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Tagged to Teach Ag Day: Evaluating the Influence of a Recruitment Event on Students' Perceptions of Campus Climate

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Abstract

In an effort to measure the influence of an immersive recruitment event, we sought to evaluate high school students' perceptions toward university climate before and after engaging in a day-long event hosted as part of National Teach Ag Day. The Inviting School Survey-Revised (ISS-R) was administered via paper and pencil when the students arrived and again at the conclusion of the event. Pre-test scores indicated students had favorable opinions of all aspects of [University's] climate factors before attending the event; however, mean scores were consistently higher on the post-test than on the pre-test for all school climate factor areas. We recommend agricultural education departments explore the possibility of implementing a similar immersive recruitment event tailored specifically for agricultural education students. Further, we recommend future research use experimental methods and larger sample sizes to expand the generalizability of these findings.

Keywords: campus climate; recruitment; teach ag day

Introduction

Across the nation and despite numerous past attempts at intervention, an ongoing need for agriculture teachers to enter the profession persists (Smith, Lawver, & Foster, 2017). In 2017, the lack of agriculture teacher candidates willing and able to become employed in school-based agricultural education (SBAE) programs resulted in the loss of 73 SBAE programs and 98.5 teaching positions in 27 states. Post-secondary school agricultural education degree programs work toward meeting the need of supplying the nation with SBAE teachers to reduce these program losses. However, academic programs for agricultural disciplines "are still not producing enough graduates to keep up with the need for qualified professionals at the entry level and at further career stages" (STEM Food and Ag Council, 2014, p.14). Between 2006 and 2009, the number of license-eligible agricultural education graduates decreased by 21% (Kantrovich, 2010). As the number of qualified SBAE teachers has declined, university teacher preparation programs have focused efforts on recruitment in order to replenish agricultural education's human capital pipeline.

Successful recruitment into college or university degree programs relies on the institution's ability to identify and meet students' expectations (Elliot & Healy, 2001). Students' satisfaction, which is largely influenced by their trust in their school and clarity of the school's goals (Grossman, 1999; Hartman & Schmidt, 1995), can be impacted by students' perceptions of several aspects of the

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university, including campus climate (Elliot & Healy, 2001). Recruitment efforts designed to improve students' perceptions of campus climate may lead to increased enrollment within colleges of agriculture; recruitment activities and departmental atmosphere have been found to be among the most important factors influencing students' selections of an agriculture major (Wildman & Torres, 2001).

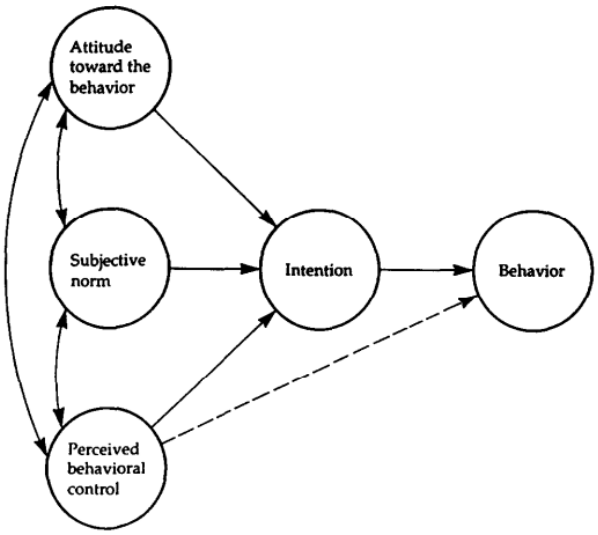
Although universities can easily measure the frequency with which recruitment events occur and the number of students attended, measuring the success of a recruitment event or strategy can be a unique challenge. Kealy and Rockel (1987) posited the most effective way to measure success is not whether students choose to matriculate into a particular college or university, but whether or not the recruitment event initiated positive change in students' perceptions of an institution's quality. Recruitment strategies must showcase the quality of the college or university and outweigh the relative cost of tuition, which is a strong factor influencing students' choices regarding matriculation (Archibald & Feldman, 2010; Ehrenberg & Sherman, 1984; Lambert, 2014; Manski & Wise, 1983).

University of Arkansas's priorities in recruitment have been similar to those within universities across the nation; while state data has not been aggregated, the NAAE region in which [University's] agricultural education graduates commonly have sought employment experienced a total of 20 unfilled teaching positions in 2017, resulting in eight program closures (Smith et al., 2017). Previous recruitment efforts made by the university's [Agricultural Education Department] have focused on print materials, electronic communication with potential recruits, and one-on-one campus meetings with visiting students. In conjunction with the National Association of Agricultural Educators' 2018 National Teach Ag Day, [Agricultural Education Department] implemented Tagged To Teach Ag Day, a recruitment event designed to allow prospective students to experience a day in the life of an agricultural education major and evaluate the school's climate. This study assessed the influence of the on-campus recruitment event on students' perceptions of [University's] campus climate.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985) and expectancy violations theory (Burgoon & Hale, 1988) guided this study. The theory of planned behavior informs the process by which an individual decides and engages in a particular action or behavior (Azjen, 1985). Azjen (1991) posited intention to perform a behavior is the most proximal determinant of their behavioral choice (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991)



Azjen's (1985) theory of planned behavior is an extension of the theory of reasoned action, a key difference being the addition of perceived behavioral control. This additional component refers to the perceived ease or difficulty associated with performing a behavior while taking into consideration past experiences and anticipated obstacles (Azjen, 1991). Additionally, one's attitude toward a behavior and subjective norms regarding the behavior influence one's intention to perform the behavior. Attitude toward the behavior is defined by Azjen (1991) as the degree to which an individual favors the behavior in question. Subjective norm refers to the perceived social expectancy or pressure to perform the behavior in question (Azjen, 1991). "As a general rule, the more favorable the attitude and subjective norm with respect to a behavior, and the greater the perceived behavioral control, the stronger should be an individual's intention to perform the behavior under consideration" (Ajzen, 1991, p.188).

Expectancy violations theory (EVT) seeks to explain the phenomenon of an individual's reaction to the unexpected (Burgoon & Hale, 1988). To explain responses to behavioral violations of social expectations, the tenets of EVT apply to nonverbal situations as well (Burgoon & Hale, 1988). Violations of expectations, derived from individual beliefs and social norms, can be viewed positively or negatively (Dunbar & Segrin, 2012), and may shape future behaviors regarding the subject of the violation. Both positive and negative experiences within EVT may directly impact the determinants of planned behavior (Azjen, 1985, 1991).

Applying both theories to the design of this study, we posited high school students hold preconceived notions regarding campus climate at University of Arkansas. We further posited through alumni, athletics, and extension and service events, students have developed expectations that influence their attitudes regarding the university. By engaging students in a day-long, immersive event designed to allow them to experience the campus climate first-hand, students with low initial expectations regarding campus climate may experience a positive violation of their expectations, thereby enhancing their attitudes toward enrolling in the university.

Conceptual Framework

Campus climate is reflected in an individual's personal evaluation of the social, emotional, and academic experiences of school life (Cohen, 2006; Freiberg, 1999; Smith & Purkey, 2015). Elliot and Healy (2001) surmised that student centeredness, instructional effectiveness, and campus climate strongly influence how satisfied a student is with their educational experience. Purkey and Novak (1996) identified five areas from which a campus climate are established: people, places, processes, policies, and programs. People, referring to the individuals who "are significant in the lives of the students and are contributing or detracting from human existence and development" (Smith, 2005, p. 36), are considered to be the most important component of the model (Purkey & Novak, 1984), as they are responsible for creating and maintaining the climate (Smith, 2005). Places refers to the physical setting in which students engage; the care with which people create and maintain physical spaces can demonstrate their concern for the people who use those spaces (Smith, 2005). Processes refers to the context created by people engaging in a space; it "is the factor that indicates how the school is operating, how the people are acting rather than what is being done" (Smith, 2005, p. 37). Policies include the rules and procedures by which people operate within the setting, as well as how the policies are communicated (Smith, 2005). Finally, programs refers to the ways in which the offerings of a school assist or alienate those it serves. A program can reduce a school's inviting climate if it neglects "the wide scope of human concerns" (Smith, 2005, p. 37).

To date, campus climate research has largely focused on race, ethnicity, gender, and minority populations (Hart & Fellabaum, 2008). An review of literature supported Hart and Fellabaum's conclusions; while we do not claim to have synthesized all possible literature, we found no studies focusing on any discipline-based population of students' perceptions of campus climate or factors influencing potential recruits' perceptions of campus climate.

The impact of recruitment strategies, however, has been well-researched. Beyl, Adams, and Smith (2016) explained that the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at an undisclosed university experienced a decrease in enrollment from 1995-2006 while utilizing traditional recruitment techniques, such as college fairs and paper brochures. In 2007, this university adjusted their approach to include advocates, ambassadors, and web-based media, along with a focus on campus tours. Their revised approach resulted in an increase in student enrollment from 858 in 2007 to 1350 in 2014 (Beyl et al., 2016).

Baker, Settle, Chiarelli, and Irani (2013) conducted focus groups with current agriculture students to identify preferred messages and channels for recruiting students. The researchers found students perceived messages related to job stability and those that displayed positive contexts to be most impactful. These students also preferred messages that were delivered either in person or disseminated through online advertisements and campus publications. Wildman and Torres (2001) reported that the recruitment messages the originated from academic departments were more influential than those originating from the college of agriculture. Similarly, Lingenfelter and Beierlein (2006) reported that the recruitment strategies that focused on individual disciplines were more impactful than those focusing on agriculture in general.

In an attempt to increase enrollment numbers in agricultural education degree programs, the National Council of Agricultural Education launched the National Teach Ag Campaign in partnership with the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) and the National FFA Organization (National Teach Ag Campaign, 2017). This initiative strives to raise awareness for the career opportunities associated with agricultural education degrees, encourage students to pursue a career in agricultural education, and support current agricultural education teachers (National Teach Ag Day, 2017). One of the engagement opportunities provided by the initiative includes National Teach Ag Day.

Hosted each September, the campaign's culminating day calls for postsecondary agricultural education programs to engage their students in efforts that highlight agricultural education as a promising career path (NAAE, 2017).

Purpose

Through this study, we sought to describe students' perceptions toward school climate through a post-secondary agricultural education recruitment event. The following research objectives guided this study:

1. Describe students' perceptions toward University of Arkansas's school climate before engaging in an immersive recruitment event;
2. describe students' perceptions toward University of Arkansas's school climate after engaging in an immersive recruitment event; and
3. describe the difference between students' perceptions before and after the immersive recruitment event.

Methods

University of Arkansas hosted a recruitment event for its agricultural education degree program in conjunction with National Teach Ag Day. The event was offered to students identified by current agriculture teachers in Arkansas as those likely to be interested in a career as an agriculture teacher. Teachers (N = 225) were sent an email that explained the event and asked them to identify students they wanted to "tag to teach ag", aligning with the theme of the NAAE's national recruitment efforts. Nineteen teachers responded to the request, and 24 students were nominated. Once these students were identified, we contacted each student via email and explained they were nominated by an agriculture teacher to attend the event. Nineteen students attended the event, yielding an event participation rate of 79.7%. The event took place at University of Arkansas and allowed students to tour campus, attend two classes available to agricultural education majors, participate in a workshop focusing on the roles and responsibilities of agriculture teachers, and discuss topics such as campus engagement, financial aid, program requirements, and college culture with undergraduates, graduates, and faculty of the [Agricultural Education Department] through a one-on-one speed networking event. The students also participated in two group meals during the event. During both meals, faculty and students interacted with participants via informal conversations in small groups.

This study employed a pre- post-test design to assess students' perceptions of the campus culture at University of Arkansas. While this design has been faulted for its numerous flaws jeopardizing a study's internal validity (Campbell & Stanley, 1963), it has been cited as a useful design when collecting baseline data to inform future studies using more robust designs (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Because we intentionally created events aligning with factors associated with perceptions of campus climate and were unable to identify a suitable control group of students nominated by their teachers as being good candidates to teach SBAE but not attending the event, we deemed the pre-experimental, single group pre- post-test design to be suitable for collecting baseline data on the influence of the event. However, we recognize the limitations of the design and recommend findings not be generalized outside the sample herein, but rather be used to inform future studies of more robust experimental designs.

The Inviting School Survey-Revised (ISS-R) was administered via paper and pencil when the students arrived and again at the conclusion of the event. Again, we recognize the limitations created as a result of administering both pre- and posttests in the same day. Campbell and Stanley (1963) and Cook and Campbell (1979) identified testing effects as a threat to internal validity. Participants' responses on a posttest may be altered by their experience with the pretest rather than the intervention, as the pretest may cause them to better understand the experiment, and/or take effort to moderate their performance on the posttest (Lund Research, 2012). However, attrition is also a threat to validity

recognized by Campbell and Stanley (1963) and Cook and Campbell (1979). The loss of participants over time in a study with any duration can alter the findings so greatly that the results can be rendered "almost worthless" (Barry, 2009, p. 267). After evaluating both threats, we felt the risk of participant attrition created by administering the posttest after participants had left campus was a greater threat to the study's validity than the threat of a testing effect created by a one-day testing timeline.

The ISS-R assesses students' perceptions of people, places, programs, policies, and processes within the university (Smith & Purkey, 2015). The original Inviting School Survey was developed by Purkey and Fuller (1995) and consisted of 100 items on a Likert-type scale. The modified instrument used for this study was created by Smith (2005) after reliability analyses revealed that the instrument could be reduced to 50 items without significantly compromising reliability (Smith & Bernard, 2004). All items on the instrument used for this study were based on a five-point Likert scale system with *five* being strongly agree and *one* being strongly disagree.

Based on the tenets of invitational theory and practice, the ISS-R assesses students' perceptions on people, programs, processes, policies, and places within the university (Table 1). Cronbach's alpha coefficients from previous studies revealed acceptable internal consistency yields in all five subscale areas (≥ .75) (Smith, 2005, 2011).

Table 1
School Climate Factors Included in the Inviting School Survey – Revised

School Climate Factors	Number of Items	Possible Score Range
People	16	16 - 80
Programs	7	7 – 35
Processes	8	8 – 40
Policies	7	7 – 35
Places	12	12 - 60

Currently, concurrent and predictive validity of the ISS-R is limited, however face and content validity has been thoroughly established through experts and practitioners in the field of invitational education (Smith & Purkey, 2015; Smith 2011, 2005).

Three of the students informed us prior to their arrival that they had to leave the event early, leading to a response rate of 84.2% (n = 16). Because these students were unable to experience the full recruitment event, they were removed from the study and efforts were not made to collect their responses to the posttest. Descriptive analysis yielded the average mean score, standard deviation, and difference score of the participants' responses. The ISS-R items from both the pre- and posttest were grouped by subscale-specific questions and analyzed in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

Results

This study sought to describe students' perceptions toward University of Arkansas's school climate. While statistical analysis of Likert-type scales is performed on a set of items designed to measure a construct (Clason & Dormody, 1994), we described participants' responses to individual items within each construct in order to give the reader a fuller understanding of the responses within each construct.

Before engaging in the recruitment event, participants' mean scores indicated agreement (3.50 – 4.49) on a majority of the items within the *people* construct (Table 2). Participants agreed most strongly with the statement, "school pride is evident among students" (M = 4.53). Responses indicated a more neutral attitude regarding the department chair's involvement of others in decision making (M

= 2.88), people's level of politeness toward one another (*M* = 3.35), and people's pride in keeping facilities clean (*M* = 3.25). Following the recruitment event, participants' mean scores indicated strong agreement with half of the items in the *people* construct and agreement with all of the remaining items, with the exception of two. Participants displayed neutral feelings regarding the department chair's involvement of others in decision making *(M* = 3.53) and people's pride in keeping facilities clean (*M* = 3.35). Mean scores increased on all items, with the exception of that focusing on students' display of school pride; the mean score on this item remained constant between pre- and posttest. However, while this item yielded the highest mean score on the pretest, five items on the posttest yielded higher mean scores than this previously top-ranked item.

Table 2
Respondents' Mean Scores Displaying their Perceptions on Items Related to People

	Pretest		**Posttest**	
Items in *People* Construct	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
The department chair involves everyone in the decision-making process.	2.88	0.78	3.53	0.78
Teachers in this school show respect for students.	3.94	0.75	4.82	0.38
Teachers are easy to talk with.	4.06	0.80	4.76	0.42
Teachers take the time to talk with students about students' out-of-class activities.	3.71	0.89	4.29	0.75
Teachers are generally prepared for class.	3.88	0.76	4.53	0.61
Teachers exhibit a sense of humor.	4.20	0.65	4.94	0.24
People in this school are polite to one another.	3.35	1.03	4.41	0.77
Teachers work to encourage students' self-confidence.	3.82	0.71	4.47	0.92
The faculty members treat people as though they are responsible.	3.75	0.83	3.81	0.81
Students work cooperatively with each other.	3.81	0.63	4.47	0.78
People in this school want to be here.	3.88	0.86	4.53	0.85
People in this school take pride in keeping the school facilities clean.	3.25	0.66	3.35	0.68
Teachers appear to enjoy life.	4.35	0.76	4.71	0.75
School pride is evident among students.	4.53	0.78	4.53	0.77
Teachers share out-of-class experiences with students.	3.63	0.86	4.59	0.69
Teachers spend time outside of class with those who need extra help.	3.56	0.87	4.19	0.81

Within the *program* construct (Table 3), respondents initially felt neutral regarding how the school encouraged students to participate in extracurricular programs (M = 3.29) and whether interruptions to academic activities were kept to a minimum (M = 3.25), while their mean scores indicated agreement to the remaining items. Following the recruitment event, participants' mean scores increased on every item. Their feelings regarding whether everyone was encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities remained neutral (M = 3.35).

Table 3
Respondents' Mean Scores Displaying their Perceptions on Items Related to Program

	Pretest		Posttest	
Items in *Program* Construct	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Everyone is encouraged to participate in extracurricular programs.	3.29	0.96	3.35	0.84
There is a wellness (health) program in this school.	3.76	0.88	4.05	0.87
School programs involve out of school experience.	3.94	0.94	4.24	0.94
Good health practices are encouraged in this school.	3.94	0.83	4.00	0.79
Interruptions to classroom academic activities are kept to a minimum.	3.25	0.75	4.29	0.74
The school sponsors extracurricular activities apart from sports.	3.65	0.90	4.12	0.90
Educational opportunities outside of class are available to students.	3.73	0.77	3.94	1.03

Before the intervention, respondents felt neutral regarding several of the items within the *process* construct (Table 4) (Everyone arrives on time for school [M = 2.82], All telephone calls to this school are answered promptly and politely [M = 3.41], and Classes get started quickly [M = 3.50]). The item regarding the timeliness of people arriving to school yielded the lowest mean score across the full questionnaire. On average, respondents agreed most strongly with the statement regarding the frequency with which people feel welcome when they enter the school (M = 4.31). After the recruitment event, participants' mean score remained neutral in only the statement regarding how telephone calls were answered (M = 3.50). Mean agreement scores increased on all items. Participants' mean scores moved from agreement to strong agreement on the statement regarding the frequency with which people feel welcome when they enter the school (M = 4.59); this item remained the one on which respondents indicated the strongest agreement.

Table 4
Respondents' Mean Scores Displaying their Perceptions on Items Related to Process

	Pretest		Posttest	
Items in *Process* Construct	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Student discipline is approached from a positive standpoint.	3.76	0.64	4.24	0.73
Grades are assigned by means of fair and comprehensive assessment of work and effort.	3.94	0.73	4.41	0.69
All telephone calls to this school are answered promptly and politely.	3.41	1.03	3.50	0.79
Everyone arrives on time for school.	2.82	0.86	3.71	1.07
People often feel welcome when they enter the school.	4.31	0.46	4.59	0.69
Many people in this school are involved in making decisions.	3.63	0.86	4.18	0.86
Daily attendance by students and staff is high.	3.94	0.94	4.37	0.86
Classes get started quickly.	3.50	0.87	4.41	0.77

Table 5 displays respondents' mean agreement scores on items related to the *policy* construct before and after the recruitment event. Initially, respondents felt neutral regarding whether faculty and student interactions are positive ($M = 3.31$) and whether faculty encourage and assist struggling students ($M = 3.19$). Their average scores indicated agreement on the remaining items. Following the recruitment event, respondents indicated strong agreement regarding whether teachers are willing to help students who have special problems ($M = 4.65$), whether students have the opportunity to talk to one another during class activities ($M = 4.65$), and whether the grading practices are fair ($M = 4.53$). Respondents indicated agreement on all other items with the exception of whether faculty encourage and assist struggling students, which continued to yield a neutral mean score ($M = 3.41$).

Table 5
Respondents' Mean Scores Displaying their Perceptions on Items Related to Policy

	Pretest		Posttest	
Items in *Policy* Construct	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Teachers are willing to help students who have special problems.	4.06	0.73	4.65	0.59
Students have the opportunity to talk to one another during class activities.	3.82	0.92	4.65	0.48
School policy encourages freedom of expression by everyone.	3.94	0.80	4.47	0.78
Faculty and student interactions are positive.	3.31	0.68	3.57	0.73

Table 5
Respondents' Mean Scores Displaying their Perceptions on Items Related to Policy, Continued…

A high percentage of students pass in this school.	**3.81**	**1.07**	**4.35**	**0.90**
Faculty encourage and assist struggling students.	3.19	0.81	3.41	0.77
The grading practices in this school are fair.	3.81	0.88	4.53	0.78

Regarding items related to *place*, respondents initially displayed strong agreement regarding the school grounds (M = 4.88). They held neutral beliefs regarding the attractiveness of faculty members' offices (M = 3.38) and bulletin boards (M = 3.31), and whether safety instructions were posted and reasonable (M = 3.00). The item regarding the attractiveness of the school grounds yielded the highest mean score over the entire instrument before the intervention. Following the recruitment event, respondents' mean scores indicated an increase in agreement on all items with the exception of that regarding the attractiveness of school grounds, which remained the same, and the adequacy of the interior lighting, which decreased 0.04 points.

Table 6
Respondents' Mean Scores Displaying their Perceptions on Items Related to Place

	Pretest		**Posttest**	
Items in *Place* Construct	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Furniture is pleasant and comfortable.	3.82	1.15	4.53	0.59
The air smells fresh in this school.	4.18	1.10	4.71	0.57
The school grounds are clean and well maintained.	4.88	0.32	4.88	0.32
The restrooms in this school are clean and properly maintained.	3.88	0.83	4.63	0.70
The faculty offices are attractive.	3.38	0.70	3.50	0.71
Bulletin boards are attractive and up-to-date.	3.31	1.10	3.65	0.97
Space is available for student independent study.	4.24	0.73	4.29	0.75
Safety instructions are well posted and seem reasonable.	3.00	1.14	3.38	1.05
Classrooms offer a variety of furniture arrangements.	3.71	1.02	4.19	1.13
Clocks and water fountains are in good repair.	3.94	0.87	4.24	0.73
There are comfortable chairs for visitors.	4.38	0.78	4.82	0.38
The lighting in this school is more than adequate.	4.29	0.75	4.24	0.94

Factors of school climate, analyzed by construct, were compared in a pre- and post-test analysis (Table 7). Prior to the intervention, respondents mean scores indicated the strongest agreement on the *policy* construct and weakest agreement within the *process* construct.

Table 7

Pre- and Post-test Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of School Climate Factors

	Pre-Test		Post-Test		
Factor	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	Difference
People	59.63	0.36	61.69	0.22	+2.06
Program	61.29	0.33	63.14	0.20	+1.86
Process	54.86	0.40	60.00	0.31	+5.14
Policy	62.71	0.41	63.14	0.32	+0.43
Place	60.17	0.34	64.00	0.28	+3.83

Note. Difference was calculated as post-test minus pre-test

Mean scores were consistently higher on the post-test than on the pre-test for all school climate factor areas. Students' scores yielded the largest score difference within the *process* construct (+5.14). The smallest difference was found within the *policy* construct (+0.43). Post-test mean scores indicated the strongest on the *policy* construct; the *process* construct remained the area in which respondents held the weakest agreement.

Conclusions and Implications

Before engaging in the recruitment event, participants displayed mean scores that indicated agreement with positively worded statements for each of the school climate factors, both for each construct and for a majority of the individual items within each construct. The *policy* construct yielded the highest mean score while the *process* construct yielded the lowest mean score before the event. Policies refer to the appropriateness of the rules and procedures within a school, as well as how well they are communicated (Smith, 2005), suggesting previous interactions with the university, either directly or vicariously, have led these students to feel the university's policies positively contribute to the university's climate. Processes refers to how the people within a school act (Smith, 2005). Mean scores on individual items within this construct indicated several neutral perceptions related to people's timeliness, the answering of telephone calls, and whether classes start on time, but greater agreement on items related to student discipline, grading, and whether people feel welcome, suggesting previous experiences with the university have led to perceptions of a lack of respect for promptness from the university's people. Scores did not reach the maximum in any factor, suggesting recruitment events may have an opportunity to positively influence students' perceptions of campus climate.

According to Kealy and Rockel (1987), the success of a recruitment event cannot be accurately measured by the number of students in attendance or by how much enrollment numbers change from year to year, but through positive shifts in perceptions regarding an institution. Based on this measurement, the University of Arkansas's agricultural education recruitment event was a success. Students who participated in the all-day event indicated through the ISS-R that their perceptions of University of Arkansas's campus climate positively increased as a result of their experiences with the institution's people, program, processes, policies, and places. Following the event, students' mean scores indicated the strongest agreement within the *place* construct and weakest agreement within the *process* construct (it should be noted, however, this construct yielded the greatest increase in mean

score). Hosting the recruitment event on the university campus increased students' perceptions of the physical setting and the care with which these settings were maintained, particularly related to furniture, air, restrooms, and faculty offices; perceptions regarding the school grounds did not change, but remained the item on which students had the strongest agreement within this construct. While students' maintained a neutral perception regarding the way in which telephone calls were answered, their perceptions of the timeliness of people arriving to campus and classes starting increased to indicate agreement on average. Smith (2005) noted the impact negative processes can have on academics and human development; the direct experience with the university's people increased students' overall perceptions of the university's promptness, but more can be done to shift their perceptions of how telephone calls are answered.

The degree to which each construct increased suggests hosting the event on campus and setting up experiences that engaged participants in activities with students and faculty were most influential, as mean scores on the *process*, *people*, and *place* constructs increased the most. However, the differences in which each construct yielded mean score changes could also be the result of the amount by which each construct had the opportunity to increase based on initial mean scores. The *policy* construct, which originally yielded the highest mean score, increased the smallest amount while the *process* constructed, which originally yielded the lowest mean score, increased the greatest amount.

Recommendations for Research and Practice

Focusing again on the fact that all constructs did see an increase in mean score, we recommend agricultural education departments explore the possibility of implementing a similar immersive recruitment event tailored specifically for agricultural education students, and use it to investigate the influence of such an event on campus culture among their participants. Hosting the events on campus and providing opportunities for engagement between recruits and faculty, staff, and current students can be instrument in shaping participants' perceptions of the people, places, and processes of a university.

Universities are encouraged to use the ISS-R to evaluate opportunities for improvement (Smith, 2005). Results of this administration suggest improvements can be made with regard to [Department's] lighting, as this was the only item on the questionnaire that yielded a decrease in mean score. We recommend a request for the Facilities Department to inspect all lighting be made before a recruitment event. There were several items that yielded mean scores aligning with neutral perceptions following the event; each of these is an opportunity for improvement within the department. We recommend Agricultural Education departments utilizing the ISS-R or other instrument measuring campus climate utilize results to identify areas for improvement to incorporate into an annual improvement plan.

Additional research into the longitudinal impact campus climate has on matriculation rates is recommended to establish empirical evidence. Additionally, while this study's data may support Wildman and Torres' (2001) and Lingenfelter and Beierlein's (2016) recommendations to focus on discipline-specific recruitment, the current study's omission of an alternate group experiencing a college-based recruitment event limits our ability to confirm the findings of these previous studies. We recommend further research using experimental techniques to examine the impact of these two methods of recruitment on students' perceptions of campus climate.

Azjen's theory of planned behavior (1985), which states that an individual's intention to carry out a behavior is a direct indicator of a behavioral action, suggests these findings may yield positive outcomes for both the current decline among college enrollment (Jaschik, 2017), and the national shortage of agricultural teachers (Smith et al., 2017). Further research is needed to establish a

correlation between recruitment events specifically within agricultural education and the future supply of agriculture teachers.

These findings should not be generalized beyond the population of this study. However, the data carries implications for all agricultural education degree programs wanting to maximize their recruitment events. Due to the impact that campus climate has on student satisfaction and the determinants of intention (Azjen, 1985, 1991; Elliot & Healy, 2001; Harrison, 1995), recruitment events should focus on making a connections with the institution's people, program, processes, policies, and places. This on-campus recruitment approach allowed for high school students to foster impactful connections with an institutions' students, faculty, and facilities. Also, due to the difficulty associated with measuring the impact of college recruitment events (Kealy & Rockel, 1987) this study provided an opportunity to reframe the way other institutions measure the success of their recruitment endeavors. A replication study on a larger scale that incorporates multiple agricultural education degree programs is recommended to increase generalizability of results.

These recommendations stem from the findings of this study; we must recognize that while all teachers across Arkansas were invited to identify students to attend this event, only a small handful actually did. A lack of participation from teachers in identifying students to attend the event could be the result of a combination of numerous factors. First, University of Arkansas is located in the northwest corner of the state, making transportation to participate in a day-long event challenging. Compounding the issue is the possibility that high school students may not have access to transportation. We must also consider the nontangible possibilities leading nonresponse from teachers; there are four institutions certifying agricultural education teachers in the state, and loyalty to other universities may have prevented some teachers from identifying students to participate in a University of Arkansas recruitment event. Alternately, we recognize teachers may not be promoting agricultural education as a career choice for their students, and may be putting greater effort in promoting other employment opportunities within agricultural industries. We recommend researchers identify the motives and barriers leading to participation, or lack thereof, in recruiting events in order to employ efforts to maximize participation. Finally, we sent the invitation for teachers to identify students through the electronic listserv, which delivered the invitation three times to each teacher's email. We recommend those hosting events send the invitation via multiple methods, including social media and telephone in addition to email.

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