UNLV UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Journal of Research in Technical Careers

Volume 7 | Issue 2 Article 5

12-2023

Shaping Supervised Agricultural Experiences in Rural American Schools: Support, Supervision, and Culture

Eric D. Rubenstein
University of Georgia

Andrew Thoron
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College

Taylor D. Bird
University of Georgia

Recommended Citation

Rubenstein, E. D., Thoron, A., & Bird, T. D. (2023). Shaping Supervised Agricultural Experiences in Rural American Schools: Support, Supervision, and Culture. *Journal of Research in Technical Careers, 7* (2). https://doi.org/10.9741/2578-2118.1126

Shaping Supervised Agricultural Experiences in Rural American Schools: Support, Supervision, and Culture

Cover Page Footnote

This research was funded by Midwest PMS.

Journal of Research in Technical Careers
December 2023, Vol. 7, No. 2

Shaping Supervised Agricultural Experiences in Rural American Schools: Support, Supervision, and Culture

Eric D. Rubenstein
University of Georgia
Andrew C. Thoron
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
Taylor D. Bird
University of Georgia

Over the years, examination of barriers to the development and implementation of Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs has gained traction. This has led the profession to investigate the relevance of SAE. In the conducted studies, the profession continually notes that SAE remains a foundational component and perhaps the only distinguishing difference between school-based agriscience education (SBAE) and other Career and Technical Education programs or specialty courses that tie in a student leadership organization. While collecting evidence of perceived barriers of SAE implementation is important, at some point the question must be asked: What is right with student SAE programs in SBAE? This study used a qualitative approach to examine factors that exist in rural SBAE programs that maintain exemplary SAE programs. Through focus groups, one-on-one interviews, observations, and informal interviews, nine factors, embedded in three themes, emerged. Researchers concluded a culture for SAE existed throughout the total program, school, and community. It was recommended that agriculture teachers aspire to instill SAE culture within their programs.

Keywords*:* SAE implementation; SAE development; agricultural education; and experiential learning

Introduction

The National Council for Agricultural Education (NCAE) developed an initiative to renew and reinvigorate the utilization of Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE) within school-based agricultural education (SBAE) classrooms. The Experiential Learning Planning Committee was developed to address the barriers that teachers and students in SBAE programs around the country were facing in their implementation of SAE programs at the local level (NCAE, 2015). Following the presentation of the final report, the planning committee was recharged with the development of specific methods to renew and reinvigorate the development and implementation of SAE.

The National FFA Organization, serving as the leadership component within the agricultural education model, reported 60% of FFA chapters, and presumably secondary-school agricultural education programs, still reside in rural areas (2023). Residents within

https://doi.org/10.9741/2578-2118.1126

a rural community are more likely to live in lower socioeconomic status (SES) conditions than urban counterparts (Blumenthal & Kagen, 2002). Various studies have addressed the factors of limitation for students to participate in SAE programs including lack of time, resources, and motivation (Barrick et al., 1991; Dyer & Osborne, 1995; Rayfield & Moore, 2012). Rural SBAE teachers are faced with these limitations and barriers when teaching students the concepts and requirements of SAE programs.

For SAE programs to be successful, teachers must effectively assist students in the development and implementation of SAE programs that meet students' needs and interests (Barrick et al., 1992). However, little to no research has been done to examine how teachers currently develop and implement SAE programs (Dyer & Osborne, 1995). Retallick (2011) discussed tactics for teachers to redefine the structure of SAE to reach a broader student body with the idea that SAE cannot be a "one size fits all." An examination of these considerations and methods to improve SAE instruction could assist in an increased utilization of SAE in SBAE programs. Therefore, this study investigated the development and implementation process utilized in rural schools where exemplary SAE programs were conducted.

Purpose and Research Questions. The purpose of this study was to identify factors present in the development and implementation of exemplary SAE programs in rural schools. This study supported Priority Area Four, Meaningful and Engaged Learning Environments, of the National Research Agenda (Doerfert, 2011). This study was part of a larger study, and the research question is as follows:

1. What [teacher; student; school; community; & family] factors were present in the development and implementation of exemplary SAE programs in rural schools?

Literature Review

Barrick et al. (2011) defines an SAE as, "a planned and supervised program of experience-based learning activities that extend school-based instruction to enhance knowledge, skills, and awareness." Developed from the original project-based teaching method (Stimson, 1915), the current version of SAE encompasses career exploration, literacy, workplace safety, college and career readiness, and financial management through placement/internship, ownership/entrepreneurship, research, school-based enterprise, and service-learning projects through the lens of the agricultural industry (NCAE, 2017). SAE programs have been seen to be most effective when relating to a topic or facet of agriculture that meets student interests (Swenson et al., 2021) and developing a student's work-based learning skills to prepare them for college and other professional environments (Robinson & Haynes, 2011).

SAE is a requirement for all SBAE students, regardless of location (NCAE, 2017). Although there has been some research in the literature regarding SES comparison between rural and urban students (Blumenthal & Kagen, 2002), there has also been research regarding the benefits and opportunities that rural students have in the context of agricultural education. Elliot & Lambert (2018) applied the term *rural privilege* to

students in rural SBAE programs because of the closer connection to agriculture, the larger land space to engage in larger SAE programs, and community connections. However, the literature also suggests that due to the nature of a rural school having a smaller population of students, rural students are stretched thinner and pulled away from participation in SBAE because of external factors including sports and other clubs or organizations (Rayfield, et al., 2008). The involvement load of rural students may affect their application of an SAE program.

Many issues regarding the utilization of SAE have been discussed within the agricultural education literature. Throughout the literature, the decreasing level of student participation has been a major concern of the agricultural education community (Barrick & Estepp, 2011; Newcomb et al., 2004; Phipps et al., 2008; Talbert et al., 2007). Further, teachers have reported numerous concerns regarding their ability to develop and implement SAE programs including changing student demographics and availability of resources to students (Barrick & Estepp, 2011; Dyer & Osborne, 1995; Newcomb et al., 2004; Phipps et al., 2008; Retallick, 2011; Talbert et al., 2007). Studies have recommended that further examination of SAE program utilization in SBAE is needed (Barrick et al., 1991; Dyer & Osborne, 1995; Lewis et al., 2012; Retallick, 2010; Robinson & Hayes, 2010).

Theoretical Perspectives

Creswell (1998) described case-study research as the in-depth examination of single or multiple cases. The researchers in this study examined two rural SBAE programs to describe the SAE development and utilization processes used by teachers. The researchers also utilized ontological, epistemological, and theoretical frameworks to ground the research (Crotty, 2010).

According to Crotty (2010), ontology refers to the study of the existence of multiple realities. The study of ontology examines what a participant perceives as real in relation to the phenomenon that was examined (Crotty, 2010). This study and researchers utilized the ontology of realism. Realism "is the doctrine that there are real objects that exist independently of our knowledge of their existence" (Schwandt, 1997, p. 133). Turner (2008) suggested that realism accepts that a real world exists that must be explored and interpreted through physical interaction between the individual and the world. In this study, the participants interacted with their SAE program and discovered knowledge based upon their interactions with the physical world.

When describing the constructionism epistemological perspective, Guba and Lincoln (1990) posited a human's reality of the world is different than the natural physical world. According to Patton (2002), due to a human's ability to interpret and construct meaning from his/her reality, a human's reality "is not real in an absolute sense, as the sun is real, but is 'made up' and shaped by cultural and linguistic constructs" (p. 96). In this study, the researchers examined each participant's perspective and interaction with SAE development and implementation within the participant's individualized reality.

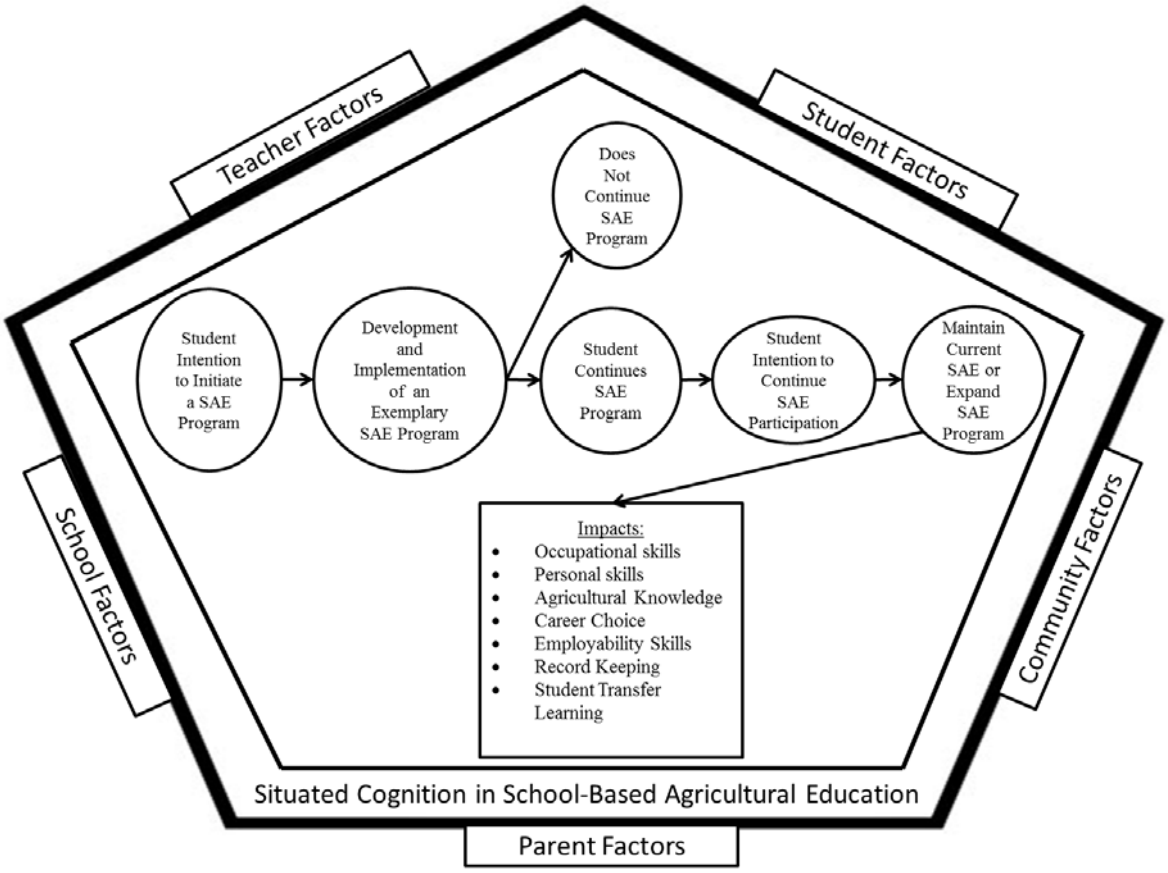
The theoretical frameworks of constructivism guided this study. Crotty (2010) defined a theoretical perspective as "an elaboration … of the assumptions brought to the research task and reflected in the methodology as we understand and employ it" (p. 7). Constructivism refers to an individual's meaning-making process as a construction of meaning rather than a discovery. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) define constructivism as an individual's construction of knowledge constructed through interaction between the individual and an object. In this study, the researchers sought to examine the knowledge-base of factors developed by participants through their interaction with exemplary SAE programs.

Conceptual Framework

Within SAE literature, little work has been completed in the construction of a model that guides the development and implementation of SAE programs. Phipps et al., (2008) stated that all involved in the SAE program must agree upon the development and implementation of SAE. However, Rubenstein and Thoron (2014) found SAE development and implementation were affected by the students' intention to participate in SAE. Bird et al. (2013) stated external and internal factors influence a student's decision to participate in SAE. Utilizing the recent literature in SAE, Figure 1 represents the researchers' conceptual framework, which guided this study. The framework seeks to explain the role of student, teacher, parent, community, and school factors on student intention, development, implementation, and continual use of SAE programs. The researchers utilized this framework to guide the methods of this study in choosing participants and framing questions that align with previous understanding of factors that affect a student's SAE.

Figure 1

Conceptual model of SAE programs in SBAE



Methods

The methods of this study were developed as part of a larger study. This qualitative study utilized a purposive method for participant selection (Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2009). Two states were selected where the researchers had not previously worked and also had not partnered with anyone from the states on research activities to reduce threats to researcher bias. Researchers contacted an agricultural education university faculty member and the state agricultural education supervisor within the two states to garner three to five rural agricultural education programs. Rural programs were qualified as being in places with fewer than 2,500 people in population, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (2019). At the completion of the review of the school demographics, seven teachers in Minnesota and ten teachers in Georgia were contacted and interviewed by phone. The agriculture teachers were notified of their selection for participation in the study and on-site visits were established. The agriculture teachers

were then asked to select six students who were establishing an SAE program for the first time and six students who had conducted an SAE program for three years or more. A parent or guardian of each student was asked to participate in a focus group during the on-site visit.

Site visits were scheduled for a two-day observation and data collection period. During the site visit, a minimum of two student focus groups, two parent focus groups, one community member focus group, and one or two teacher interviews (depending on the number of agriculture teachers in the program) were conducted. Each focus group contained between four and six participants (Morgan, 1988). The participants of this study included 21 students, 16 parents, four community members and three agriculture teachers. School A comprised nine students, eight parents, and three community members. School B comprised 12 students, eight parents, and one community member. Due to a limited number of community members, the community members were combined with parents to conduct the focus groups. The students in the focus groups ranged from 10th grade to 12th grade (Table 1). The adults (parents and community members) ranged from ages 37 to 63. A majority of the participants were predominately Caucasian (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 1
Student Participant SAE Programs

Student	Gender	SAE Program
1	Female	Equine Management – Placement and Entrepreneurship
2	Male	Beef Production – Entrepreneurship
3	Male	Equine Science – Placement
4	Female	Specialty Crop Production – Entrepreneurship
5	Male	Agricultural Mechanics – Entrepreneurship
6	Female	Equine Management – Placement
7	Female	Agricultural Education – Placement
8	Female	Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Assisting – Placement
9	Female	Agricultural Education – Placement
10	Female	Goat Production – Entrepreneurship
11	Female	Greenhouse Management – Placement
12	Female	Garden Production – Entrepreneurship
13	Female	Dairy Production – Entrepreneurship
14	Male	Dairy and Crop Production – Entrepreneurship
15	Male	Dairy Production – Placement
16	Female	Poultry Production – Entrepreneurship
17	Female	Specialty Animal Production (Honey Bees) – Entrepreneurship
18	Female	Poultry Production – Entrepreneurship
19	Male	Specialty Crop Production (Seed Corn) – Placement
20	Female	Landscape Maintenance – Placement
21	Female	Agricultural Sales – Placement

Table 2
Community Member Careers

Community Member	Gender	Career
1	Male	Owner of a Family Farm
2	Male	Owner of a Family Farm
3	Male	Extension Agent
4	Female	Owner of a Family Farm

Table 3
Parent Careers

Parent	Gender	Career
1	Female	Owner of a Dairy Farm
2	Female	Animal Handler for an Assisting Care Facility
3	Female	Owner of a Dairy Farm
4	Female	Radiology Technologist
5	Female	Bookkeeper/Accountant
6	Female	Parent Educator & College Student
7	Male	Director of Engineering for a Milk Producer Coalition
8	Male	Township Maintenance Department
9	Female	Stay-at-home Mom
10	Female	Accountant
11	Male	Contractor
12	Female	Secretary
13	Female	Disable – Owner of a Family Farm
14	Female	Landscape Maintenance Department
15	Female	Owner of a Remodeling Company
16	Female	Sales Coordinator

The focus groups and interviews were audio recorded and transcribed for data analysis. Observations and informal interviews were conducted with additional agriculture students, who did not participate in the focus groups, by the researchers to establish consistency in the data between all students enrolled in an agricultural education course and to ensure that the researcher had achieved data saturation. Data saturation was achieved by the researchers and was noted, when the researchers found the repetition of themes and lack of new data, during the initial stages of data analysis.

Interviews and focus groups were conducted utilizing a semi-structured interview guide. The individual interviews lasted between 50 and 90 minutes, while the focus groups lasted between 80 and 110 minutes. Even if participants chose not to utilize a pseudonym, pseudonyms were assigned to all participants during the transcription process to ensure anonymity of the data (Creswell, 2013; McMillian & Schumacher, 2010). Further, all identifiers were removed from the data to ensure participant anonymity was upheld. An incentive was utilized as a stimulus to participate in the focus

group (Krueger & Casey, 2009). In this study, parents and community members were provided with a $25 check and the agriculture teachers were provided with a $75 check.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) constructed a four-step constant comparative method that was utilized to compare data collected across multiple cases without the development of relationships and a theory. This method was performed by analyzing and comparing data not only from the multiple cases observed, but within each individual site to determine themes and contradictions within the data. To ensure the trustworthiness and rigor of the research study, the researchers utilized: member checking, peer debriefing, persistent observations, referential adequacy materials (teachers' SAE instructional materials), and triangulation between three different data collected (Dooley, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), thick descriptions of the context and data, and an audit trail with documentation on methodological decisions made during the study (Dooley, 2007). Further the researchers in this study were agricultural education faculty with formal training in SAE program development. Both researchers believed SAE was an integral component of a SBAE program.

Findings

Supportive Surrounding "Community." When ensuring every student was involved in an SAE program, it was essential to understand the factors that influenced student involvement. "Community" in the findings of this study includes parties such as parents, SBAE programs, and community members involved in agricultural education.

Supportive Parents. When working with students involved in an SAE program, teachers must address the needs of the students' parents, which supports the work of Retallick (2010) and Dyer & Osborne (1995). The teachers noted they spent time discussing a student's SAE program whenever they were engaged in a conversation with the student's parent. Teacher-1 described, "anytime I talked to a parent I talk to them about their student's SAE, no matter what the conversation is about." Parents believed their role was to be supportive and provide supervision to their students while they were engaged in their SAE program at home. Parent-2 stated, "we support what he wants to do but we also encourage, like as a parent I encourage him to take every opportunity that comes his way." The parents felt as though they had an interest in seeing their students succeed and learn from their SAE. Parent-11 remarked, "My son was working with wood and me being a contractor, he's been around it all his life and it was something that I could get involved with, with him." Throughout the focus groups and informal interviews, the students mentioned their parents assisted them in acquiring pertinent resources for their program and that they were always there to answer questions they may have. Further, they believed the support of their parents and family members was a reason they remained involved in an SAE program. Student-3 affirmed "as I got involved, I got more interested and I continued working with him (grandpa) and see if it's something I would like to do in the future."

Parental Knowledge of SAE. While parents discussed that they were adamant supporters of SAE, throughout the study it became evident parents had limited knowledge of SAE. While these two ideas could contradict one another, it was found that even though parents lacked a full understanding of what SAE actually meant, they were full supporters of the learning and engagement of students in a program that sparked their interest. In each focus group, "What does SAE mean?" was asked. Many times the parents were unable to answer the question. The teachers required the parents to sign a sheet stating they understood the requirements and expectations of their student. Teacher-3 described their policy, "one of the things that they (parents) have to do to start it off, is that they do have to sign off on the course syllabus that has that grading spelled out."

Parents were confused as to if SAE was a separate course, a part of FFA, or if it was an assignment for the agriculture education course. Parent-1 stated, "I actually am not sure if this is a new class or what this is in general." The lack of knowledge continued when Parent-6 said, "I did not know that it was called an SAE program, the assignment that she had to do. All I knew was that I had to take her to work sometimes." Parent-7 added, "I really didn't know what we were getting into. In some ways I'm not sure that wasn't better because if I'd known what we were getting into I'm not sure I'd have gotten involved." In an attempt to describe an SAE program, Parent-12 responded that SAE was "an unknown secret that we have here."

Program Goals. During the development and implementation process, teachers and students worked together to develop adequate and achievable goals for the student to work toward during the SAE program. The main purpose of the goals was to continually motivate the student to continue their involvement and to apply their knowledge to their SAE. Teacher-2 explained that every student was expected to "identify three goals that they want to achieve." Further, teacher-1 shared, "I think that that's encouraging for that student to feel like they have met that success. Even if they were unable to reach all of their goals, to at least reach a goal is important." SAE goals were viewed as an essential component to guide student engagement in an SAE program. Student-9 remembered the teacher "[emphasized] that you should have short and long-term goals." Further, Student-9 mentioned the agriculture teachers did not expect all student goals would be directly related to the SAE program and encouraged students "to think about the personal side of the goals and [my teacher] always told me let yourself grow." The parents recognized the goals students developed for themselves would assist the parent in guiding and supporting their child as they engaged in an SAE program. Parent-15 expressed that "they set goals and I know they have certain skills that they want to attain. I know that they go online and they post their goals and the skills that they want to attain through their SAE."

Community Member Support. When developing an SAE program for students, community members play a large role in providing students with resources or assisting students in achieving their goals (Lewis et al, 2012). When starting a business, Student-16 mentioned community members "pushed us along saying we would definitely buy eggs from you. So, they kind of supported us once we brought that idea to them." When developing SAE programs, agriculture teachers assist with connecting community

members with students. Teacher-1 explained the development of "SAE's is based on the community's needs and what the community has to offer." Community members contacted the agriculture teacher before they hired employees to see if they had a student who might be interested in a job. Teacher-3 described a situation where a community member was reluctant to hire a high school student for an opening in a construction business. A year later, the community member contacted that agriculture teacher to say the student "was the first person he's ever seen in high school that he would rather hire straight out of high school."

Students who worked for different community members recognized their knowledge and skill had been enhanced because of their opportunity to work with a local community member. When talking about a local community member who was his/her boss, Student-8 expressed that "he's been a big influence just igniting that passion and going beyond just helping me and cushioning me. He's really cracked the whip and made sure I did all the dirty stuff as well as the good stuff." Further, Student-6 expressed that community members had provided opportunities to expand skills by "coming up to me and asking me to come ride their horses and work with their horses rather than just at the local farm it helps me meet other people and get to work with new horses."

Joint Supervision

Classroom supervision. Within the classroom setting, the agriculture teachers provided students with classroom time to work on the development and implementation of their SAE program. During this classroom instructional time, the agriculture teacher spent the entire time talking with students and asking questions about their SAE program. Teacher-2 described their philosophy of SAE supervision as "it's the teacher's job to evaluate the student and to encourage the student to make sure the problems are getting done correctly, then the community member or the parent is there to offer support as well." Teacher-1 recognized some issues with only classroom supervision but described the classroom can be effective if "there's progress checks and if there's something really alarming, I can say okay, let's talk about what's going on here." The students explained when they were in class they spent time working with the agriculture teacher to ensure they were completing their assignments and SAE correctly. Student-21 recalled their experience with classroom supervision, "in class he (agriculture teacher) would set days so we could work on our SAE's and if we had questions about it, he would just answer them, so that always helped." In many cases, the parents denoted this practice as providing the students guidance and encouragement to keep them on schedule and assist them in meeting their goals. Parent-10 described the teacher's role in supervision "as keeping them (students) on track to make sure they're meeting their goals." Further, Parent-12 explained that the teacher provided supervision when conducting "weekly checks on the paperwork, you know, do you have pictures, and do you have a way to present this to the class at the end of the year."

On-site Supervision. While the teachers in this study recognized the importance of conducting on-site supervision, each of the teachers affirmed that due to time constraints and the number of students enrolled in the SBAE program, on-site checks were near impossible. Teacher-2 stated the only time to see a student's SAE in person

was "if they bring it up here to school." The teachers recognized a need to be more actively engaged in providing on-site supervision. Teacher-2 mentioned they relied on parents and community members "for supervision, for the most part. Their (student) supervisor has to sign off on their project at the end, their hours, to make sure that they've actually completed those hours." Teacher-3 noted that if parents or community members provided supervision to a student they were required to complete "some forms and they can say, this student is doing these things, this student has showed me how to do this specific task."

Community members were rather concerned with the lack of time the agriculture teacher spent on-site with students. Community members recognized being a supervisor of students' SAE programs was one of their roles in the SAE development and implementation process. However, the community members suggested if the agriculture teacher expected this, a training session should be conducted with community members assisting with student SAE programs. Community member-3 recognized teachers may not need to be the "direct supervisor but I think one thing they could do is make sure that the employer realizes that this is an education[al] experience." Further, community member-2 explained that the agriculture teacher needed to provide "clear expectations up front so the employer knows what is expected of him as the employer in terms of guidelines, rules, regulations, expectations."

Shared Expectations

Supportive Administration. When working in a public school system, teachers must ensure their local administration supports the work being done in their classrooms (DiBenedetto et al., 2018). Teachers and community members in this study recognized and discussed the supportiveness of the building administrators in both schools. While only an informal conversation to thank the building administrators for their support of this study was held, it was noted the administrators were proud of the SBAE programs in their schools. Teacher -2 explained, the "administration in our school is very supportive of what we do, especially with the way we conduct our SAE projects." Involving administration in different aspects of the SAE program increased their support of the utilization of SAE. Teacher-1 explained, "when we do our presentation expo at the end of the semester, we invite our faculty and administration to participate. We encourage them to come down because they hear a lot about the SAE project." Teacher-3 explained that supportive administrators can "see the connection between career development and the SAE portion of the Ag program and my administration said that our Ag programs needs to do more SAE and we need to find ways to make that available to them." Community member-3 further explained, "unless you have them on board because they can throw up roadblocks and challenges" for the agriculture teacher to face when developing and implementing student SAE programs. Community member-2, who had served on the local school board, added that school administration will "discover that a successful program will attract students to it. If there's enrollment in the classes it must be doing pretty good."

Prior Sibling Involvement in SAE. When conducting an SAE program, students and their parents discussed that older siblings' experience with SAE had an impact on the

current student's involvement in SAE. Further, the sibling's involvement in SAE assisted in the development of a culture within the family that participation in SAE was an expectation. Parents noted they perceived better conceptualization of SAE, and they were better able to support their son or daughter, once they had one child conduct an SAE program. Student-20 discussed that older siblings had a large impact on their involvement in SAE, "I have older brothers that were super involved in FFA, they were both presidents and I saw them succeed with their SAE, so I kind of felt like I should then." When discussing the development of an SAE program, student-18 shared that a grandfather first had the idea to raise poultry and "brought the interest to me and then also to my sister, but I basically run the program." Student-18 further stated that her sister would take over the project when she enters high school in two years. Parent-10 discussed the experience of having two students conduct an SAE program, our "1st daughter did it and then the 2nd daughter picked up on it and she did expand it to some other things that the 1st daughter didn't. Then, we have a son coming in. He's looking forward to it."

Developing a Culture for SAE. The students understood they were expected to conduct an SAE program if they enrolled in an agriculture course. Teacher-1 explained, "there are kids who will not take ag classes because of the SAE, because there's extra work involved and they can go take another CTE class and not have extra work." Teacher-3 explained that student perspectives regarding SAE changed over time when a culture for SAE was developed. The agriculture teachers expressed they were proud of the culture they had developed and were pleased students recognized involvement in an SAE program was required of every agricultural education student. Teacher-2 explained how the culture for SAE had changed,

> Before we got here five years ago, the SAEs were not a major component in the classroom, and we made it that major component. We've seen that go from maybe one or two kids with quality projects to six, eight, ten, twelve kids with quality projects and we've identified kids that are coming in that could have really good projects.

This was supported when student-8 stated watching friends develop their SAE "helped me develop my SAE and I was just constantly reminding myself, I have people backing me up, I have resources and I can do this."

The parents' noticed students were assisting in the process of developing a culture for SAE. Many of the parents described that their son or daughter enjoyed being in an agricultural education course and they had made friends through FFA. Those friendships encouraged students to participate and engage in the SAE development and implementation process. Parent-10 explained, "it's a great community … from the other students, the students they work with, also. They're excited about the projects each of them is working on." Parent-10 stated a culture for SAE that had been developed, his children "...wanted to do it. It hasn't been where we had to beg and prod like with some things that you have. They would rather be doing that than just about anything else. You don't find many things like that."

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

The agriculture teachers noted classroom instructional time was dedicated to classroom SAE supervision and this was a choice they made to ensure all students were successful in their SAE. However, community members believed the agriculture teacher should conduct more on-site supervision during a student SAE program supported by the work of Dyer and Williams (1997) and Roberts and Dyer (2004). Similar to previous research by Dyer and Williams (1997), the agriculture teachers in this study denoted that lack of resources and time limits the number of on-site supervisory visits. However, the agriculture teachers in this study believed on-site supervision was beneficial to student success in their SAE. All of the participants believed an adult other than the agriculture teacher could supervise a student SAE program. This finding supported the work of Lewis et al. (2012), that reported supervision practices be shared between the agriculture teacher, parent, and community member.

Throughout this study the findings indicated the utilization of a culture for SAE within their SBAE programs. Teachers in the study reported the utilization of a multi-year process to develop an SAE culture. Over five years, teachers described that persistence and determination were key to ensuring that their expectations did not waiver or diminish. The teachers in this study described that students changed their attitude towards SAE and students' knowledge of an expectation to engage in SAE, within the student body, increased each year a firm SAE policy was implemented and enforced. Therefore, it was concluded that agriculture teachers needed to develop a culture for SAE within the SBAE program. The participants in this study reported prior sibling and/or family involvement assisted in the development of a culture for SAE. Agriculture students who had a sibling involved in an SAE program reported they had a positive perception of SAE and that encouraged them to participate. As siblings enter agricultural education courses and engage in SAE, a culture for participation was strengthened. This conclusion was similar to the finding of Rubenstein and Thoron (2014), who found that prior student involvement in SAE strengthens the value of SAE within SBAE programs.

The findings of this study supported the need for garnering administrative support for student SAE involvement. Rayfield and Wilson (2009) found school principals perceived SAE as an important component of agricultural education. The agriculture teachers supported the recommendations Phipps et al. (2008) posited for garnering administrator support. Therefore, it was concluded that involving administrators in SAE activities may elicit administrative support.

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers make the following recommendations for practice. Agriculture teachers should identify parents and community members to serve as SAE supervisors that receive training to be able to supervise and support a student in their SAE program. Additionally, agriculture teachers should utilize both on-site and classroom supervision including class time for students to be able to work on their record books and ask the teacher specific questions for their program. Agriculture teachers should have students develop goals for their SAE programs to act as a guide or road map for what that student wants to achieve through

their SAE program. Furthermore, agriculture teachers should engage in the development of a culture for SAE participation including inviting school administration to observe SAE-based lessons and activities.

Based upon the findings of this study, the following recommendations should be considered by teacher preparation programs. Preservice teachers should be prepared to utilize both on-site and classroom supervision techniques. Preparation to utilize both on-site and classroom supervision will allow teachers in their first year to serve more students effectively in their SAE program. Additionally, in-service teachers need professional development to prepare volunteers, parents, and employers to supervise SAE programs. Finally, based upon the findings of this study, the following recommendations for future research have been drawn. The development of a model to enhance SAE development and implementation is warranted. Conducting and sharing results of qualitative studies that examine urban and suburban SBAE programs with exemplary SAE programs and examination the development of a culture for SAE.

References

American Management Association. (2010). *AMA 2010 critical skills survey.* https://www.amanet.org/news/AMA-2010-critcal-skills-survey.aspx

Anyadoh, E. B., & Barrick, R. K. (1990). *Relationship between selected teacher, program and student characteristics and student scores on their supervised occupational experience program in Ohio*. Summary of Research 57(ED324411).

Barrick, R. K., Arrington, L. R., Heffernan, T., Hughes, M., Moody, L., Ogline, P., & Whaley, D. (1992). *Experiencing agriculture: A handbook on supervised agricultural experience.* The National Council for Agricultural Education.

Barrick, R. K., & Estepp, C. M. (2011). Experience programs in agriscience education: From Projects to SAEPs and beyond. *Agricultural Education Magazine, 83*(4), 26-27.

Barrick, R. K., Whitson, R., Staats, J., Gruis, D., Hastings, H., Neyhart, J., Davenport, B., Cano, J., Foor, R., Retallick, M. S., & Estepp, C. (2011). *Report of the experiential learning planning committee for The National Council for Agricultural Education.*

Bird, W. A., Martin, M. J., & Simonsen, J. C. (2013). Student motivation for involvement in supervised agricultural experiences: An historical perspective. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, *54*(1), 31-46. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2013.01031

Blumenthal, S. J., & Kagen, J. (2002). The effects of socioeconomic status on health in rural and urban America. *JAMA, 287*(1), 109. https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.287.1.109-JMS0102-3-1.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publications, Incorporated.

Crotty, M. (2010). *The foundations of social research:* Meaning and perspective in the research process. Sage Publications.

Denzin N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research.* Sage.

DiBenedetto, C. A., Willis, V. C., & Barrick, R. K. (2018). Needs assessments for school-based agricultural education teachers: A review of literature. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 59*(4), 52-71. https://doi.org/10.5032.jae.2018.04052

Doerfert, D. L. (Ed.) (2011). *National research agenda: American Association for Agricultural Education's research priority areas for 2011-2015*. Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech University, Department of Agricultural Education and Communications.

Dooley, K. E. (2007). Viewing agricultural education research through a qualitative lens. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 48*(4), 32-42. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2007.04032.

Dyer, J. E., & Osborne, E. W. (1995). Participation in supervised agricultural experience programs: A synthesis of research. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 36*(1), 6-14. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.1995.01006.

Dyer, J. E., & Williams, D. L. (1997). Benefits of supervised agricultural experience programs: A synthesis of research. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 38*(4), 50-58. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.1997.04.050.

Franklin, E. A. (2008). Description of the use of greenhouse facilities by secondary agricultural education instructors in Arizona. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, *49*(3), 34-45. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2008.03034.

Gibson, G. L. (1988). Factors associated with the supervised occupational experience programs of Kentucky vocational agriculture seniors. *(Dissertation Abstracts International, 48, 2224A)*.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1990). Can there be a human Science? *Person-Centered Review, 5*(2), 130-154.

Koro-Ljungberg, M., Yendol-Hoppey, D., Smith, J. J., & Hayes, S. B. (2009). Epistemological awareness, instantiation of methods, and uniformed methodological ambiguity in qualitative research projects. *Educational Researcher, 38*(9), p 687-699. https://doi.org/10.31021/0013189X09351980.

Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2009). *Focus group interviews: A practical guide for applied research* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Lewis, L. J., Rayfield, J., & Moore, L. L. (2012). An assessment of students' perceptions toward factors influencing supervised agricultural experience participation. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 53*(4), 55-69. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2012.04055.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Sage Publications.

McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2010). *Research in education: Evidence-based inquiry* (3rd ed.). Pearson Education.

Morgan D. L. (1988). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Sage Publications.

National Council for Agricultural Education. (2015). *Philosophy and Guiding Principles for Execution of the Supervised Agricultural Experience Component of the Total School Based Agriculutral Education Program.* https://ffa.app.box.com/s/i8ntesw8zsajaxxdnj5cle6zaf0a6za3

National Council for Agricultural Education. (2017). *SAE for all: Teacher edition. https://ffa.app.box.com/s/exollg1x7q2lntun3su2mdufw07wiklf*

National FFA Organization. (2023). *National FFA Organization 2022-23 Fact Sheet.* : https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1695814830/nwr7com/amcnq09w8wgcbukscxi2/2023FFAFactSheet.pdf

Newcomb, L. H., McCracken, J. D., Warmbrod, J. R., & Whittington, M. S. (2004). *Methods of teaching agriculture* (3rd ed.). Pearson Prentice Hall.

Office of Management and Budget. (2013). *Revisited delineations of metropolitan statistical areas, micropolitan statistical areas, and combined statistical areas, and guidance on use of the delineations of these areas* (OMB Bulletin No. 13-01). http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/bulletins/2013/b13-01.pdf

Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods,* (3rd ed.). Sage Publication.

Phipps, L. J., Osborne, E. W., Dyer, J. E., & Ball, A. (2008). *Handbook on agricultural education in public schools* (6th ed.). Thomson Delmar.

Rayfield, J., Compton, K., Doerfert, D., Fraze, S., & Akers, C. (2008). Factors that influence the decision to participate in youth organizations in rural high schools in three states. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 49*(4), 83 – 95. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2008.04083.

Rayfield, J., & Wilson, E. (2009). Exploring principals' perceptions of supervised agricultural experience. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, *50*(1), 70-80. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2009.01070.

Retallick, M. S. (2010). Implementation of supervised agricultural experience programs: The agriculture teachers' perspective. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 51*(4), 59-70. https://doi.org/10.5031/jae.2010.04059.

Retallick, M. S. (2011). Learning by doing through SAE: It isn't as easy as it sounds! *Agricultural Education Magazine, 83*(4), 23-25.

Roberts, T. G., & Dyer, J. E. (2004). Characteristics of effective agriculture teachers. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, *45*(4), 82-95. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2004.04082.

Robinson, J. S. & Haynes, J. C. (2011) Value and expectations of supervised agricultural experiences as expressed by agricultural instructors in Oklahoma who were alternatively certified. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 52*(2), 47–57. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2011.02047.

Rubenstein, E. D., & Thoron, A. C. (2014). Successful supervised agricultural experience programs as defined by American FFA Degree star finalists. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 55*(3), 162-174. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2014.03162.

Schwandt, T. (1997). *Qualitative inquiry: A dictonary of terms.* Oxford University Press.

Stimson, R. W. (1915). The Massachusetts home project plan for vocational agricultural education. *The School Review, 23*(7), 474–475. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1076877.

Swenson, R. D., McKay, T. D., & Steede, G. M. (2021). The agricultural communication SAE: A qualitative exploration on opportunities and teacher experiences. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 62*(3), 275–291. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2021.03275.

Talbert, B. A., Vaughn, R., Croom, D. B., & Lee, J. S. (2007). Foundations of agricultural education. Pearson.

Turner B. S. (2008). The constructed body. In J. A. Holestein & J. F. Gubrium (Eds.) *Handbook of constructionist research,* (pp. 86-99). Curriculum Material Services.

United States Department of Agriculture. (2019). *Rural Classifications.* https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-classifications/what-is-rural/