentality (I) for the attainment of other outcomes” (Vroom, 2005, p. 239). To tie the model together, valent outcomes have no effect on behavior unless accompanied by the expectancy (E) that the action will have some likelihood on attaining the positive

valent and avoiding the negative valent (Vroom, 2005). Figure 2–1 is an additional illustration of Vroom’s Expectancy Theory of Motivation as derived by Droar (n.d.).

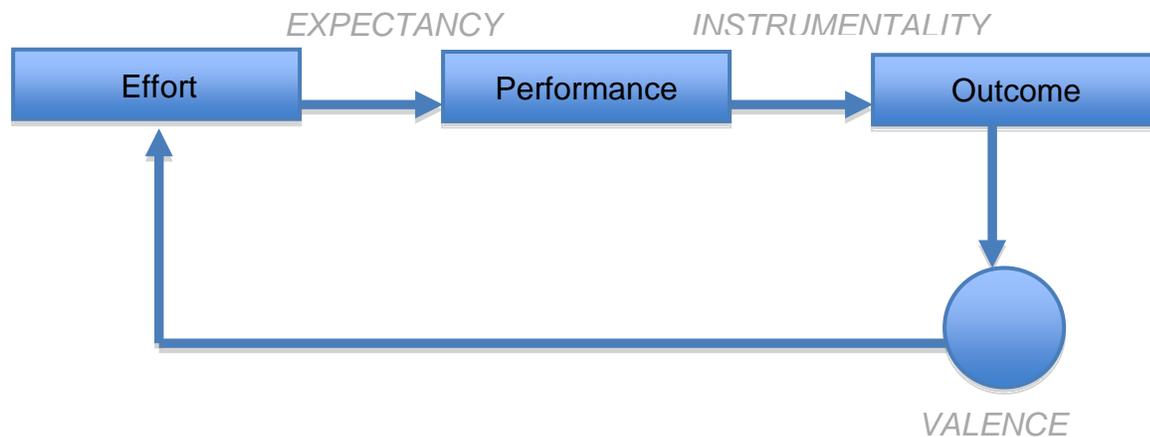


Figure 2–1. Aadapted from context model of Vroom’s Expectancy Theory of Motivation (Droar, n.d.)

The validity of the expectancy theory lies in its causal relationship between expectancy, attitudes, and motivation (Lawler & Suttle, 1973). This causal relationship has proven to be an indicator of job performance. The most significant predictor of performance proved to be the expectancy–performance probability and the performance–outcome probability, indicating that individuals can “distinguish between expectancies involving intrinsically and extrinsically rewarding outcomes” (Lawler & Suttle, 1973, p. 500).

The development of Vroom’s expectancy theory of motivation was centered on the need for a greater understanding of employee performance and motivation (Montana & Charnov, 2008). While the theory was created for its application to work performance and management scenarios, it is applicable to other domains, though little has been done to expand its uses (Vroom, 2005, Droar, n.d). There are areas of the theory that are largely unanswered and untested (Lawler & Suttle, 1973). These

untested areas include the political, academic, nonprofit and nongovernmental sectors (Lawler & Suttle, 1973), where participation is often voluntary, making the need for understanding motivations ever present.

One area of use where the model is gaining application is in the treatment of drug and alcohol diseases (Jones, Corbin & Fromme, 2001). The need for research in this area stems from the variability in which individuals consume alcohol in terms of quantity, style and drinking times. Motivation of individuals is the primary concern of treatment practitioners. This especially pertains to understanding of the definition of motivation, factors affecting motivation, and potential ways to modify motivation (Jones et al., 2001) The term has been used to describe a patient's failure with treatment, citing a lack of motivation, while at the same time it has been used to praise a patient's success (Jones et al, 2001.) This has resulted in the view that motivation is "inexorably implicated in both – to the extent that enhancing patient motivation, itself, might be a legitimate treatment goal" (Jones et al., 2001, p. 58).

Use of the expectancy theory has also been applied in the development of leaders versus managers in organizations. By creating highly motivational work environments through the application of expectancy theory, individuals have the ability to "transcend their traditional roles of supervisor, manager, or follower and realize their potentials as leaders" (Isaac, Zerbe & Pitt, 2001). Increasing global markets and international competitiveness makes leadership a necessity for every employee at all levels of the organization (Isaac et al., 2001). The call for this theory in organizations revolves around the concept that the "workforce is composed of leaders, rather than employees" (Issac et al., 2001, p. 213). Utilizing the expectancy theory in the workforce

instills a “sense of purpose or mission amongst the workers” (Issac et al., 2001, p. 213). Using the expectancy theory to create leaders allows for leaders to participate with employees versus simply administering tasks and orders (Isaac et al., 2001). The use of the expectancy theory to create motivation (Montana & Charnov, 2008) builds individuals who “incorporate both leadership and managerial roles into their personal repertoires” (Isaac et al., 2001, p. 214).

Motivation

The application of motivation has been frequently applied to industry and organizational settings (Maslow, 1965). The earliest schools of thought on motivation believed that an individual’s willingness to perform a task occurred at the extremes of pleasure and pain (Shah & Shah, n.d.). In order to sustain that motivation certain basic human needs must be met (Maslow, 1965). Those needs, in ascending order, are the need for physiological satisfaction, the need to be and feel safe, the need for love and belongingness, the need to establish positive self–esteem, and lastly the need for self–actualization, which creates motivation (Barling, 1977). Not until one level of needs has been accomplished can an individual seek the next level (Maslow, 1965), culminating with reaching self–actualization, which only increases as it is fulfilled, and therefore, never fully achieved (Maslow, 1965; Barling, 1977).

Motivation in the workplace relies on the individual’s ability to accomplish his or her needs at the workplace or through the actual work itself. This places a responsibility on the workplace to seek to “enhance the psychological health of the individual employee” (Barling, 1977, p. 3). Researchers have also pointed out that an employee’s self–actualization could actually be a result of the supervisor’s perception of the employee’s abilities (O’Reily, 1973). This finding places a major responsibility on

managers and supervisor to be self-actualized so to not under or over utilize an individual based upon personal opinions (Barling, 1977). Also, these types of managers and employees tend to be more efficient and realistic (Barling, 1977), enhancing productivity both qualitatively and quantitatively (Maslow, 1971).

Motivational research has also been conducted in the field of volunteerism and nonprofits. The relationship between volunteer motivations and organizational needs is met with the volunteer experience, which includes satisfying the volunteer's needs, including motivation (Culp & Schwartz, 1999). Three drivers of motivation have been identified as the need for achievement, affiliation, and power (McClelland, 1987). According to Maehr and Braskamp (1986), these categories are important factors in the determination of performance and success in the volunteer organization. Maehr and Braskamp's study found that its subjects were motivated initially by affiliation and continued service to the organization through additional affiliation motives. Achievement proved to be the weakest factor motivating participation (Culp & Schwartz, 1999).

Because volunteers need an incentive to join, a look at the factors that sustain motivation after the initial step of joining has been taken, which Pearce (1993) suggests are distinctly different. For a task to be intrinsically motivating the individual must experience meaningfulness in the task, feel responsibility for work outcomes, and obtain knowledge of the tasks results (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Research indicates that experiencing meaningfulness in a task is the most important and reliable factor in retaining motivation and participation in volunteer activities (Millette & Gagne', 2008). Putnam found that "performance in government and other social institutions is largely influenced by citizen engagement in community affairs" or what he calls social capital

(1993). The theory of social capital is grounded in relationships between individuals, which builds trust as deeper relationships are formed. This social trust has been found to be strongly correlated with civic engagement (Putnam, 1993), and thus encourages additional participation in political activities (Leighly, 1991).

Social Capital

Social capital has long been associated with the development of community and politics, specifically policy (Kahne, Chi & Middaugh, 2006). Research defines social capital as the “social organization such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam, 1993, p. 35). Social capital has been shown to improve an individual’s capacity for social and political and economic understanding, as well as knowledge of the structure of democratic government (Kahne et al., 2006). The decline of political participation and civic engagement in America makes understanding social capital’s potential uses and influences all the more relevant (Putnam, 1993).

The key to understanding social capital and its potential is viewing it as a resource with “function value” (Kahne, Chi, & Middaugh, 2006, p. 389) that enables interested parties to meet needs and pursue their interests. Unlike physical or human capital, which both are measured by outcomes, social capital is “embedded in the structure of relations between actors in a given setting” (Kahne et al., 2006, p. 389). No one individual can obtain social capital on his or her own, and it cannot exist outside a network of social relations (Kahne et al., 2006).

Social capital includes three forms that serve as a means to promote civic and political engagement among otherwise inactive citizens. Coleman (1988) defined those forms as community norms, trust, and access to networks and information. Community

norms refer to the incentives, rewards, and passes individuals receive for certain behaviors or actions (Kahne, Chi, Middaugh, 2006). These norms are generally enforced by the group (Portes, 1998). Social capital also exists in the degree to which citizens trust that others in the community will perform the duties and tasks expected of them (Kahne et al., 2006). In both of these forms, reciprocity expectations and the establishment of group norms exist to develop social capital within a group (Portes, 1998). Having access to information and resources, Portes argues, is actually a consequence of the possession of social capital. Individuals receiving these resources view them as gifts (1998). Therefore, it is important to distinguish between resources and the ability to obtain them “by virtue of membership in different social structure (Bourdieu, 1979; Portes, 1998). Simply equating social capital with the resources acquired through it can lead to the creation of “tautological statements.” Also important is the sequestering of the social organization that provides the context for these events to occur (Portes, 1998).

All three of these forms of social capital exist for the pursuit of a particular goal. In fact, research indicates that communities with high levels of social capital are more likely than communities with low levels of social capital to accomplish specific goals (Coleman, 1988; Fukuyama, 1995). The way in which these forms are administered has shown to also play a role in the effective functioning of community organizations (Knack, 2002) with an indication that varying the forms increases efficiency (Putnam, 1993).

Sources of Social Capital

The character of social capital is largely reliant on other forms of capital. While economic capital deals with a citizen’s monetary resources, and human capital represents what is in his or her mind, social capital lies in the structure of those

relationships (Portes, 1998). To fully possess social capital one must be interconnected with others, and through others that individual finds his or her advantage (Portes, 1998). Coleman (1988) describes this relationship as “effective norms that inhibit crime make it possible to walk freely outside at night in a city and enable old persons to leave their houses without fear for their safety.” Simplified, this concept holds that citizens with high levels of social capital will also extend their economic and human capital to the community because of their inherent nature derived from social capital (Portes, 1998).

Another source of social capital stems from buildup of reciprocity obligations from others. This social exchange is said to differ from traditional economic transactions in two ways. The first is the expectance of the tender from the first obligation to be different than that of the latter, which research has shown to be often intangible, such as allegiance to a person, stance and organization. The second difference is the time of repayment is often unspecified and if it is, the exchange is defined as a market exchange rather than one mediated by social capital (Blau, 1964; Coleman, 1994; Homans, 1961; Schiff, 1992; & Simmel, 1964).

The underpinnings of Marx’s analysis of emerging class structures provide another source of social capital. As citizens are placed into common situations, they learn to identify with each other and support each other’s initiatives (Portes, 1998). Marx argues that this solidarity is not a result of enforced childhood norms but a product of common fate (Marx, [1894] 1967, Marx & Engels, [1848] 1947). This commonality explains the altruistic actions of these individuals in community, but not universal situations. Other members of the community can then utilize the character and dispositions of such individuals as sources of social capital. Portes refers to this

mechanism as bounded solidarity, saying that “identification with one’s own group, sect, or community can be a powerful motivational force” (p. 8). Zeal is often used to describe extreme forms of this behavior (Coleman, 1990).

Lastly, researchers have noted group rituals as a source of social capital (Portes, 1998). Founded in Durkheim’s ([1893] 1984) theory of social integration, the case is made that instead of focusing on the tit-for-tat nature of community norms, the focus is on the placement of citizens in a common social setting (Portes, 1998). Research has shown that this creates two consequences. The first is the potential for the donor’s payment to not come directly from the recipient but instead from the collective community (Portes, 1998). Second is the possibility for the collective community to act as a witness that whatever debts are incurred will be repaid (Portes, 1998).

These two acts serve to enforce trust and in social capital, facilitate access to resources for recipients, while generating approval for and accelerating transactions for donors because of the assurance against malfeasance (Portes, 1998). Trust exists in these situations not as a manifestation of the interaction but because the obligations are enforceable through the power of the community (Portes, 1998).

Because of the inherent nature of the development and sources of social capital, there is potential for negative consequences. These negative consequences can occur in all three forms of social capital. Community norms can result in “excessive claims on certain members, restrictions on individual freedoms because of expectations of conformity to group norms; and downward leveling norms of non-mainstream groups that ostracize individual success and keep members of downtrodden groups from seeking to join mainstream society” (Kahn, Chi & Middaugh, 2006). Social trust within a

community is vital to the development of social capital, but an excess can overshadow needed skepticism from citizens and other accountability structures concerning democratic societies. Researchers have found that access to information and networks through membership in one community may inherently bar access to another (Kahne et al., 2006). To understand that “social capital is an aggregate concept that has its basis in individual behavior, attitudes, and predispositions” (Brehm & Rahn, 1997, p. 1000) is to know that its successes and outcomes largely depend on the individuals within that system. The development of social capital through motivation thus empowers individuals to participate in organizations (Weaver, 1996).

Empowerment

Empowerment is a construct that establishes a relationship between individual strengths and competencies, natural systems, and proactive behaviors in social policy and social change (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). The necessity for empowerment can be generalized by the following statement: “Beliefs in limits create limited people” (Weaver, 1996). The constructs of self and political efficacy, competence, control, and a desire for control fall under the umbrella construct of empowerment (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Research has suggested that becoming involved in decisions that affect community life is a way to enhance empowerment (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Furthermore, research has shown that participation in political activities with other individuals is a “creative and enlightening experience” (Leighly, 1991) that is not based solely on the policy results, but on participation, which leads to self–realization enhancing political efficacy. As political and self–efficacy increase, participation in policy processes has also been shown to increase, providing sustainability (Leighly, 1991).

The policy process has also been shown to produce psychological empowerment (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Activities aimed at “influencing political decision making (policy development processes), involvement with others, increased responsibility, and organizational problem solving” enhance the development of an individual’s sense of empowerment (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Actual participation must occur for the generation of psychological empowerment, which encourages further participation, (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988) suggesting that the difference between active FFBF members that participate in the policy process and those that do not is a lack of empowerment that acts as a catalyst to participate.

Research has suggested that participation develops empowerment based on the “experience citizens gain by organizing people, identifying resources, and developing strategies for achieving goals” (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988, p. 727) This increases perceived control, which is a construct of empowerment. Demographic factors, such as gender, industry affiliation, marital status, economic status, and stance on industry-specific issues, have also been shown to have a role in the level of participation, indicating those from more urbanized and educated regions as having a greater sense of self-efficacy and willingness to participate in political activities (Leighly, 1991). An experience in which one has the sense of empowerment has also shown to include self-confidence, social and political understanding, and the “ability to play an assertive role in controlling resources and decisions in one’s community” (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988).

Due to the shift from government to governance in order to deal with the problems of society, non-governmental groups have found new ways to engage

citizens in political activity which seek to “deepen the abilities of ordinary citizens to effectively participate in the shaping of programs and policies relevant to their own lives” (Fischer, 2006, p. 23). Three principles enable this condition for involvement, which include (a) the need to address a particular practical problem, (b) the empowerment of ordinary citizens and (c) the deliberate effort to solve the problem under consideration (Fung & Wright, 2001, 2003). These activities give citizens a “political identity” (March & Olsen, 1995, p. 6) by creating space in which “citizens and officials act and politics occur, and which shape the identities and institution of civil society” (March & Olsen, 1995, p. 6). Research follows that participation in community organizations helps citizens feel more competent about social and political issues and decreases feelings of alienation (Levens, 1968; Zurcher, 1970).

Related Studies

The discussion will now turn to the characteristics of the specific problem in question: the decline of civic engagement in the United States. In relation to this problem, this section presents a discussion of the various types of political involvement with specific focus on policy–motivated participation with the interactions of expectancy, motivation, and empowerment.

The Decline of Civic Engagement

Participation in civic engagement refers to citizens’ connectedness not only with politics but with their community (Putnam, 1995). Despite the inventive opportunities for citizen engagement that organizations have created, the number of people involved in civic and political activities has declined over the past three decades (Theiss–Morse & Hibbing, 2005; Putnam, 1995). Participation in political and civic engagement develops trust in the government, encourages further participation, increases knowledge about

society and societal issues, and makes citizens more tolerant of and connected to fellow citizens (Theiss–Morse & Hibbing, 2005).

Studies show that in 1970 approximately one half of 18–29 year olds voted in presidential elections. That number decreased to one–third by 2000 and to one–fifth by 2005, respectively (Galston, 2004). A decrease in collective participation, such as attending a speech or rally, has also fallen sharply (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993; Putnam, 1996). A study by UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute measured indicators of political engagement from 1960 to 2004 involving a quarter of a million matriculating college freshmen each year (Garlson, 2004). The study showed that since 1960, all indicators of political engagement have fallen by approximately one–half, and only 34% of freshman feel that staying up to date with politics is important, which is down from 60% in 1966 (UCLA, 2004). The study also found that only 24% of freshman feel the discussion of politics is important (UCLA, 2004), which Leighly (1991) suggests is vital to the stimulus of political conceptualization by creating efficacy and buy–in of the political process.

Education has proven to have the strongest correlation with civic engagement in all forms (Putnam, 1998). Putnam (1998) found that the four years of education received between 14 and 18 years have ten times more impact on trust in the government and membership in civic and political organizations than the first four years of collegiate education. However, even though the percentage of individuals receiving more than 12 years of education increased from 28% in 1973 to 50% of Americans in 1998, civic engagement has continued to decline (Putman, 1998). Based on this information, Putnam concluded that the rise in education levels from 1973 to 1998

should have increased social capital and civic engagement by 15–20%, even with the assumption that education levels remained linear (1998).

Putnam (1998) suggested that the major reason for this phenomenon is that the correlation between education and participation may be spurious, citing that the reasons one generation participates in civic and political activities are not strong enough to encourage the next generation to take part. Another possible reason citizens are less involved is that the portion of those feeling “always rushed” has increased by 50% from the mid 1960s to the mid 1990s (Robinson & Godbey, 1995). This has resulted in the tendency to drop out of community organizations in an effort to feel like one has more disposable time (Putnam, 1995). Residential mobility and suburbanization are other suggestions as to a lack of involvement citing groupthink and norms in cities as a possible factor (Putnam, 1995). The changing roles of women is also suggested to have decreased social capital, as women were originally the greatest holders of the concept through membership and participation in various groups and organizations such as PTA, church, and charity (Putnam, 1998). Additional possibilities include the disruption of marriage and family ties, changes in the structure of the American economy, the Sixties (specifically the revolt against authority), the growth of the welfare state and the technological revolution which has allowed citizens to feel connected in less personal or active manners (Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 1998).

Models of Participation

Human activity as it relates to political participation falls into three democratic theories (Teorell, 2006). The first is the attempt by citizens to influence the government, “either by affecting the choice of government personnel or by affecting the choices made by government personnel” (Teorell, 2006, p. 789). Fischer (2006) refers to this

type of participation as instrumental. Both modes of instrumental participation seek to accomplish goals that cannot be solved through private efforts (Fischer, 2006; Teorell, 2006). Under this theory of democracy, “participation is seen as an instrumental act through which citizens attempt to make the political system respond to their will” (Teorell, 2006, p. 789). Citizens often seek to accomplish this by influencing elections and the passing of laws to solve the problems of their society that couldn’t be solved through the use of private organizations. This form of political participation serves as a “means by which governing officials are informed of the preferences and needs of the public and are induced to respond to those preferences and needs” (Verba, 1996, p. 1). Researchers believe this type of participation to still be indirect action “vis-à-vis” or with regard to the policy outcomes (Teorell, 2006). Therefore, citizens, in fact, do not direct the outcomes but may have influences on the preference and perceived needs of society based on the government’s desire for a specific outcome (Teorell, 2006).

Direct participation in decision-making is another theory of democracy (Teorell, 2006). This usually manifests in the form of policy making. The aim of this type of participation is to “connect individuals’ participation to policy outcomes” (Platt, 2008). This type of political activity is a vital part of the democratic policy process (Verba, Scholzman & Brady, 1995). Research has shown that individuals participate in a strategic manner. The decision to participate is based upon the degree of effectiveness and efficiency of the action; “when the ratio of benefits to costs is higher” (Platt, 2008, p. 393). Each opportunity to affect policy is set in the constraints of the cost/benefit ratio. These constraints create open and closed opportunities for involvement (Platt, 2008). An open opportunity is one characterized by the least amount of constraints on the

activity, a higher benefit to cost ratio (Platt, 2008). Conversely, a closed opportunity has greater constraints on the individual's participation decisions (Platt, 2008).

The need for this specific type of involvement stems from failure of the government to adequately meet the demands of society. Grassroots and non-governmental organizations have sprung up to serve as mediums and catalysts for this type of political involvement (Miller, 1994). Typically representing marginalized communities, these organizations help "give voice to those who have been historically marginalized and provide them with a crucial vehicle for exercising rights and holding government accountable" (Miller, 1994, p. 4). Through the representation of marginalized individuals, participation becomes developmental (Fischer, 2006). This refers to the effects this style of participation has the expansion of an individual's education, thoughts, feelings and commitment, or social action pertaining toward a particular issue. A result of this development is the increase of tolerance and knowledge on diversity issues, as well as the gain of political skills to that help him or her "efficaciously contribute to social change" (Fischer, 2006, p. 22).

The third theory of democracy is the concept of participation as a political discussion (Teorell, 2006). The concept of "discussion" embodies the action of political activity, which researchers suggest is collective (Teorell, 2006). Early research concerning this theory has referred to it as "deliberative participation," which Teorell claims is misleading. Some researchers feel that deliberation is the process of decision-making through argument, while others define it as the formation of opinion (Elster, 1998; Chambers, 1996). The use of "discussion" avoids the blurry line in the aspect of the term "discussion," as it forces conversation to occur with other parties as

one cannot adequately converse with his or herself (Teorell, 2006). The use of discussion is an attempt to “influence those who have a say in government” (Teorell, 2006, p. 791). Research has found that citizens view participation as “the necessary opportunity to be a part of something bigger than oneself” (King, Feltey, & Susel, 1998). Results from the same study indicated that the desire for participation was reciprocated from an administrative perspective, stressing the centrality of citizen input in the policy process (King et al., 1998).

Problems with Current Participation

Just as King, et al. (1998) found that individuals at all levels in the policy participation process view participation as “necessary and desirable” (p. 319), each person viewed the way in which participation is framed as making the participation unsuccessful. Public participation has been framed in a manner that puts the issues at

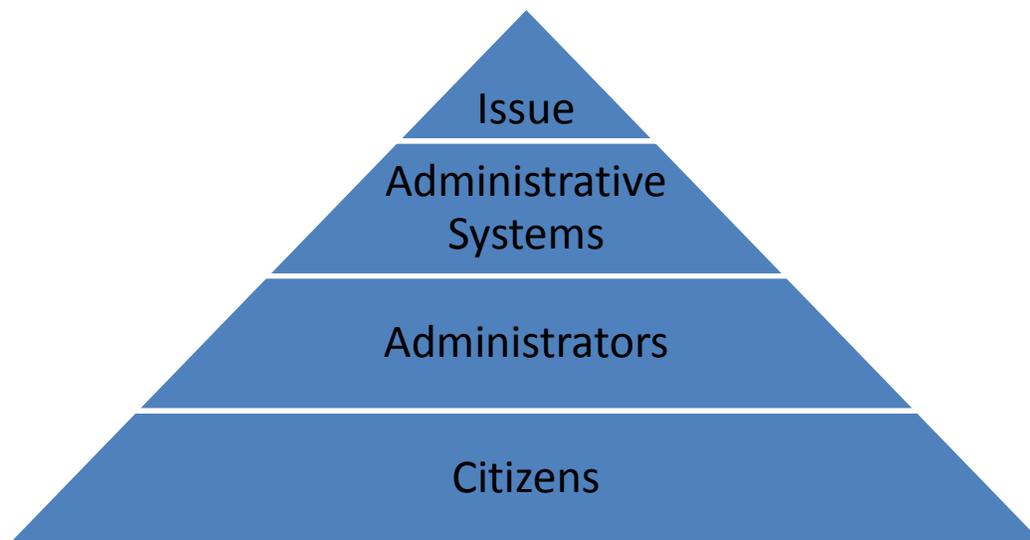


Figure 2–2. Adapted from context model of conventional participation (King et al., 1998). the farthest level from the citizen, which King et al. suggest is a reason many chose not to participate. Currently, public participation consists of four components: “(1) the issue or situation; (2) the administrative structures, systems and processes within participation

takes place; (3) the administrators; and (4) the citizens” (King et al., 1998, p. 319). The frame is illustrated in Figure 2–2.

This context maintains the centrality of the administrator who is presented publically as a representative or participatory figure (White and Swain, 1993). The citizen then becomes the “client” and is not in a position to question the administrator (King et al., 1998). This “falsely dualistic relationship” (King et al., 1998, p. 320) separates the administrator from the “demands, needs and values” (deLeon, 1992, p. 126) of those in need of service. From this framework, King et al. (1998) argue that citizen participation is more symbolic than real.

To overcome this ideological framework of participation, King et al. (1998) argue “authentic participation is deep and continuous involvement in administrative processes with the potential for all involved to have an effect on the situation” (p. 320). This type of participation has been characterized by “on–going active involvement, not a one–shot

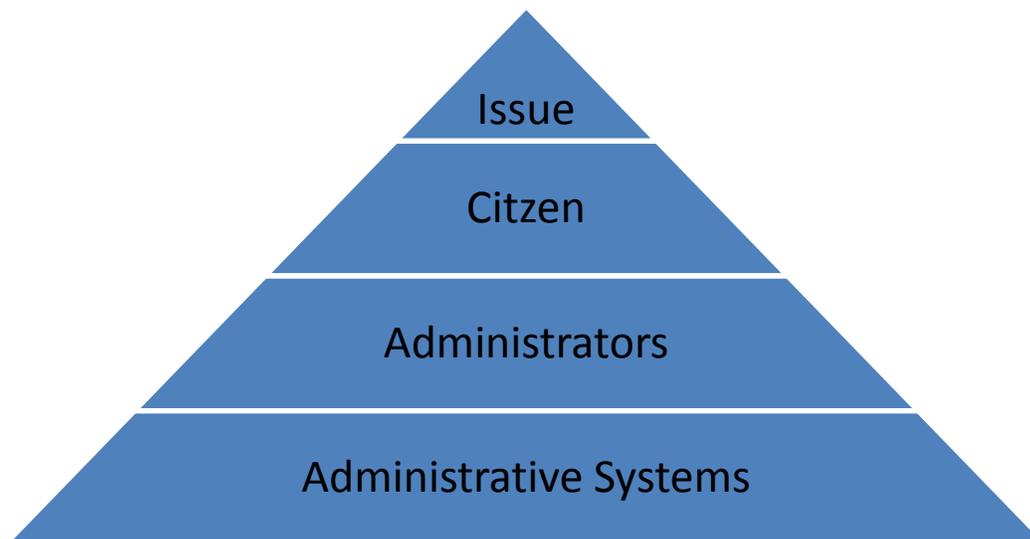


Figure 2–3. Adapted from context model of authentic participation (King et al., 1998). deal, not just pulling the lever...it needs to go out and reach out to every part of your community, however defined” (King et al., 1998, p. 320). The frame of authentic

participation is organized as follows: (1) issue, (2) the citizens, (3) administrators, and (4) administrative systems and processes. This frame is illustrated in Figure 2–3.

While the revised framework places the citizen closest to the issues it is still bridged by the administrator. This allows for citizens to be directly related to the issue, while allowing for the influence of the administrator’s expertise and position (King et al., 1998). This framework of authentic participation “involves citizens in the making of decisions instead of just judging” (King et al., 1998, p. 321). The goal of this framework is to provide discourse where all participants have an equal footing and where one group is not privileged over the other (Habermas, 1975).

Conceptual Model

As indicated by the literature, motivation, empowerment, and demographics play a role in the development of political participation. The conceptual model (Figure 2–4) shows the flow of ideas throughout the study. The present study examined the factors that motivate Florida Farm Bureau members to participate in the policy process.

Specifically, this study looked at the roles of motivation, empowerment, and demographics as they indicate expectancy to participate. Figure 2–4 consists of the following elements:

1. *Participation in the policy process* – Personal participation in the development or implementation of political policy, specifically agricultural policy, at a grassroots level.
2. *Motivation* – The willingness of an individual to perform a certain task, which can only occur after certain needs are met within the individual (Shah & Shah, n.d.; Maslow, 1964 [1894]).
3. *Need are met* – Maslow’s (1964[1894]) theory that humans obtain a hierarchy of basic needs consisting of physiological satisfaction, the need to be and feel safe, the need for love and belongingness, the need to establish positive self–esteem, and lastly the need for self–actualization, which creates motivation. Only after the need for self–actualization is met, can motivation be formed. (Barling, 1977).

4. *Affiliation* – The concept that affiliation within an organization creates a sense of belonging and togetherness that has proven to be one of the strongest indicators for motivation within that organization (Culp & Schwartz, 1999).
5. *Power* – A revolving motivational factor that occurs as organizational members gain access to networks and resources, as well as reciprocity obligations and favors (Kahne, Chi, & Middaugh, 2006).
6. *Issue proximity* – A subject's view on specific agricultural issues that may influence his or her interest and therefore, willingness to participate in specific policy issues.
7. *Empowerment* – Empowerment is a construct that establishes a relationship between individual strengths and competencies, natural systems, and proactive behaviors in social policy and social change (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988).
8. *Attitude* – The feelings and perceptions held by the subject toward agriculture, FFBF, the policy and political process, or the specific agricultural issue that may influence his or her participation in a negative manner. Leighly (1991) suggests that these factors are strong indicators of political interest.
9. *Aptitude with technological communications* – The skills and abilities of Florida Farm Bureau members to receive and gain information through electronic sources.
10. *Employment Status* – The extent to which a FFBF member will become involved in the volunteer process. Participation can range from policy input to formal meetings with congressional members on specific issues.
11. *Demographics* – The unique factors pertaining to an individual that may have an influence on participation. Verba and Nie (1972) suggest that demographic factors are strong indicators of civic attitudes that encourage or discourage participation in the political process.
12. *Age* – A factor that indicates generation, which Putnam (1995) suggests may be a variable affecting one's participation in the policy process.
13. *Gender* – A variable that has shown to be an influence in civic engagement as gender roles change over time (Putnam, 1995).
14. *Membership status* – The status of a FFBF member that serves as an indicator of the type of affiliation the member has with the organization.
15. *Industry affiliation* – A variable that may indicate opinions or beliefs on certain agricultural issues, therefore influencing participation in specific policy processes.

Chapter Summary

The theories of motivation, social capital and empowerment offer insight into the potential reasons that may influence an individual to participate or not participate in the policy process. These theories have offered a foundation on which this study was built and provide a lens to better understand member participation in political and policy processes. Research findings from the literature also indicated the important roles social capital plays in the political participation process, including its potential benefits and gaps of knowledge. The grounded decline of civic engagement, accompanied with the models of participation, and the current problems with participation further strengthen the foundation on which this study was researched and based, creating a holistic view. In summary, a visual representation of how the theory of expectancy, motivation, and empowerment interact with the factors motivating members to participate in the study is shown in Figure 2–4.

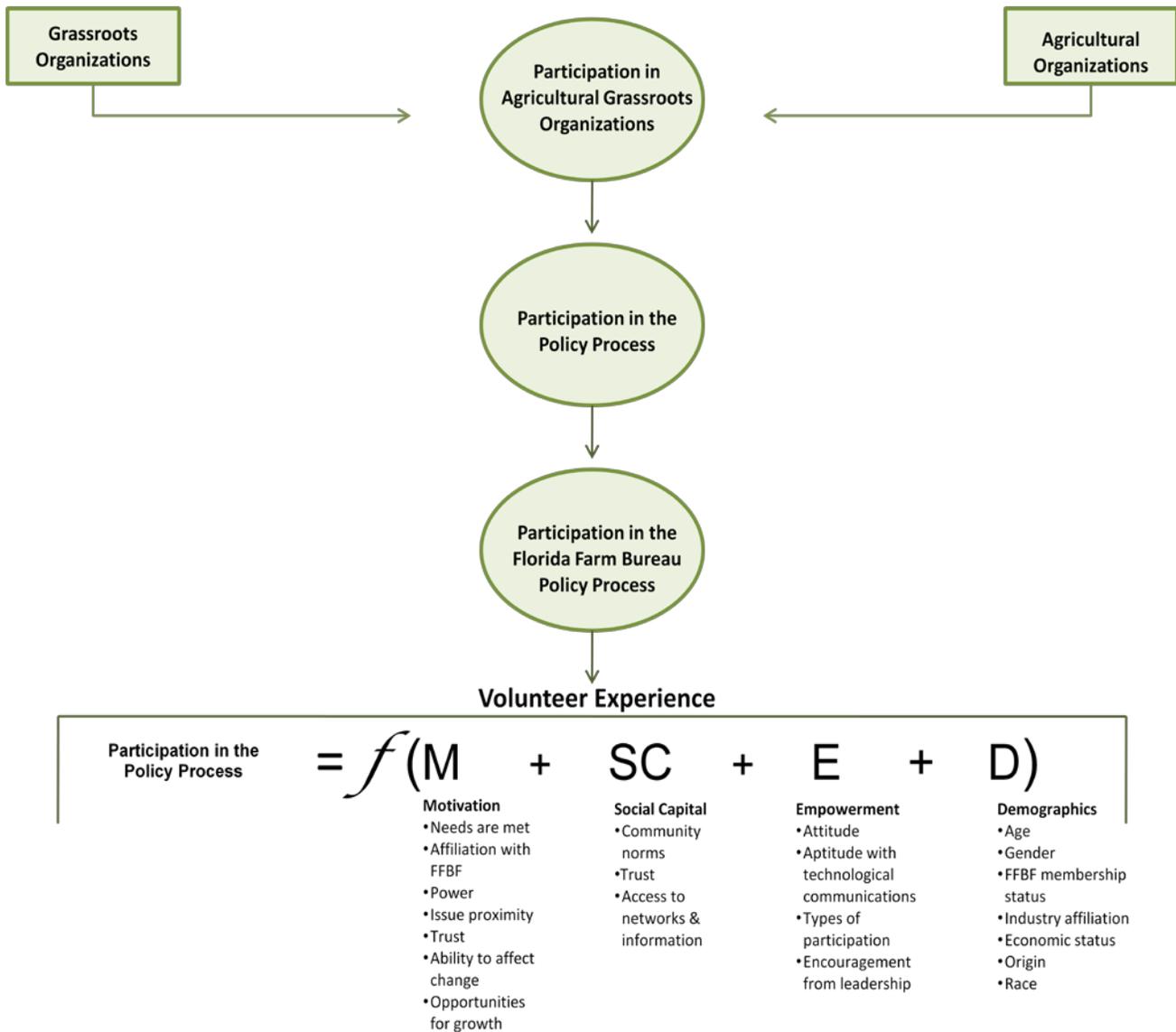


Figure 2–4. Conceptual model of the policy participation experience (Adapted from Mathews, 2009).

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This study was designed to ascertain the specific variables, which motivate active members in the FFBF (FFBF, 2009) to participate in the policy development and implementation process. The researcher sought to determine if a relationship existed between certain factors and whether or not an active member of the FFBF participated in policy development and/or implementation activities. The following objectives were investigated in order to achieve the purpose of this study:

1. Determine the perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members as they relate to Farm Bureau's organizational policy development efforts.
2. Determine the perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members as they relate to their personal ability to make an impact on Farm Bureau's policy development efforts.
3. Determine differences, which exist among Florida Farm Bureau members related to Florida Farm Bureau's policy development efforts.
4. Determine differences, which exist among Florida Farm Bureau members related to personal impact on Florida Farm Bureau policy development efforts.
5. Determine the perceptions and concerns of Florida Farm Bureau active members on immigration and energy crop issues.
6. Determine the differences which exist among Florida Farm Bureau Members related to needs for foreign labor, energy crop issues, electronic correspondence and participation in the policy process.
7. Determine the relationship between aptitude with electronic correspondence, dependence on foreign workers, and energy crop issues with participation in the policy process.

The focus of this chapter is to explain the descriptive survey design used to accomplish this research. Additionally, the researcher identifies and describes the population. Instrumentation and factors affecting reliability and validity are also addressed in detail. The aforementioned sections are brought together in an

explanation of the procedures used in this study. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion concerning the various data analysis techniques used to analyze the findings.

Research Design

This study used a quantitative research perspective for its methods. This research type was chosen for mass production ease and absence of bias. The use of descriptive survey methodology was employed following empirical survey design. According to Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorenson (2006), descriptive survey research is defined as the utilization of questionnaires or other instruments to gather data which can be used to make a summary about characteristics or measure intangibles and tangibles of a subject group. The concept of “intangibles” refers to the perceptions, opinions, and interests of the sample population, which may be difficult to define (Ary et al., 2006). The survey also employed a census of tangibles, which Ary et al. described as “well-defined and unambiguous variables” such as demographic information (2006, p. 402). The use of a questionnaire method is applicable because the questions asked of the population are focused around views toward the policy development and implementation process, as well as willingness to participate in FFBF activities, and opinions on specific agricultural issues. The researcher used a mailed questionnaire to collect data in an effort to understand the factors motivating participation in the policy process among active FFBF members.

Population and Sample

The population for this study included the active members of the FFBF, defined by FFBF as:

Persons engaged in the production of agricultural products for sale, including lessees and tenants of the land used for the production of such products, and/or leasers and landlords who receive as rent, either in kind or in cash, all or part of the crop raised on the leased or rented premises. (FFBF, 2009)

The majority of active members of the FFBF are general production farmers. Insurance and membership benefits draw a small number of non-farmer landowners, which the researcher considered for this study by indicating the “type” a member is, as classified by FFBF. For the most part, active members are generally male and range in age. There is a gap in the information as to whether the members are self-sustaining from the farming operation or bi-vocational.

The researcher obtained a list of active members (N = 21,000) from the FFBF membership database. This active and non-active member database served as the population frame for the study, including the 140,000 members registered with the FFBF in 2009. Active members of the FFBF represent the multi-sectional nature of Florida’s agricultural industry, providing a broader perspective from which the data was collected. The FFBF active and non-active membership database was chosen as the population frame for this study because of FFBF’s role as the largest agricultural organization in the state of Florida at the time of the study (FFBF, 2009). A census sampling technique was attempted but proved to be a convenience sample upon data collection.

Because not all subjects chosen responded to the questionnaire, non-response had to be considered. Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorenson (2006) noted non-response can “bias survey data, especially when it is nonrandom and if it is in some way correlated with the variables measured in the study” (p. 438). The problem with non-response is that sometimes non-responders are drastically different from responders (Ary et al., 2006). The issue of non-response was of particular importance in this study

because the sample group was not randomly selected, but a rather a census of the entire sample population was conducted. To combat non-response, a comparison of early respondents and late respondents was made. According to Miller (1983), early and late respondents are similar. The two groups were statistically compared to determine any differences. A t-test on the results was run to identify any possible differences between the two groups. With no found differences, the two groups were considered similar and the findings were generalizable to the entire sample (Miller).

Instrumentation

The researcher found no existing instrument measuring variables that motivate individuals to participate in the agricultural policy process. Therefore, the researcher utilized a secondary-source questionnaire developed by the Agriculture Policy Division at the FFBF (Appendix B-C). The University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and the FFBF collaborated on this study and gave permission to utilize the survey results. The FFBF funded the study in an effort to gain specific tangible and intangible information. Special consideration was given to the design, terminology, packaging and format of the questionnaire, which Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorenson (2006) suggested play a significant role in the willingness of a participant to complete an instrument.

The questionnaire began by explaining informed consent of the participants and instructions on how to properly mark the instrument. The first section of the instrument required participants to assess his or her current knowledge of the policy process in the FFBF. These were four questions in a Likert-type scale format. Figure 3-1 illustrates a sample question for the first section of the instrument:

How dependent is your operation on the employment of foreign-born workers?

Not Dependent	Not Very Dependent	Somewhat Dependent	Very Dependent
1	2	3	4

Figure 3-1. Sample Question from study instrument

The next section of the questionnaire required participants to express their opinion on certain agricultural topics, such as immigration and the use of energy crops. These five questions were presented in multiple-choice and short-answer format. The specific topics participants were asked to give an opinion on were influenced by the FFBF’s desire for direct member opinions on current agricultural issues in an effort to set the policy agenda for the upcoming year and look for possible relationships between issue affiliations and policy process participation. Thirdly, through a series of four questions participants were asked to verify their current involvement with the FFBF policy implementation process and indicate their future willingness to participate. Within the same section, participants were asked to indicate whether they had ever used electronic correspondence for policy implementation. Questions pertaining to electronic correspondence were included at the request of the FFBF in an effort to evaluate the usability of the Federation’s e-mail alert system. These questions included multiple-choice, short answer, and Likert-type questions.

Lastly, to obtain certain demographic information, participants were required to indicate the sections of the Florida agricultural industry in which they were engaged. The list of “agricultural-production” industry sectors was recognized and defined by the FFBF and FDACS at the time of the study (FFBF, 2009). The list included 30 industry sectors, giving the participant the ability to mark all that applied.

Considerations for validity and reliability were taken into account by the researcher to ensure the instrument measured the construct appropriately. Validity refers not only to the whether an instrument measures what was intended for measure but also to the “interpretation and meaning of the scores derived from the instrument” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 243). Campbell and Stanley (1963), as cited by Ary, et al., (2006) identified four types of validity, which exist within research design. These types of validity are internal validity, statistical conclusion validity, construct validity, and external validity. Each of these types of validity must be accounted for in order for the instrument to be considered valid.

Internal validity refers to whether the changes observed in the dependent variable were in fact caused by the independent variables rather than extraneous factors (Ary et al., 2006). Eight variables have been identified as potential challenges to internal validity, which threaten the strength of the research design. History, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistical regression, selection, experimental mortality, and interactions among all these factors have been identified as potential threats and if left uncontrolled, may have an effect on a study’s findings. Because the study’s instrument was developed by a panel of experts within FFBF the major threat to internal validity was instrumentation. Instrumentation was controlled by administering a standardized questionnaire which was finalized and remained unchanged throughout the course of the study after being reviewed by a panel of experts and industry professionals. Performing a census of active FFBF members prevented the researcher from having to consider history, maturation, testing, and mortality because the instrument was administered at a single time, rather than over a long period of time.

Statistical conclusion validity refers to the “validity of the inferences about the covariation between treatment and outcome” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 291). Threats to this type of validity are due to the inappropriate application of statistics when analyzing data. Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2002) included the following list as potential threats to statistical validity: low statistical power, violation of assumptions of statistical tests, unreliability of measures, range restrictions, extraneous variance, and inaccurate effect size estimates. The researcher controlled for these threats by consulting empirical and widely-referenced literature with similar studies to mimic the data analysis used, *Statistical Methods for Social Sciences* (Agresti, 2009), as well as a general knowledge of statistical tests and their appropriate uses.

In order to measure psychological constructs such as intelligence, motivation, self-concept, learning, personality, anxiety and so on, indicators, which measure those constructs, must be used (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorenson, 2006). Therefore, the construct must be valid. Specifically, construct validity encompasses the study’s subjects, settings, and treatment (Ary et al.) For a study to be constructually valid, the inferences made in the study must coincide with the “instances represent” (p. 313). Construct error was avoided by choosing a population directly involved with agricultural policy processes and with the study supported by the largest, most comprehensive general agricultural organization in the state of Florida (Florida Farm Bureau, 2009). The mode/setting of the methodology was chosen based on the participant’s familiarity with the medium. Lastly, the treatment was considered valid based on approval by a panel of experts and industry professionals.

External validity is the ability to generalize to greater publics and add to the greater body of knowledge. Selection-treatment interaction, setting-treatment interaction, pretest-treatment interaction, subject effects, experimenter effects and novelty effects are all threats to external validity (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorenson, 2006). The researcher accounted for threats to external validity by thoroughly explaining the setting and population to which the study was applied. Statistical testing was performed on the data to account for subject and novelty effects. Experimenter effect was not an issue in this study as there was no interaction between subject and researcher other than through mail. Lastly, suggestions for the application of the findings were only made to organizations with similar structures.

Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009) identified four errors which, if left uncontrolled, could affect the integrity of the study. The first of the errors is coverage error, which results when not all members of the population have a nonzero chance of being included in the survey. Also, coverage error occurs when participants not included in the study are the same as those include (Dillman et al., 2009). The researcher combated coverage error by accessing the most up-dated and comprehensive membership list the FFBF utilizes. The database was assumed to contain correct and accurate information, not include names of individuals not in the population, and not include multiple listings for the same person (Dillman et al., 2009).

Sampling error is described by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009) as the “extent to which the precision of the survey estimates is limited because not every person in the population is sampled” (p. 17). The researcher avoided this error by drawing a convenience sample of the entire active member population, though

according to Dillman et al., sampling error occurs to some extent in all sample surveys. In addition, non-response error, as briefly discussed earlier in chapter three, results when individuals who fail to respond to a survey are different in some variable than those who participated. To combat non-response error, the research performed a comparison of early and late respondents. According to Dillman et al.(2009), minimizing non-response error requires motivating the majority of people surveyed, with the goal of receiving questionnaires from participants of “different sociodemographic groups or with other characteristics that may be important to the study” (2009, p. 18). Using SPSS, no significant differences were found to exist between early and late respondents based on all demographics factors.

Lastly, Dillman et al. (2009) described measurement error as a result of inaccurate responses due to poor wording of the questions, survey mode effects, or respondent’s behavior. Measurement error occurs because of the inability for the research to explain the meaning and design of the questionnaire to participants. In this study, the survey developers tested for measurement error by having professionals at the FFBF review the piece.

Data Collection

Once industry experts considered the instrument valid and reliable, names and addresses of the sample population through the Florida Farm Bureau membership database were gathered. After considering the known demographics of the sample populations and the desired delivery method of the FFBF, mail survey methodology was utilized. Furthermore, according to Dillman et al. (2009), there is still a general consensus that responding via mail is more desirable than responding via the Internet. Availability to address lists, delivery of incentives and multiple follow-ups, cost

effectiveness, and ease of use where no sample frame exists justifies and makes relevant the use of mail and paper surveys (Dillman et al., 2009).

Initial contact was made on May 12 – 15, 2008 to 21,000 active FFBF members when members were mailed the questionnaire. Personalized cover letters (Appendix A) were included, which Dillman et al. suggests helps to reduce non-response error (2009). Also, subjects were provided with a pre-stamped envelope to return the instrument rather than the use of business correspondence, which literature has shown to create a perception of value with the respondent (Dillman et al.). Subjects were given until July 31, 2008 to return the instrument. Questionnaires were filed at FFBF according to their date of return to distinguish early respondents from late respondents. To address non-response after data collection, a comparison of early respondents to late respondents was made as mentioned earlier in the chapter. At the conclusion of the data collection, 1757 (8.4%) of the active members responded, reaching saturation of the population sample at the 95% confidence interval (Dillman et al., 2009).

Data Analysis

To best analyze the data, the researcher utilized Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0 for Windows. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data received. Because a convenience samples defined the respondents, inferential statistics were used to make assumptions about the entire population sample.

Standard deviations (σ), means (μ), and frequencies (f) were used to measure potential interactions between the variables of interest in the study. Running standard deviations (σ), means (μ), and frequencies (f) sought to satisfy the first objective of this study, to determine the factors, which motivate active members of the FFBF to

participate in the policy development and implementation process. Additionally, to determine the perceptions of FFBF members as they relate to their personal ability to make an impact on FFBF's policy development efforts the second objective of the study, standard deviations (σ), means (μ), and frequencies (f) were used.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the differences which exist among Farm Bureau members related to Farm Bureau's policy development efforts (objective three) as well as to determine differences which exist among FFBF members related to personal impact on FFBF policy development efforts (objective four). This test was run to measure the variability among the population based on different variables (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorenson, 2006). Further, standard deviations (σ), means (μ), and frequencies (f) were used to determine the perceptions and concerns of FFBF active members on immigration and energy crop issues. The researcher relied again on a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine the relationship between aptitude with electronic correspondence with Congressional members and participation in the policy process. Lastly, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine the differences, which exist among Farm Bureau Members related to immigration, energy crop issues, electronic correspondence and electronic participation in the policy process.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described the methods used to satisfy the research objectives of this study as described in chapter one. This chapter also discussed the population, described the instrument used to survey the population, detailed the procedure by which the data were collected, and reported the statistical tests used to analyze the collected

data. The study's design was quantitative, using a descriptive survey methodology. The dependent variable in this study was participation in the policy process by active members of the FFBF. The observed independent variables were the effect of empowerment on the policy process, the specific factors affecting motivation for participation in the policy process, the perceptions and concerns of active members on immigration and energy crop issues, and the relationship between aptitude with electronic correspondence and participation in the policy process. Lastly, this chapter discussed the issues surrounding the validity and reliability of this study.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

Chapter one described the declining nature of civic engagement and the importance of active citizenry in proposing and setting policy for grassroots and nongovernmental organizations. Additionally, the initial chapter provided the background necessary for understanding the specific factors that motivate members of grassroots organizations to participate in the policy process. Chapter 1 identified the following objectives to aid in the guiding of this study: 1) determine the perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members as they relate to the FFBF's organizational policy development efforts, 2) determine the perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members as they relate to their personal ability to make an impact on the FFBF's policy development efforts, 3) determine differences which exist among Florida Farm Bureau members related to the FFBF's policy development efforts, 4) determine differences which exist among Florida Farm Bureau members related to their personal impact on the FFBF's policy development efforts, 5) determine the perceptions and concerns of Florida Farm Bureau active members on the reliance of foreign workers and energy crop issues, 6) determine the differences which exist among Florida Farm Bureau Members related to needs for foreign labor, energy crop issues, electronic correspondence and participation in the policy process, and 7) determine the relationship between aptitude with electronic correspondence, dependence on foreign workers, and energy crop issues with participation in the policy process. More so, Chapter 1 described the importance and purpose of this study. Finally, the chapter concluded by defining key terms, assumptions and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2 presented an overview of the literature, addressing the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study. Specifically, Chapter 2 discussed the roles of empowerment, motivation and social capital in motivating members to participate in the policy process. Chapter 2 did not reveal any previous studies which evaluated the factors motivating members of the FFBF to participate in the policy development and implementation process, thus furthering the need for this study.

Chapter 3 described the methodology utilized in order to answer the research questions and objectives on which this study was founded. Furthermore, the chapter addressed the sample population, research design, instrument, data collection and data analysis procedures. The purpose of this quantitative study was to evaluate the factors motivating active Florida Farm Bureau members to participate in the policy process.

This chapter presents the findings of the study beginning with a description of the population as well as the findings for each of the objectives. The population of this study consisted of 21,000 active FFBF members. At the conclusion of the data collection procedures outlined in chapter three, 1757 (8.36%) FFBF members responded, reaching saturation of the population sample according to Dillman et al. (2009). According to Dillman (2009), saturation occurs when an adequate number of the population frame has been reached to provide an accurate representation of the whole.

Demographics

Active members of the FFBF were analyzed based on the following demographics: member type, county, Florida Farm Bureau district, level of contribution, participant employment, prevalence of e-mail, and industry affiliation.

Member type

Of the respondents, 45.8% ($n=804$) were full-time farmers, 51% ($n=896$) were part-time farmers, 2.8% ($n=50$) were farm employees, and 0.3% ($n=5$) were farm associates. No respondents reported being Mail-List Only or Honorary members and 0.1% ($n=2$) did not respond. Table 4-1 illustrates this information further.

Table 4 -1. Frequencies and percentages of member type

	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	Total Answered
			1755
Full Time Farmer	804	45.8%	99.9%
Part Time Farmer	896	51.0%	
Farm Employee	50	2.8%	
Farm Associate	5	0.3%	
Mail List Only	0	0.0%	
Honorary	0	0.0%	

County

Based on the findings, no specific county was significantly more represented than another. Due to the amount of information provided, the four most represented counties and the four least represented counties are included. The most represented counties boasted percentages such as 5.7% ($n=100$) from Alachua County, 4.7% ($n=82$) from Volusia County, 4.2% ($n=73$) from Hillsborough County, as well as 4.2% ($n=73$) from Marion County. The four least represented counties were as follows: 0.1% ($n=1$) from Gulf County, 0.1% ($n=2$) from Liberty County, 0.3% ($n=6$) from Collier, and 0.3% ($n=5$) from Pinellas County. Furthermore, counties with zero representation included: Charlotte, Citrus, Dixie, Franklin, Glades, Monroe, and St. Johns. For a breakdown of each county, see Table 4-2.

Table 4-2. Frequencies and percentages of counties

	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	Total Answered
			1755
Alachua	100	5.7%	99.9%
Baker	19	1.1%	
Bay	15	0.9%	
Bradford	15	0.9%	
Brevard	25	1.4%	
Broward	28	1.6%	
Calhoun	9	0.5%	
Charlotte	0	0.0%	
Citrus	0	0.0%	
Clay	26	1.5%	
Collier	6	0.3%	
Columbia	43	2.5%	
Dade	52	3.0%	
Desoto	21	1.2%	
Dixie	0	0.0%	
Duval	25	1.4%	
Escambia	34	1.9%	
Flagler	4	0.2%	
Franklin	0	0.0%	
Gasden	18	1.0%	
Gilchrist	20	1.1%	
Glades	0	0.0%	
Gulf	1	0.1%	
Hamilton	20	1.1%	
Hardee	55	3.1%	
Hendry	26	1.5%	
Hernando	29	1.7%	
Highlands	42	2.4%	
Hillsborough	73	4.2%	
Holmes	26	1.5%	
Indian River	21	1.2%	
Jackson	30	1.7%	
Jefferson	27	1.5%	
Lafayette	24	1.4%	
Lake	37	2.1%	
Lee	20	1.1%	

Table 4-2. Continued

Leon	15	0.9%
Levy	25	1.4%
Table 4-2. Continued		
Liberty	2	0.1%
Madison	56	3.2%
Manatee	31	1.8%
Marion	73	4.2%
Martin	14	0.8%
Monroe	0	0.0%
Nassau	30	1.7%
Okaloosa	16	0.9%
Okeechobee	30	1.7%
Orange	32	1.8%
Osceola	17	1.0%
Palm Beach	19	1.1%
Pasco	34	1.9%
Pinellas	5	0.3%
Polk	64	3.6%
Putnam	40	2.3%
St. Johns	0	0.0%
St. Lucie	16	0.9%
Santa Rosa	33	1.9%
Sarasota	12	0.7%
Seminole	17	1.0%
Sumter	48	2.7%
Suwannee	66	3.8%
Taylor	13	0.7%
Union	10	0.6%
Volusia	82	4.7%
Wakulla	4	0.2%
Walton	33	1.9%
Washington	15	0.9%
Western Palm Beach	12	0.7%

Farm Bureau District

In regard to the respondent's location, 12.1% ($n=213$) resided in District 1 consisting of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Holmes, Jackson, Washington,

Bay, Calhoun, and Gulf counties; 13.8% ($n=242$) were from District 2 consisting of Liberty, Gasden, Franklin, Wakulla, Leon, Jefferson, Taylor, Madison, Hamilton, Suwannee, and Lafayette counties; 17.4% ($n=305$) lived in District 3 consisting of Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Clay, Duval, Putnam/St. Johns, Nassau, and Union counties; 12.9% ($n=226$) were from District 4 consisting of Alachua, Dixie, Gilchrist, Flagler, Marion, Levy, Seminole, and Volusia counties. Additionally, 16.6% ($n=291$) held property in District 5 consisting of Hernando, Citrus, Sumter, Lake, Pasco, Hillsborough, Polk, and Pinellas counties; 10.4% ($n=182$) were from District 6 in the counties of Manatee, Hardee, Highlands, Sarasota, Desoto, Charlotte, and Lee; 8.8% ($n=154$) were from District 7 consisting of Orange, Osceola, Brevard, Indian River, Okeechobee, St. Lucie and Martin counties. Lastly, 8.0% ($n=141$) resided in District 8 in the counties of Hendry, Glades, Palm Beach, Collier, Broward, Dade and Monroe. Table 4-3 offers an additional representation of this information.

Table 4-3. Frequencies and percentages of farm bureau districts

	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	Total Answered
			1755
District 1	213	12.1%	99.9%
District 2	242	13.8%	
District 3	305	17.4%	
District 4	226	12.9%	
District 5	291	16.6%	
District 6	182	10.4%	
District 7	154	8.8%	
District 8	141	8.0%	

Level of Contribution

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were given the option to donate to Florida Farm Bureau's Federal Political Action Campaign. As indicated by Table 4-4

84.5% ($n=1485$) of the respondents contributed zero, 8.5% ($n=150$) contributed \$25, 2.0% ($n=35$) gave \$50, 4.5% ($n=79$) contributed \$100, 0.2% ($n=3$) gave \$200, and 0.2% ($n=4$) gave over \$200 to the campaign.

Table 4-4. Frequencies and percentages of level of contribution

	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	Total Answered
\$0	1485	84.5%	1755
\$25	150	8.5%	99.9%
\$50	35	2.0%	
\$100	79	4.5%	
\$200	3	0.2%	
\$201 and up	4	0.2%	

Type of Employment

Additionally, 60.7% ($n=1066$) of respondents reported being self-employed in the agricultural industry. Respondents employed by another equaled 24.1% ($n=423$), and 15.2% ($n=268$) did not respond to the question. Table 4-5 describes the aforementioned information.

Table 4-5. Frequencies and percentages of participant employment

	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	Total Answered
			1489
Self-Employed	1066	60.7%	84.7%
Employed by another	423	24.1%	

Prevalence of E-mail

Based on the results, the researcher found that 36.3% ($n=638$) of respondents have an e-mail account, while the majority of respondents, 63.6% ($n=1117$) did not. Non-respondents equaled 0.1% ($n=2$). Table 4-6 illustrates this information.

Table 4-6. Frequencies and percentages of prevalence of e-mail

	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	Total Answered
			1755
Has E-mail Account	638	36.3%	99.9%
No E-mail Account	1117	63.6%	

Industry Affiliation

Respondents were asked to indicate the sector of the agricultural industry with which they were affiliated; 99.9% ($n=1755$) responded, while 0.1% ($n=2$) did not indicate an industry affiliation. The top three sectors with which most respondents indicated an affiliation with was beef cattle at 41.8% ($n=735$), hay at 23.7% ($n=416$) and forestry

Table 4-7. Frequencies and percentages of industry affiliation

	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	Total Answered
			1755
			99.9%
Apiary/Honey	55	3.2%	
Aquaculture	37	2.1%	
Beef Cattle	735	41.8%	
Blueberries	78	4.4%	
Citrus	265	15.1%	
Cotton	31	1.8%	
Dairy	44	2.5%	
Horticulture	89	5.1%	
Equine	221	12.6%	
Forestry	385	21.9%	
Grains	65	3.7%	
Hay	416	23.7%	
Nuts	58	3.3%	
Organics	37	2.1%	
Other Fruits	54	3.1%	
Other Livestock	108	6.1%	
Peanuts	61	3.5%	
Potatoes	33	1.9%	
Poultry	68	3.9%	
Rice	5	0.3%	
Seafood	16	0.9%	
Turf grass	67	3.8%	
Strawberries	30	1.7%	
Sugarcane	30	1.7%	
Swine	30	1.7%	
Table 4-7. Continued			
Tobacco	5	0.3%	
Tomatoes	65	3.7%	
Vegetables	144	8.2%	
Watermelon	72	4.1%	
Other	196	11.2%	

representing 21.9% ($n=385$) of the respondents. Meanwhile, the three sectors respondents were least involved with were tobacco at 0.3% ($n=5$), rice also at 0.3% ($n=5$) and seafood at 0.9% ($n=19$). Table 4-7 provides a full list of industry affiliation information.

Objective 1

Objective: Determine the perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members as they relate to the FFBF’s organizational policy development efforts.

Table 4-8. Farm bureau member’s awareness of the FFBF policy development process

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
Policy Awareness	2.29	0.96	1	4
Received E-mail Alert	1.76	.42	1	2

Note: 1 = Not at all aware
 2 = Not very aware
 3 = Somewhat aware
 4 = Very aware

1 = Yes
 2 = No

The variables selected for this objective included a respondent’s political awareness and whether or not they received a FBACT e-mail alert. This objective determines the effectiveness of e-mail as a communication medium and assesses respondents’ perceived impact on the FFBF policy development and implementation process. Respondents indicated being “not very aware” ($M=2.29$, $SD=0.96$) of how FFBF develops policy. The data also indicated that respondents generally did not receive e-mail alerts from Florida Farm Bureau ($M=1.76$, $SD=4.29$). These scores are presented in Table 4-8.

Objective 2

Objective: Determine the perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members as those perceptions relate to respondents’ personal ability to make an impact on Florida Farm Bureau’s policy development efforts.

In order to determine Florida Farm Bureau Members' perceptions as they relate to his/her ability to influence policy, three variables were evaluated. These variables included respondents' willingness to contact elected officials, the impact they feel they have on the Florida Farm Bureau policy process, and whether or not participants responded to the FBACT e-mail alert. Respondents indicated being "somewhat willing" to contact elected officials on important issues ($M=3.02$, $SD=0.86$). Also, respondents felt they had "not much impact" on the Florida Farm Bureau policy process ($M=2.39$, $SD=0.89$). Lastly, the respondents tended to not respond to FBACT e-mail alerts ($M=1.83$, $SD=0.37$). Table 4-9 further illustrates objective two.

Table 4-9. FFBF's member's personal ability to impact policy development efforts

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
Elected Officials	3.02	0.86	1	4
Policy Impact	2.39	0.89	1	4
Responded to E-mail Alert	1.83	0.37	1	2

Note: 1 = Not at all willing 1 = No impact 1 = Yes
 2 = Not very willing 2 = Not much impact 2 = No
 3 = Somewhat willing 3 = Some impact
 4 = Very willing 4 = A great deal of impact

Objective 3

Objective: Determine differences, which exist among Florida Farm Bureau members, related to the FFBF's policy development efforts.

A one-way analysis of variance was used to determine the differences, which existed among Florida Farm Bureau member demographics and Florida Farm Bureau's policy development efforts. Significant relationships existed with significance scores less than .05 at a 95% confidence interval. Such a relationship was found between respondents' awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau and

contribution levels ($F=12.685$, $p<.05$). No significant relationship was found between receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts and contribution levels ($F=.000$, $p>.05$). Table 4-10 illustrates level of significance between the two variables.

Table 4-10. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF's policy development efforts and contributors

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	1	12.685	.000
	Within	1463		

A significance level of .000 was found to exist between a respondent's awareness of the policy process and the Florida Farm Bureau district to which a respondent belonged ($F=17.820$, $p<.05$). Receipt of the FBACT e-mail alerts also proved to have a significant relationship with a respondent's awareness of the policy awareness ($F=10.705$, $p<.05$). These significance levels are reported in Table 4-11.

Table 4-11. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF's policy development efforts and farm bureau district

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	5	17.820	.000
	Within	1702		
Received E-mail Alert	Between	5	10.705	.000
	Within	1663		

A respondent's member type also proved to be an indicator of their awareness of the policy development process ($F=3.654$, $p<.05$). In addition, receipt of the FBACT e-

Table 4-12. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF's policy development efforts and member type

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	8	3.654	.000
	Within	1698		
Received E-mail Alert	Between	8	3.152	.002
	Within	1659		

mail alert was proven to have a strong relationship with a respondent's member type (full-time or part-time) ($F=3.152, p<.05$). These figures are illustrated in Table 4-12.

Given significance occurs at .05 or less for a 95% confidence interval, significant relationships for a respondent's type of employment existed with his/her awareness of FFBF's policy development process ($F=13.364, p>.05$), as well as if the respondent received the FBACT alert ($F=12.398, p>.05$). These figures are shown in Table 4-13.

Table 4-13. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF's policy development efforts and participant employment

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	3	13.364	.000
	Within	1703		
Received E-mail Alert	Between	3	12.398	.000
	Within	1664		

Lastly, the results showed significant relationships between where a respondent was from and their awareness of the Farm Bureau policy process ($F=1.383, p<.05$), as well as receipt of the FBACT e-mail alert ($F=1.598, p<.05$). This information is described in Table 4-14.

Table 4-14. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF's policy development efforts and county

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	60	1.383	.029
	Within	1646		
Table 4-14. Continued				
Received E-mail Alert	Between	60	1.598	.003
	Within	1607		

Objective 4

Objective: Determine differences, which exist among Florida Farm Bureau members related to personal impact on FFBF policy development efforts.

In order to assess the differences that exist among Florida Farm Bureau member's personal impact on Florida Farm Bureau's policy development efforts, a one-way analysis of variance was conducted. This test identified relationships, if any, between Florida Farm Bureau members' demographics and their impact on the policy process. After ANOVAs were calculated, the results indicated a significant relationship between a respondent's willingness to contact their elected official and contribution levels ($F=7.909, p<.05$). No significant relationships were found between contribution levels and a perceived impact on the policy development system ($F=2.619, p>.05$), or response to the FBACT e-mail alert ($F=1.678, p>.05$). This information is presented in Table 4-15.

Table 4-15. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF members' impact on policy development and contributor

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Elected Officials	Between	1	7.909	.005
	Within	1427		

The Florida Farm Bureau district proved to have significant relationships with the perceived impact a respondent has on the Farm Bureau policy development process ($F=12.704, p<.05$), the respondent's willingness to contact elected officials ($F=5.788, p<.05$), and finally, response to the FBACT e-mail alert ($F=16.231, p<.05$). See Table 4-16 for additional information.

Table 4-16. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF members' impact on policy development and farm bureau district

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Impact	Between	5	12.704	.000
	Within	1662		
Elected Officials	Between	5	5.788	.000
	Within	1653		
Responded to E-mail Alert	Between	5	16.231	.000
	Within	1574		

Whether a respondent was classified as full-time, part-time, farm employee, farm associate, mail-list only or honorary, significant relationships existed with whether or not participant's responded to FBACT e-mail alerts type ($F=4.006, p<.05$), as indicated in Table 4-17. No significant relationships were found between member type and perceived impact on the policy process ($F=1.790, p>.05$), or willingness to contact elected officials ($F=1.497, p>.05$).

Table 4-17. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF members' impact on policy development and member type

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Responded to E-mail Alert	Between	8	4.006	.000
	Within	1570		

Whether or not a respondent was self-employed proved to have significant relationships with a respondent's perceived impact on the policy development process ($F=5.926, p<.05$), as well as response to the FBACT e-mail alert ($F=15.102, p<.05$). No significant relationship existed between type of employment and willingness to contact elected officials ($F=0.744, p>.05$). See Table 4-18 for further information.

Table 4-18. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF members' impact on policy development and participant employment

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Impact	Between	3	5.926	.001
	Within	1663		
Responded to E-mail Alert	Between	3	15.102	.000
	Within	1575		

The county in which a respondent resided showed to only have a significant relationship with response to FBACT e-mail alerts ($F=1.383, p<.05$). No significant relationships existed between county of residence and a respondent's perceived impact on the policy process ($F=1.031, p>.05$), or willingness to contact elected officials ($F=1.019, p>.05$). Table 4-19 presents this information further.

Table 4-19. One-way analysis of variance between FFBF members' impact on policy development and county

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Responded to E-mail Alert	Between	60	1.383	.030
	Within	1518		

Objective 5

Objective: Determine the perceptions and concerns of Florida Farm Bureau active members on their reliance for foreign workers and energy crop issues.

In addition to measuring the perceptions Florida Farm Bureau members have toward the policy development process, respondent's perceptions concerning foreign workers and energy crops were measured. Respondents were asked to indicate their dependence on foreign workers and the results showed that respondents were "not very dependent" on immigrant workers ($M=1.73$, $SD=1.148$). Furthermore, respondents were asked if they had experienced worker shortage in year previous to when the questionnaire was taken. High numbers of respondents reported not having worker shortages ($M=1.89$, $SD=0.323$). Lastly, respondents were asked to indicate their willingness to shift production to an energy crop. The calculations show that respondents were "not very willing" to "somewhat willing" ($M=2.45$, $SD=1.040$) to shift operation to an energy crop. See Table 4-20 for a presentation of this information.

Table 4-20. FFBF member perceptions concerning foreign workers and energy crops

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
Need for Foreign Workers	1.73	1.148	1	4
Willingness to Shift to Energy Crop	2.45	1.040	1	4
Worker Shortage	1.89	0.323	1	2

Note: 1 = Not at all dependent 1 = Not at all willing 1 = Yes
 2 = Not very dependent 2 = Not very willing 2 = No
 3 = Somewhat dependent 3 = Somewhat willing
 4 = Very dependent 4 = Very willing

Objective 6

Objective: Determine the differences, which exist among Florida Farm Bureau members related to needs for foreign labor, energy crop issues, electronic correspondence and participation in the policy process.

When analyzing relationships between aptitude with electronic correspondence and foreign worker dependency with participation in the policy process, ANOVAs uncovered significant relationships between receipt of the FBACT e-mail alerts and respondents' awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($F=188.340, p<.05$), respondents' perceived impact on the Farm Bureau policy process ($F=79.341, p<.05$) and willingness to contact an elected official ($F=72.821, p<.05$). See Table 4-23 for a description of this information.

Table 4-21. One-way analysis of variance between participation in the policy process and receipt of the FBACT e-mail alert

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	1	188.340	.000
	Within	1652		
Policy Impact	Between	1	79.341	.000
	Within	1614		
Elected Official	Between	1	72.821	.000
	Within	52.846		

Similarly, significant relationship were found between whether or not a respondent responded to the FBACT e-mail alert and their awareness of the Florida Farm Bureau policy process ($F=106.844, p<.05$). Also, significance was found in the relationship between FBACT e-mail alert response and the perceived impact a respondent felt he/she had the on Farm Bureau policy development process ($F=49.327, p<.05$), as well as their willingness to contact an elected official ($F=49.765, p<.05$). These relationships are illustrated in Table 4-24.

Table 4-22. One-way analysis of variance between participation in the policy process and response to FBACT e-mail alert

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	2	106.844	.000
	Within	1564		
Political Impact	Between	2	49.327	.000
	Within	1525		
Elected Official	Between	2	49.765	.000
	Within	1529		

ANOVAs were used to examine the relationship between participation in the policy process and reliance on foreign workers. Significant relationships were found between respondents' reliance on foreign workers and their awareness of the policy process ($F=17.138, p<.05$), perceived impact on the Florida Farm Bureau policy development process ($F=16.940, p<.05$), and willingness to contact an elected official ($F=6.447, p<.05$). See Table 4-25 for an alternate representation of this information.

Table 4-23. One-way analysis of variance between participation in the policy process and reliance on foreign workers

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	3	17.138	.000
	Within	1651		
Policy Impact	Between	3	16.940	.000
	Within	1612		
Elected Official	Between	3	6.447	.000
	Within	1612		

Significant relationships existed in a Florida farmer's experience of worker shortages in the year previous to taking the questionnaire and their awareness of the FFBF policy process ($F=5.618, p<.05$), as well as their perceived impact on the policy process at FFBF ($F=3.388, p<.05$). Also, a mild relationship was seen between foreign worker shortage and willingness to contact elected officials ($F=2.895, p>.05$).

Table 4-24. One-way analysis of variance between participation in the policy process and foreign worker shortage

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	2	5.618	.004
	Within	1595		
Policy Impact	Between	2	3.388	.034
	Within	1560		
Elected Official	Between	2	2.895	.056
	Within	1562		

The willingness of respondents to shift farm production to an energy crop was tested against the various aspects of participation in the policy process. ANOVA calculations uncovered significant relationships with respondents' willingness to shift to an energy crop and respondents' awareness of the Florida Farm Bureau policy process ($F=28.181, p<.05$), perceived impact on the policy development process ($F=33.686, p<.05$), and lastly, their willingness to contact elected officials ($F=44.004, p<.05$). This information is presented further in Table 4-27.

Table 4-25. One-way analysis of variance between participation in the policy process and willingness to shift to an energy crop

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Policy Awareness	Between	3	33.686	.000
	Within	1525		
Policy Impact	Between	3	28.181	.000
	Within	1490		
Elected Official	Between	3	44.004	.000
	Within	1499		

Objective 7

Objective: Determine the relationship between aptitude with electronic correspondence, dependence on foreign workers, and energy crop issues with participation in the policy process.

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to determine potential relationships between aptitude with electronic correspondence, dependence

on foreign workers, and energy crop issues with participation in the policy process. To better understand that data Miller (1998) suggests that values between 0 and 1 represent different interpretations in Table 4-28.

Table 4-26. Miller's correlation interpretation levels

Level	Coefficient
Perfect	$r=1.0$
Very High	$r=0.99 - 0.70$
Substantial	$r=0.69 - 0.50$
Moderate	$r=0.49 - 0.30$
Low	$r=0.29 - 0.10$
Negligible	$r=0.09 - 0.01$

Based on the calculations, no coefficients were found to be perfect. However, receipt of a FBACT e-mail alert indicated a very high, positive correlation with response to FBACT e-mail alert ($r=.757, p<.05, n=1669$), with high numbers of received FBACT e-mail alerts associated with high levels of FBACT responses. This information is illustrated in Table 4-29.

The next of Miller's correlation interpretation levels included relationships with substantial coefficients, though none existed for the given data. Moderate relationships were found between a member's awareness of the FFBF policy process and whether or not they had received an FBACT e-mail alert ($r=-.320, p<.05, n=1654$), with high levels of policy development awareness associated with low levels of FBACT e-mail alerts receipt. An active member's awareness of the policy development process also indicated a moderate, negative relationship with response to an FBACT e-mail alert ($r=-.341, p<.05, n=1567$), with high levels of policy development awareness associated with low response to FBACT e-mail alerts. Additionally, a moderate, positive relationship was found to exist between a respondent's perceived impact on Florida Farm Bureau's policy process and their awareness of the policy development process ($r=.451, p<.05,$

$n=1662$), with high levels of perceived impact associated with increased awareness of the policy development process. Lastly, a moderate, negative relationship was found to exist between the experience of worker shortages and the need to foreign labor ($r=-.307$, $p<.05$, $n=1606$), with higher incidents of worker shortage associated with lower dependence on foreign workers. For more information concerning this data, see Table 4-29.

The interpretation level, according to Miller (1998) is low correlations. The first relationship indicated on the correlation matrix is the low, negative relationship between a respondent's perceived impact on the policy development process and receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.216$, $p<.05$, $n=1616$), with high levels of perceived impact on the policy process associated with low receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts. Perceived impact on the policy process also had a low, negative relationship with response to FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.244$, $p<.05$, $n=1528$), with high levels of perceived impact on the policy development process associated with low response rates to FBACT e-mail alerts. Next, the coefficients indicate a low, negative relationship between willingness to shift to an energy crop and receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.102$, $p<.05$, $n=1504$), with a high willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop associated with low receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts. The coefficients also indicated a low, negative relationship between willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop and response to FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.137$, $p<.05$, $n=1419$), with a high willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop associated with low response rates to the FBACT e-mail alerts. In contrast, a low, positive relationship was discovered between willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop and a respondent's policy awareness ($r=.206$,

$p < .05$, $n = 1529$), with a high willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop associated with high awareness of the policy development process. A low, positive relationship was also found between willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop and perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r = .206$, $p < .05$, $n = 1494$), with a high willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop associated with high levels of perceived impact on the policy development process. Table 4-29 provides an additional illustration of this information.

Based on the correlation matrix, a low, negative relationship was found between a respondent's reliance on foreign workers and receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts ($r = -.173$, $p < .05$, $n = 1624$), with high needs for foreign labor associated with low receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts. Similarly, a low, negative relationship existed between a respondent's reliance on foreign workers and response of FBACT e-mail alerts ($r = -.183$, $p < .05$, $n = 1539$), with high needs for foreign labor associated with low responses to FBACT e-mail alerts. The need for foreign labor showed a low, positive relationship with awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r = .171$, $p < .05$, $n = 1655$), with high needs for foreign labor associated with high levels of awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau. The coefficients indicated another low, positive relationship between the need for foreign workers and perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r = .172$, $p < .05$, $n = 1616$), with high needs for foreign labor associated with high levels of perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau. For more detail, see Table 4-29.

A low, negative relationship existed between willingness to contact elected officials and receipt of an FBACT e-mail alert ($r=-.207$, $p<.05$, $n=1621$), with high willingness to contact elected officials associated with low receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts. The low, negative relationship was echoed in willingness to contact elected officials and response to a FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.247$, $p<.05$, $n=1532$), with high willingness to contact elected officials associated with low response to FBACT e-mail alerts. The coefficients indicate a low, positive relationship between willingness to contact elected officials and awareness of the policy development process at the Florida Farm Bureau ($r=.289$, $p<.05$, $n=1645$), with high willingness to contact elected officials associated with high awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau. Willingness to contact elected officials showed a low, positive relationship with perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r=.256$, $p<.05$, $n=1609$), with high willingness to contact elected officials associated with high levels of perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau. According to the correlation matrix, a low, positive relationship existed between willingness to contact an elected official and willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop ($r=.283$, $p<.05$, $n=1503$), with high willingness to contact elected officials associated with high levels of willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop. Lastly, a low, positive relationship was found between willingness to contact elected officials and reliance of foreign labor ($r=.101$, $p<.05$, $n=1616$), with high willingness to contact elected officials associated with high needs for foreign labor. This information is also presented in Table 4-29.

The last level used to indicate correlation strength is negligible. The first relationship indicated on the correlation matrix is a negligible, positive relationship between reliance on foreign labor and willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop ($r=.099$, $p<.05$, $n=1527$), with high levels of reliance on foreign workers associated with high levels of willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop. A negligible, positive relationship also existed between experience of worker shortages and receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=.074$, $p<.05$, $n=1569$), with higher shortages of workers associated with higher receipts of FBACT e-mail alerts. Experience of worker shortages also held a negligible, positive relationship with responses to FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=.057$, $p<.05$, $n=1490$), with higher shortages of workers associated with higher responses to FBACT e-mail alerts. Negligible, negative relationship existed between experience of worker shortages and awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r=-.072$, $p<.05$, $n=1598$), with high experiences of worker shortages associated with a low awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau. The coefficients also indicate a negligible, negative relationship between experience of worker shortage and perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r=-.039$, $p<.05$, $n=1563$), with high experiences of worker shortages associated with a low perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau. Next, a negligible, negative relationship was found between experience of worker shortages and willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop ($r=-.074$, $p<.05$, $n=1527$), with high experiences of workers shortages with low levels of willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop. Lastly, willingness to contact an elected official showed a negligible, negative

relationship with experience of worker shortages ($r=-.060$, $p<.05$, $n=1565$), with a high willingness to contact an elected official associated with low experiences of worker shortages. See Table 4-29 below for an alternative representation of this information.

Table 4-27. Pearson product moment correlations coefficient between aptitude with electronic correspondence, dependence on foreign labor, and energy crop issues with participation in the policy process

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Received E-mail Alert	-	.757**	-.320**	-.216**	-.102**	-.173**	.074**	-.207**
2. Responded to E-mail Alert	.757**	-	-.341**	-.244**	-.137**	-.183**	.057*	-.247**
3. Policy Awareness	-.320**	-.341**	-	.451**	.206**	.171**	-.072**	.289**
4. Policy Impact	-.216**	-.244**	.451**	-	.206**	.172**	-.039	.256**
5. Shift to Energy Crop	-.102**	-.137**	.206**	.206**	-	.099**	-.074**	.283**
6. Need for Foreign Workers	-.173**	-.183**	.171**	.172**	.099**	-	-.307**	.101**
7. Worker Shortage	.074**	.057*	-.072**	-.039	-.074**	-.307**	-	-.060*
8. Elected Official	-.207**	-.247**	.289**	.256**	.283**	.101**	-.060*	-

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECCOMENDATIONS

Introduction

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this research is to ascertain the specific factors, which motivate certain members of the FFBF (FFBF) to participate in the policy development and implementation process. Additionally, empowerment will be analyzed for its influence on member participation and potential to create sustainability. A secondary purpose of this study will be to understand the perceptions and concerns of active FFBF members regarding major agricultural issues in the state of Florida such as immigration and energy crops. In order to meet the purpose of this study, the following objectives were investigated:

1. Determine the perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members as they relate to Farm Bureau's organizational policy development efforts.
2. Determine the perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members as they relate to their personal ability to make an impact on Farm Bureau's policy development efforts.
3. Determine differences, which exist among Florida Farm Bureau members related to Florida Farm Bureau's policy development efforts.
4. Determine differences, which exist among Florida Farm Bureau members related to personal impact on Florida Farm Bureau policy development efforts.
5. Determine the perceptions and concerns of Florida Farm Bureau active members on immigration and energy crop issues.
6. Determine the differences, which exist among Florida Farm Bureau Members related to needs for foreign labor, energy crop issues, electronic correspondence and participation in the policy process.
7. Determine the relationship between aptitude with electronic correspondence, dependence on foreign workers, and energy crop issues with participation in the policy process.

Methodology

This study used a quantitative research perspective for its methods. More specifically, the researcher utilized a descriptive survey design as described by Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (2002). The researcher utilized an industry-developed mail based questionnaire that was administered to all active members of the FFBF ($n=21,000$). The questionnaire was considered valid and reliable after review by an expert panel. The 2008 FFBF member directory served as the population frame. Duplicates, those not involved in agricultural and those once involved in agriculture that had deceased were removed from the master list. Responses were obtained from 1757 of the 21,000 active members for an overall response rate of 8.34%, reaching saturation of the population frame (Dillman et al., 2009).

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS[®]) 17.0 for Windows was used to analyze the questionnaire data. The researcher calculated frequencies, mean scores, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Summary of Findings

Demographics

Demographic findings were reported on member type, county, Florida Farm Bureau district, level of contribution, participant employment, prevalence of e-mail, and industry affiliation. Findings for each demographic were reported individually.

Member Type

The majority of participants in this study were classified as part-time farmers, 51.0% ($n=896$) of the sample, meaning most the participants gain large portions of their income from sources other than their farming operation (FFBF, 2009). Adversely, the

group with the least amount of participants was the farm associate member type, representing only 0.3% of the population. Mail-list only and honorary member types were not represented in the study.

County

The breadth of counties representing respondents was varied. The largest group represented in the study was Alachua County respondents, with 5.7% ($n=100$) of the sample population. In contrast, the least represented counties were Gulf and Liberty, each with only 0.1% ($n=1$, $n=2$, respectively) of the population sample. Additionally, some Florida counties obtained zero participation including: Charlotte, Citrus, Dixie, Franklin, Glades, Monroe, and St. Johns.

Farm Bureau District

As members of the FFBF, respondents were automatically classified into Farm Bureau districts based upon their address. The most represented FFBF district was District 3, which obtained 17.4% ($n=305$) of the population from the following counties: Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Clay, Duval, Putnam/St. Johns, Nassau, and Union. The district with the least percentage of respondents was District 8, with only 8.0% ($n=141$) of the population sample. Respondents belonging to District 8 were from Hendry, Glades, Palm Beach, Collier, Broward, Dade and Monroe counties.

Level of Contribution

The majority of respondents contributed little to nothing to the Florida Farm Bureau's Federal Political Action Campaign; 84.5% ($n=1485$) of the respondents contributed zero and 8.5% ($n=150$) contributed \$25.

Type of Employment

Of the 1489 respondents who reported their type of employment, 60.7% ($n=1066$) reported being self-employed, while 24.1% ($n=423$) indicated employment by another.

Prevalence of E-mail

Based on the responses, the researcher found that 63.6% ($n=1117$) of participants do not have an e-mail account, while 36.3% ($n=638$) do have an e-mail account. Finally, 0.1% ($n=2$) chose not to report whether or not they had an e-mail account.

Industry Affiliation

The top three agricultural sectors with which most respondents indicated an affiliation with were beef cattle with 41.8% ($n=735$), hay with 23.7% ($n=416$) and forestry representing 21.9% ($n=385$) of the respondents. Meanwhile, the three sectors in which respondents were least involved were tobacco at 0.3% ($n=5$), rice also at 0.3% ($n=5$) and seafood at 0.9% ($n=19$).

Objective 1

Objective 1 sought to determine the perceptions of FFBF members as those perceptions relation to FFBF's organizational policy development efforts. The variables chosen for this objective included a respondent's awareness of FFBF's policy development efforts, as well as whether or not the respondent received the FBACT e-mail alert. Respondents indicated being "not very aware" ($M=2.29$, $SD=0.96$) of the FFBF policy development process on a scale of 1 to 4 (1=not at all aware, 2=not very aware, 3=somewhat aware and 4=very aware). Also, generally did not receive FBACT e-mail alerts ($M=1.76$, $SD=4.29$) with 1=yes, 2=no.

Objective 2

The second objective sought to determine the perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members as those perceptions related to respondents' personal ability to make an impact on Florida Farm Bureau's policy development efforts. This objective was accomplished through an examination of three variables including the following: respondents' willingness to contact elected officials, the impact respondents' feel they have on FFBF's policy development process, and whether or not participants responded to FFBF's FBACT e-mail alerts. Respondents' willingness to contact elected officials was rated on a Likert-type scale with a minimum of 1 and maximum of 4 (1=not at all willing, 2=not very willing, 3=somewhat willing, and 4=very willing). Respondents indicated being "somewhat willing" to contact elected officials ($M=3.02$, $SD=0.86$).

Perceived impact on the Florida Farm Bureau policy development process was scaled 1 to 4 (1=no impact, 2=not much impact, 3=some impact, 4=A great deal of impact) and respondents felt they had "not much impact" on FFBF's policy development efforts ($M=2.39$, $SD=0.89$). Lastly, respondents indicated that they did not respond to FBACT e-mail alerts ($M=1.83$, $SD=0.37$), using 1=yes, 2=no.

Objective 3

This objective sought to determine the differences, which existed among active members of the FFBF, related to FFBF's policy development efforts. Using an ANOVA, significant relationships were found to exist between respondents' awareness of FFBF's policy development process and contribution levels ($F=12.685$, $p<.05$). Awareness of FFBF policy processes also showed significant relationships with Farm Bureau districts ($F=17.820$, $p<.05$), member type ($F=3.654$, $p<.05$), type of employment ($F=13.354$, $p<.05$), and county ($F=1.383$, $p<.05$).

Significant relationships were also found between respondents' receipt of the FBACT e-mail alert and the Florida Farm Bureau district in which a respondent resides ($F=10.705$, $p<.05$), Farm Bureau member type ($F=3.152$, $p<.05$), type of employment ($F=12.398$, $p<.05$), and county of residence ($F=1.598$, $p<.05$). However, no significant relationships existed between receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts and contribution levels ($F=.000$, $p=>.05$).

Objective 4

Objective 4 sought to determine, the differences, if any, which existed among Florida Farm Bureau active members, related to the members' personal impact on FFBF's policy development efforts. Using an ANOVA, significant relationships were found between a respondent's belief that he/she impact FFBF's policy development process and their Farm Bureau District, ($F=12.704$, $p<.05$), as well as type of employment ($F=5.926$, $p<.05$). In contrast, no significant relationships existed between perceived impact and contribution levels ($F=2.619$, $p>.05$), member type ($F=1.790$, $p>.05$), and the county in which a respondent resided ($F=1.031$, $p>.05$).

Differences were also found to exist in respondents' willingness to contact elected officials and contribution level ($F=7.909$, $p<.05$), as well as Farm Bureau district ($F=5.788$, $p<.05$). The calculations did not indicate significant differences between respondents' willingness to contact elected officials and member type ($F=1.497$, $p>.05$), type of employment ($F=0.744$, $p>.05$), and county of residence ($F=1.019$, $p>.05$).

Finally, significant relationships were found to exist between a participant's response to a FBACT e-mail alert and several variables. First, FBACT e-mail alert response was found to have a significant relationship with the Farm Bureau district to which a respondent belonged ($F=16.231$, $p<.05$), as well as a participant's member type

($F=4.006$, $p<.05$), type of employment ($F=15.102$, $p<.05$), and county ($F=.383$, $p<.05$). No significant relationships were found between response to FBACT e-mail alerts and contribution level ($F=1.678$, $p>.05$).

Objective 5

The fifth objective sought to determine the perceptions and concerns of FFBF active members concerning their reliance on foreign workers and energy crop issues. Respondents indicated their dependency on foreign workers on a scale of minimum 1 to maximum 4 (1=not at all dependent, 2=not very dependent, 3=somewhat dependent and 4=very dependent). The results show that active members in FFBF were “not very dependent” on immigrant workers ($M=1.73$, $SD=1.14$). Respondents were also asked to indicate worker shortages in the year previous to when the questionnaire was taken, in a yes/no format. Generally, respondents indicated that they had not experienced worker shortages in the past year ($M=1.89$, $SD=0.32$), with 1=yes, 2=no. Furthermore, respondents were evaluated on their willingness to shift a farming operation to an energy crop. Using a Likert-type scale with 1=not at all willing, 2=not very willing, 3=somewhat willing, and 4=very willing, the results showed that respondents were “not very willing” to “somewhat willing” to shift operation to an energy crop ($M=2.45$, $SD=1.04$).

Objective 6

This objective determined the differences that existed among Florida Farm Bureau Members related to needs for foreign labor, energy crop issues, electronic correspondence and participation in the policy process. Significant relationships were found to exist between receipt of the FBACT e-mail alert and respondents’ awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($F=188.340$, $p<.05$),

respondents' perceived impact on the Farm Bureau policy process ($F=79.341, p<.05$) and willingness to contact an elected official ($F=72.821, p<.05$). Also, significant relationships were found to exist between response/non-response to FBACT e-mail alerts and respondents' awareness of FFBF's policy development process ($F=106.844, p<.05$), as well as respondents' perceived impact on the Farm Bureau policy development process ($F=49.327, p<.05$), and their willingness to contact an elected official ($F=49.765, p<.05$).

Respondents' reliance on foreign workers for their farming operations proved to have significant relationships with respondents' awareness of the FFBF policy process ($F=17.138, p<.05$), respondents' perceived impact on the Florida Farm Bureau policy development process ($F=16.940, p<.05$), and their willingness to contact an elected official ($F=6.447, p<.05$). Lastly, relationships between respondents' willingness to switch operations to energy crops was found to have significant relationships with respondents' awareness of the Florida Farm Bureau policy process ($F=28.181, p<.05$), perceived impact on the policy development process ($F=33.686, p<.05$), and lastly, their willingness to contact elected officials ($F=44.004, p<.05$).

Objective 7

The seventh objective determines the relationship between aptitude with electronic correspondence, dependence on foreign workers, and energy crop issues with participation in the policy process. Using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, relationships were found between the examined variables. A very high, positive correlation existed between receipt of a FBACT e-mail alert and response to FBACT e-mail alert ($r=.757, p<.05, n=1669$). No substantial level correlations were indicated by the data. Moderate level relationships with positive coefficients was found

between a respondent's perceived impact on Florida Farm Bureau's policy process and their awareness of the policy development process ($r=.451$, $p<.05$, $n=1662$). Moderate, negative relationships included: a member's awareness of the FFBF policy process and whether or not they had received an FBACT e-mail alert ($r=-.320$, $p<.05$, $n=1654$), an active member's awareness of the policy development process with response to an FBACT e-mail alert ($r=-.341$, $p<.05$, $n=1567$), and the experience of worker shortages and the need to foreign labor ($r=-.307$, $p<.05$, $n=1606$).

The next level of interpretation found in the correlation matrix was low. Correlations with low, positive relationships included: willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop and a respondent's policy awareness ($r=.206$, $p<.05$, $n=1529$), willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop and perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r=.206$, $p<.05$, $n=1494$), the need for foreign labor and awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r=.171$, $p<.05$, $n=1655$), the need for foreign workers and perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r=.172$, $p<.05$, $n=1616$), willingness to contact elected officials and awareness of the policy development process at the Florida Farm Bureau ($r=.289$, $p<.05$, $n=1645$), perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r=.256$, $p<.05$, $n=1609$), willingness to contact an elected official and willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop ($r=.283$, $p<.05$, $n=1503$), and lastly, willingness to contact elected officials and reliance of foreign labor ($r=.101$, $p<.05$, $n=1616$).

Low, negative relationships also existed and are as follows: a respondent's perceived impact on the policy development process and receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts

($r=-.216$, $p<.05$, $n=1616$), Perceived impact on the policy process also had a low, negative relationship with response to FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.244$, $p<.05$, $n=1528$), willingness to shift to an energy crop and receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.102$, $p<.05$, $n=1504$), willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop and response to FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.137$, $p<.05$, $n=1419$), reliance on foreign workers and receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.173$, $p<.05$, $n=1624$), respondent's reliance on foreign workers and response of FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.183$, $p<.05$, $n=1539$), willingness to contact elected officials and receipt of an FBACT e-mail alert ($r=-.207$, $p<.05$, $n=1621$), and lastly, willingness to contact elected officials and response to a FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=-.247$, $p<.05$, $n=1532$).

The last level of interpretation indicated in the correlation matrix was negligible relationships. Of those negligible relationships, those which were positive are as follows: reliance on foreign labor and willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop ($r=.099$, $p<.05$, $n=1527$), experience of worker shortages and receipt of FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=.074$, $p<.05$, $n=1569$), and lastly, experience of worker shortages with responses to FBACT e-mail alerts ($r=.057$, $p<.05$, $n=1490$). Negligible, negative relationships were also indicated in the calculations and follow: experience of worker shortages and awareness of the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r=-.072$, $p<.05$, $n=1598$), experience of worker shortage and perceived impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau ($r=-.039$, $p<.05$, $n=1563$), experience of worker shortages and willingness to shift farming operations to an energy crop ($r=-.074$, $p<.05$, $n=1527$), and lastly, willingness to contact an elected official with experience of worker shortages ($r=-.060$, $p<.05$, $n=1565$).

Conclusions

Based on the breadth and variety of the population sample ($n=21,000$), along with the FFBF's service as an umbrella organization for all Florida agricultural sectors allows the findings to be generalizable to all members of the FFBF ($n=140,000$), farmers in the state of Florida and states with similar Farm Bureau organizations.

1. FFBF members are mildly aware of the Florida Farm Bureau policy development process.
2. Electronic correspondence is not an effective medium for transmitting messages dealing with policy issues to active members.
3. FFBF members are willing to contact their elected officials on issues that are important to them.
4. Differences exist between an active member's location and their willingness to use e-mail to contact elected officials and FFBF's policy development process.
5. Differences exist between FFBF members who contribute to Florida Farm Bureau campaigns and those who contact elected officials.
6. Immigration reform is not a top issue for FFBF members.
7. FFBF members are not committed to implementing energy crops into their farming operations.
8. E-mail is an effect medium for communication with elected officials for those already utilizing the benefits of e-mail.
9. Those aware of the policy development process feel they are impacting the process.
10. FFBF members willing to contact their elected officials are not receiving or responding to FBACT e-mail alerts.
11. FFBF members willing to contact elected officials are more aware and perceive to have an impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau.
12. FFBF members willing to shift farming operations to energy crops and those reliant on foreign labor are more aware and perceive to have an impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau.

Discussions and Implications

Florida farmers are mildly aware of the Florida Farm Bureau policy development process. The data indicated a mean of 2.29 for farmer awareness of the Florida Farm Bureau policy development process, indicating they are “not very aware.” This follows the literature that suggests Americans are becoming less engaged in politics (Theiss–Morse & Hibbing, 2005; Putnam, 1995) and only express interest when issues are specific to the individual, explaining the low level of awareness necessary to stay engaged when issues of importance arise. Also, the vehicle for communicating policy issues in Florida Farm Bureau is missing large numbers of members, resulting in a lack of awareness from the majority of members. Lastly, a lack of disposable time due to farming obligations is characteristic of the sample population and a reason for low civic engagement according to Putnam (1998).

Electronic correspondence was found to be under utilized by Florida farmers to transmit messages to elected officials. A mean of 1.83 indicated that Florida farmers are not responding to FBACT e-mail alerts concerning policy issues. These farmers do not have e-mail accounts and are unlikely to adopt the technology being resistant to change. These types of farmers value postal mail, telephone, and in-person contact with elected officials, believing technological communication to be impersonal and ineffective (Putnam, 1995, 1998). Also, efficient forms of electronic correspondence are questionable in farming areas, forcing electronic correspondence with elected officials to be purposeful and timely. Lastly, the mode in which the questionnaire was sent and received, postal mail, indicates a comfort with certain communication mediums.

Florida farmers are willing to contact elected officials on issues important to them. A mean of 3.02 indicated that Florida farmers are “somewhat willing” to contact

elected officials on issues important to them. This explains Florida farmers' mild awareness of the policy process for purposes of becoming involved when issues are personal to the individual or industry sector. Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation (1964) explains that decision-makers have greater motivation for a specific choice, in this case to contact an elected official or not, when the valancey of the decision is greater. Valancey refers to the positive or negative outcome of a decision. These farmers only contact elected officials when the option of remaining quite is more detrimental to their livelihoods than communicating.

Differences were found between an active member's location and their willingness to use e-mail to contact elected officials and FFBF's policy development process. These differences were found significant at the $p < .05$, 95% confidence interval. Location plays a role in a farmer's access to reliable Internet needed to use e-mail to contact elected officials and stay abreast on policy issues that are communicated via the Web. Some counties/districts in Florida still rely on dial-up Internet connections explaining why location affects a farmer's willingness to communicate via e-mail. Local Farm Bureau offices also differ greatly by county and Farm Bureau district, which have an influence on the interests of local members. Certain Farm Bureau offices stress to its members the importance of involvement in the policy process while others do not. Lastly, due to the diversity of Florida agriculture certain policy issues only affect certain sectors of the agriculture industry and at varying levels of intensity. Those reporting involvement in the policy process and willingness to contact elected officials on important issues are currently facing policy dilemmas affecting their livelihoods. Those

reporting low involvement in the policy process are from sectors of the industry that are not facing major policy dilemmas but will become involved when those dilemmas occur.

Significant differences were found between contribution levels of Florida Farm Bureau members and their willingness to contact elected officials on issues important to them. Farmers who contribute view their contribution as involvement in the policy process (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988), thus encouraging further participation by contacting elected officials. According to Portes (1998), these individuals express high levels of social capital, which is motivator for further participation as self-efficacy and empowerment are formed.

Immigration reform is not a top issue for Florida farmers. The mean of reliance on foreign workers ($M=1.73$, $SD=1.14$) was “not very dependent” and farmers indicated not experiencing workers shortages in the year previous to taking the questionnaire, July 2007 to July 2008 ($M=1.89$, $SD=0.32$). The economic downturn has allowed farmers to become less reliant on foreign workers due to the availability of local labor. Also, increased technology and innovation has resulted in a decrease in the need for human labor overall. Healthcare and unemployment have put immigration policy reform on hold and farmers are focusing efforts on protecting their industry and keeping their operations going.

Florida farmers are not committed to implementing energy crops into their farming operations. The data indicated that farmers are “not very willing” to “somewhat willing” to shift production to an energy crop ($M=2.45$, $SD=1.04$). These farmers are aware of the benefits of sustainable farming but have yet to find the necessary incentives to become fully committed. The mean represents a cross-section of early

adopters, late adopters, and laggards (Rogers, 2003). The early adopters are those utilizing e-mail as a tool to correspond with elected officials and stay abreast to policy issues and education. Early adopters understand the financial and sustainable benefits of energy crop production. The late adopters are receiving the FBACT e-mail alerts but find the greatest value in traditional forms of communication. They are becoming involved in energy crops based upon the financial incentives provided. Finally, the laggards realize that e-mail technology exists to communicate with elected officials but aren't yet willing to let go of their current methods for communication. Laggards feel pressured by regulations and neighboring farms to accept energy crops but enjoy the economic incentives provided. As economic incentives increase to support energy crops, more farmers will become willing to participate. Lastly, the definition of energy crops is wide and varied. Many of the farmers are practicing energy crop and sustainable farming by definition but do not consider having such science due to pre-conceived ideas of the terms.

For those already utilizing the FBACT e-mail alert system, the technology has proven to be an effective medium of communication to farmers and to elected officials. These farmers value the ease and accessibility of communicating electronically. They are empowered and motivated through affiliation, power, and achievement with the FFBF, which McCelland (1987) consider being drivers of motivation. These farmers view the electronic correspondence as privileged access to resources only provided to members of the organization, a form of social capital (Portes, 1998). These feelings and beliefs create political and self-efficacy which increases participation in the policy process (Leighly, 1991).

Those aware of the policy development and implementation process at Florida Farm Bureau also feel they are impacting the process. These farmers feel empowered through their participation in the policy process by being involved in the decision-making process affecting their communities (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). These feelings of empowerment motivate them to continue participation and create trust in the organization (Leighly, 1991). According to March and Olsen (1995) these farmers are creating a political identity through their involvement. These farmers are current on issues facing their specific agricultural sector but have some awareness of issues facing other sectors of industry. Florida farmers become more and less aware of policy development at Florida Farm Bureau as issues personally affecting their sector come and go.

Florida farmers willing to contact their elected officials are not receiving or responding to FBACT e-mail alerts. These farmers understand the need and importance of civic engagement but need alternate routes for communicating with elected officials. These individuals are late adopters or laggards that are weary of the impact of electronic correspondence; unsure it has the same as traditional forms of interaction with elected officials. These farmers attend local candidates' forums, campaign rallies, write letters, make phone calls and even visit congressional offices. This type of farmer is knowledgeable of the issues affecting his or her commodities and has very strong opinions concerning the issues. Lastly, this farmer is very well connected with farmers similar to themselves.

Florida farmers willing to contact elected officials are more aware and perceive to have an impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau. These

farmers experience political and self-efficacy through their involvement in the policy process (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Farmers experiencing political or self-efficacy will continue to stay involved, explaining their willingness to contact elected officials (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). The feelings of achievement, affiliation, and empowerment act as a catalyst for additional participation (McClelland, 1987; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). These farmers are highly aware of the policy issues facing their industry sectors and are connected with other farmers of the same commodities. These farmers are opinion leaders and change agents in their communities and industry sectors.

Florida farmers willing to shift farming operations to energy crops and those reliant on foreign labor are more aware and perceive to have an impact on the policy development process at Florida Farm Bureau. These farmers are knowledgeable of policies concerning energy crops, understanding the income potential available and the environmental benefits/risks associated with adoption. These farmers seek to capitalize on government incentives and programs providing funding to innovative sustainability practices on the farm. Also, these farmers identify themselves as sustainable despite the amount of sustainability practices occurring on their operation. These farmers have the capital to invest in energy crops and have large operations, making them reliant on foreign labor. Negative perceptions of large farms portrayed in the media motivate these farmers to stay current on policy issues. They view Florida Farm Bureau as a liaison between the agricultural community and government, and view FFBF as a representative of agriculture to the media. Lastly, these farmers are highly connected

within their industry sector and community and will often inform Florida Farm Bureau of issues and happenings in local communities affecting the agricultural industry.

National Research Agenda

The conclusions, discussions, implications, and recommendations can all be linked back to The National Research Agenda: Agricultural Education and Communication 2007-2010. Specifically this study aids in the following research priority areas (RPA):

- RPA 1: Enhance decision making within agricultural sectors of society.
 - Discovering information that various stakeholders need in order to make informed decisions.
- RPA 2: Within and among societies, aid the public in effectively participating in public decision-making about high priority agricultural issues.
 - Identifying, assimilating, disseminating, formatting and evaluating relevant information that facilitates public decision-making about high priority agricultural issues.
- RPA 3: Build competitive societal knowledge and intellectual capabilities
 - Understanding how information and media delivery affect thinking processes, problem solving, and decision making related to agriculture
- RPA 4: Engage citizens in community action through leadership education and development.
 - Identify the strategies that successful leaders use to enhance citizen engagement in community issues and programs.
 - Examine the processes by which youth and adults become effective citizen leaders.

Recommendations

Recommendations for practice and future research are provided as a result of ascertaining the factors that motivate members of the FFBF to participate in the policy process.

Recommendations for Practice

- Organizations with established memberships should survey their members in order to assess the major issues facing specific industry sectors.
- An analysis of preferred communication modes is needed to effectively transmit message to FFBF members.
- Organizations should offer multiple communication mediums to transmit policy messages.
- Organizations should find ways to incentivize participation from all sectors of membership so to provide diverse thinking and representation on policy issues.
- Florida agricultural organizations should strive to address policy issues that affect large numbers of its membership.
- Organizations should provide diverse methods and experiences for its members to contact elected officials.
- Organizations with inactive counties/districts/areas should offer training and support to local offices on methods and incentives for encouraging participation in non-participatory areas.
- Organizations involved in policy development should provide education concerning the importance for civic engagement.
- Mini workshops or education materials should be provided on how to utilize the FBACT e-mail alerts and their effectiveness in sending a message to elected officials.
- Examine the impact of leadership at county Farm Bureau offices on the policy development and implementation level at the state Farm Bureau level.

Recommendations for Future Research

- Research should be conducted to understand the diffusion of e-mail technologies in Florida Farmers to identify opinion leaders and change agents.
- A qualitative study should be conducted to uncover the level of trust Florida Farmers have in regards to utilizing Florida Farm Bureau to receive and send policy information.
- Research to understand Florida farmers' definition, perceptions, and adoption of energy crops and sustainable farming is needed to set policy initiatives representative of Florida farmers and to ensure the longevity of farming in the state of Florida.

- Further research should be conducted to understand Florida farmers shift away from foreign labor.
- To understand the specific policy issues affecting cross sections of the agricultural industry, further research should be conducted to gain more diverse participation in the policy process.
- A more in-depth study assessing the demographics of Florida farmers in necessary to target groups of the farming community that may be underrepresented or nonexistent in the policy process.
- Further research is needed to investigate the relationship between FFBF members who responded and those who did not respond.
- An examination of the public's knowledge concerning state and federal policy development is needed to apply the study's research more broadly.
- Further research is needed to uncover potential social filters concerning perceptions about immigration and other socially sensitive issues.

Summary

The start of Chapter 5 began with a review of the purposes and objectives of this study. Summaries of the findings presented in Chapter 4 were the next section of the chapter. Using data from Chapter 4, conclusions were drawn and presented following the summaries. A discussion of the conclusions and comparison to previous literature was also included. These conclusions were discussed in the context of the National Research Agenda for Agriculture Education and Communication. Lastly, recommendations for practice and research were included.

APPENDIX A
FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERAL POLICY SURVEY COVER LETTER



May 14, 2008

Dear Active Member:

As a Farm Bureau member, we depend on you to provide us with your input as Florida agriculture faces many complex and challenging problems. If you have received our surveys in the past, I want to thank you personally for your time and contribution to FED PAC. The Florida Farm Bureau again needs your help.

The 2008 elections are quickly approaching. This is a critical time for us to speak up about agricultural issues. For that reason, I am sending you the enclosed 2008 Farm Bureau Federal Policy Survey. This survey has been commissioned by the Florida Farm Bureau Board of Directors to provide some direction and assistance on issues facing farmers, ranchers and growers.

The federal policy survey has three main objectives. First, Florida Farm Bureau board and staff value your opinion and request your input with regard to policy development, issues and implementation. Second, as we build our FBACT database we want to make sure your contact information is correct in order for you to receive the most up-to-date policy bulletins and action alerts in a timely manner. Third, we want to grow the Florida Farm Bureau Federal Political Action Campaign (FFBF FED PAC). A contribution to the FFBF FED PAC helps build a solid foundation of grassroots support for agriculture.

In appreciation for Florida Farm Bureau members who contribute \$100 or more to the FED PAC, there will be a special reception at the 2008 annual meeting in Orlando. **It is imperative that you please take the time to complete the survey and contribute to the FFBF FED PAC by July 31, 2008.**

Your completed survey and financial support are an important investment in the future of Florida agriculture. I look forward to your response and appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

John L. Hoblick
President
Florida Farm Bureau Federation

APPENDIX B
2008 FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERAL POLICY SURVEY- FRONT



The results of this survey will be used to help the Florida Farm Bureau Federation (FFBF) Board of Directors and staff to better understand the thoughts and concerns of Florida's farmers, ranchers and growers. **Please consider and answer each question carefully.**

Instructions:

Please mark the responses that best reflect your answers to the following questions. When you have completed this survey, simply return it to us by using the enclosed business reply envelope. This survey should only take a few minutes of your time. **Please return the completed survey by July 31, 2008.**

Policy Development

- 1) How aware are you about how FFBF develops policy?
 Very aware Somewhat aware Not very aware Not at all aware
- 2) What kind of impact do you feel you can have on FFBF's policy process?
 No impact Not much impact Some impact A great deal of impact

Policy Issues

- 3) If you had access to a market, how willing would you be to shift production to an energy crop?
 Very willing Somewhat willing Not very willing Not at all willing
- 4) How dependent is your operation on the employment of foreign born workers?
 Not at all dependent Not very dependent Somewhat dependent Very dependent
- 5) Have you experienced worker shortages in the past year? Yes No
 If "Yes" how have you handled the situation?

Policy Implementation

- 6) How willing are you to contact elected officials about issues that are important to you?
 Very willing Somewhat willing Not very willing Not at all willing
- 7) Have you ever received an FBACT email alert? Yes No
(FBACT is FFBF's grassroots email alert system to influence public policy makers.)
- 8) Have you ever responded to an FBACT email alert? Yes No
 If "Yes" what kind of impact do you feel that you had?
 No impact Not much impact Some impact A great deal of impact
 If "No" what prevented you from responding?
 The issues were not important to me
 I was not comfortable with the system
 The message was unclear
 Other (please explain) _____



APPENDIX C
2008 FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERAL POLICY SURVEY- BACK

2008 Federal Policy Survey

Please mark all of the following that you produce or with which you are directly involved.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apiary/Honey | <input type="checkbox"/> Grains | <input type="checkbox"/> Seafood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aquaculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Hay | <input type="checkbox"/> Sod/Turfgrass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beef | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuts | <input type="checkbox"/> Strawberries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blueberries | <input type="checkbox"/> Organic/All Natural | <input type="checkbox"/> Sugarcane |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Citrus | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> Swine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cotton | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Livestock | <input type="checkbox"/> Tobacco |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy | <input type="checkbox"/> Peanuts | <input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Horticulture | <input type="checkbox"/> Potatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equine | <input type="checkbox"/> Poultry | <input type="checkbox"/> Watermelons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry | <input type="checkbox"/> Rice | Other: _____ |

Are you self-employed? Yes No

Please review and correct the following information to ensure that you can be reached when action is needed on issues important to you.

(Be sure to include a valid email address as this is the best way to convey important messages in a timely manner.)

Email: _____

2008 Federal Political Action Campaign

Dear President Hoblick,

I am pleased to share with you my opinions on federal policy issues facing Florida agriculture. I agree that Florida Farm Bureau needs to continue to have a strong voice in Washington, DC to promote important agricultural issues. Therefore, I am enclosing a contribution to the FFBF FED PAC in the following amount:

\$25.00 \$50.00 \$100.00 \$200.00 Other: _____

* Please make your personal check payable to Florida Farm Bureau FED PAC.

Signature _____ Date: _____

FFBF FED PAC is a registered federal political action committee. FFBF FED PAC collects contributions from members to be used for political purposes, including the promotion of good federal government on behalf of all taxpayers, farmers, rural families and agricultural interests of the state of Florida.

Contributions to FFBF FED PAC are voluntary and are not a requirement of membership in any county Farm Bureau or the Florida Farm Bureau Federation.

Prior to contributing to the FFBF FED PAC, I am aware: 1) that contributions to the PAC will be used in connection with federal elections and are subject to the prohibitions and limitations of the Federal Election Campaign Act; 2) of my right to refuse to contribute without reprisal; 3) that the guidelines for contributing are merely suggestions. I may contribute more or less than the suggested guidelines or nothing at all and I will not be favored or disadvantaged by reason of the amount of my contribution or my decisions not to contribute; 4) that contributions to the PAC are not deductible for federal income tax purposes; 5) that I must be a US Citizen or Permanent Resident Alien to make a contribution.

Federal law prohibits corporate contributions to FFBF FED PAC. The maximum annual contribution for an individual is \$5,000. Any ineligible FFBF FED PAC contribution (such as a contribution drawn from a corporate account or a contribution in excess of federal limits) will be returned.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

A seventh generation Floridian, Katelyn Crow Landrum was born in Gainesville, Florida. She grew up near the Suwannee River and graduated from Columbia High School in May of 2004. Following high school graduation, Ms. Landrum went to Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, Georgia where she received an Associate of Science degree in Agriculture. Her father is also an alumnus of ABAC, graduating with an Associate of Science degree in Forestry in 1972.

Upon completion of her degree at ABAC, Ms. Landrum joined the Communication and Leadership Development program in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication at the University of Florida. In May 2008, Ms. Landrum earned her Bachelor of Science in agricultural education and communication with minors in leadership and agricultural and natural resource law. During her senior year at UF, Ms. Landrum was elected the Second Vice-President of the National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow.

In August 2008, Ms. Landrum entered the graduate program in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication at the University of Florida with an emphasis in Agricultural Leadership. During her time as a master's student, Ms. Landrum served as the editor of the College of Agricultural and Life Science magazine, CALS Connection. In addition, she served as a graduate assistant for AEE 3030 Effective Oral Communication and AEE 4035: Advanced Agricultural Communication Writing. In May 2010, Ms. Landrum received a Master of Science degree in agricultural leadership with minors in political science and food and resource economics.